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s'engager à mieux intégrer
les femmes migrantes

IMMIGRATION, RECEPTION, INTEGRATION: THE HIDDEN PHENOMENON OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN





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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

This report aims to provide details of the activities carried out in order to understand the magnitude of the phenomenon of immigration in the countries actively participating in the EnFeM project. A literature review has indicated that whilst there is substantial literature on the general phenomenon of immigration, little work has been done on the situation of immigrant women.

For this reason, the first paragraph will be dedicated to the magnitude of the phenomenon of immigration in general, and to the specific situation of immigrant women in the countries involved in the project in particular. A section of the first paragraph will focus on some of the good practices implemented in Europe to both face discrimination and deal with unsuccessful or failed integration. A specific section will analyse the results from the questionnaires administered by the project partners.

1. IMMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION FLOWS AND RECEPTION

1.1. Introduction

European countries have been a destination for immigrants coming from Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa since the 1950s. Up to the 1970s/80s, countries like France, Germany and the UK fostered immigration flows, as they needed an increasing number of factory workers during the economic boom that followed the Second World War. Clearly, this approach did not lead to any negative perspective on the presence of immigrants.

In the 1980s, however, the economic situation changed dramatically. Some industrial sectors – such as the automotive industry – experienced a decline in demand, as sales started to decrease once the majority of the people had bought mass-produced goods. The resulting drop in production, together with the introduction of the automated production process and new technologies, led to a shrinking workforce. At the beginning, job cuts in the primary and secondary sectors were more than matched by increases in tertiary sector employment, which contributed to the development of what sociologists call ‘post-industrial society’. The decrease in the workforce in low-skilled sectors caused an increase in the number of unemployed immigrant and national workers, the majority of whom resorted to crime due to their difficult living conditions. As a result, the countries that had previously welcomed immigrants started criminalising them. Demonstrations broke out and laws to control immigration and restrict the entry of immigrants were passed.

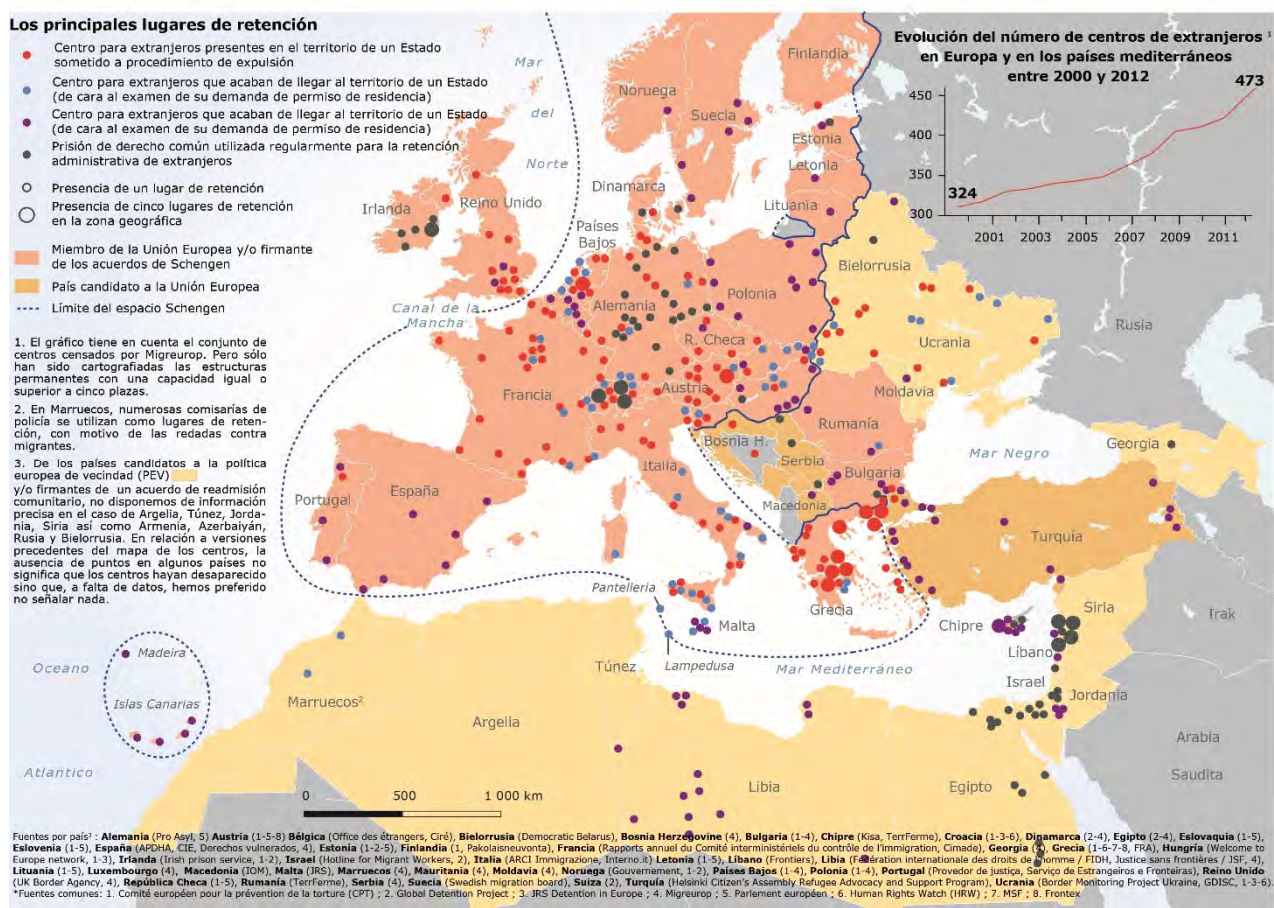
In the second half of the 1980s, two thirds of the workers were employed in the tertiary sector. However, the neoliberal policies and budget limits set in the 1990s were among the main factors that caused cuts in public expenditure, leading to the erosion of the welfare state. Further jobs were cut in the public sector and social welfare was reduced. As a result, the number of people at risk of poverty or below poverty threshold increased. The rising number of petty crimes committed by the poor and disadvantaged, immigrants included, caused a rift in society, resulting in the criminalization and even dehumanization of immigrants. The dehumanization of immigrants started in the countries that experienced the first immigration flows and in a decade spread to the countries that experienced the

second immigration flows, like Italy and Spain. Promoted by populist parties, it has become the main issue dividing public opinion across Europe and, as a result, one of the main problems to be addressed by politicians.

In this context, this report aims to analyse the presence of reception centres in Europe, introduce the main European organizations involved in the reception of migrants, identify some of the best practices implemented in Europe to facilitate integration, give an insight into the living conditions of immigrants and examine some of the most common prejudices they face every day. It must be pointed out that the primary objective of this study was to analyse only the situation of immigrant women. However, the data in the existing literature focus on the general phenomenon of immigration, while immigrant women are often just mentioned. Therefore, data are still insufficient to allow a complete analysis of the situation of immigrant women.

1.2. Reception centres in Europe

Figure 1. Reception centres in Europe



Source: <http://www.migrantitorino.it/?p=26772>

Figure 1 shows the location of different types of reception centres in Europe. An interesting analysis of the current European situation has been carried out by *Migreurop*, a European network dealing with immigration and immigrants, as well as immigration flows, factors and policies¹. *Migreurop* strongly highlights the fact that official reception centres are not the only places where migrants are

¹ A summary of the study can be read on the website x-pressed.org.

held in Europe and its neighbouring countries. Since 2012, the organization has been considering also informal – and sometimes illegal – prisons for foreigners: police station cells, airport transit areas, cargo ship cabins, common prisons and everything else that can serve the purpose. *Migreurop* has identified 420 places of detention, which hold about 37,000 people. Alessandra Capodanno, one of the coordinators at *Migreurop*, explains that both numbers have been rounded down. She talks about “invisible places of detention” to highlight the fact that official centres such as the Italian Identification and Expulsion Centres (CIEs) are not the only centres where migrants are held. However, there are no official figures on the number of centres of detention² – both visible and invisible – in Europe and its neighbouring countries. The census has been carried out combining official data, such as those provided by the Ministries of the Interior and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, with the information provided by members of the network, volunteers and activists. There are 33 centres of detention in Switzerland, 33 on the small island of Cyprus, and 52 in Greece, where the majority are represented by police stations in Athens, while others continue to be built or expanded.

The length of stay in the centres tends to be extended almost everywhere. The most alarming situations occur in Italy and Greece, where migrants can be held in the centres for up to 18 months. The length of stay has been extended from 40 to 60 days in Spain, and from 32 to 45 days in France, where it can also be extended to two months in case of terrorism threats. Furthermore, it is alarming that bigger and bigger centres are being used. The biggest one is located in Israel, where the length of stay can be three years, as the country has become a crucial stop-over site along migration routes since the Arab Spring.

Detention conditions in the centres located outside the EU seem to be worse, but this does not mean that the rights of the migrants held in Europe are respected. Furthermore, most of the times, the centres located outside the EU are funded by the European Union or its Member States. Examples of this are the centres located in Libya and funded by Italy as well as the detention centre located in Mauritania and funded by Spain within *Plan Africa*. Europe uses its bargaining power to encourage neighbouring countries to control migration flows. In other words, Europe itself is to blame for the severe violations occurring in the centres located outside the EU.

As far as Italy is concerned, the Ministry of the Interior has distinguished 4 types of centres: reception centres (CDAs) and first-aid reception centres (CPSAs), where immediate assistance is provided, reception centres for asylum-seekers (CARAs), where migrants who have sought international protection stay, and identification and expulsion centres (CIEs), where migrants are held before being expelled from the country. Furthermore, *Hotspots* are places where staff coming from all over Europe works to swiftly identify incoming migrants. In Italy, there are 4 CPSAs, 14 CDAs/CARAs and 5 CIEs that provide first reception services, 1,657 temporary reception facilities that provide supplementary reception services, and a number of SPRARs, reception facilities for asylum-seekers that try to facilitate integration processes³.

As it has already been pointed out, the majority of reception centres both within and outside Europe are characterised by a system of exclusion, as migrants are forced to spend long periods there. In other words, reception centres provide a way to keep groups of migrants within a geographically

² *Migreurop* uses the word ‘detention’ to describe not only centres of detention, but also those places – both well and less known – where migrants are held or tend to gather. Migrants are not locked up in gathering centres, but the obstacles on migration routes force them to seek refuge there.

³ In 2017, 40% of local municipalities in Italy had a SPRAR, and SPRARs could accommodate up to 30,000 political refugees and asylum seekers.

restricted area. Although sometimes the “guests” can theoretically leave the centres, this is practically impossible due to bureaucratic barriers. This is what happens in Belgium and Germany, where, in order to be entitled to state subsidies, migrants are required to live in permanent accommodation, i.e. the reception centre.

The map of reception centres (see Figure 1) shows the location of the main reception centres in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. As can be seen, most of the reception centres are located in coastal areas, giving the impression that migrants should be kept at their arrival point. Thus, the different states allocate funds not to facilitate a full process of integration, but to deal with an emergency situation. This is also due to the fact that populism has recently been on the rise in Europe, with far-right parties winning parliamentary seats or being brought into government, such as in the case of Austria. Therefore, detention centres are not places for reception and integration, nor for repatriation, due to the long period of time migrants are forced to spend there. Inadequate regulations and slow bureaucratic processes worsen the situation, leading to overcrowded centres, terrible hygienic conditions, the violation of human rights and the establishment of informal settlements even in the heart of some European and Italian cities.

Furthermore, the funds allocated by the different states are not adequate to make the migrants’ journey safe. On 22 December 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) issued a report stating that – other conditions being equal – migrants who cross the Central Mediterranean are more at risk of exploitation and human trafficking than those who cross the Eastern Mediterranean. The research is based on quantitative data obtained by identifying the main vulnerabilities/risk indicators and analysing the stories of some of the victims of abuse, violence, exploitation and human trafficking. The data have been collected by direct contact with 16,500 migrants in 7 countries (Italy, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia and Hungary). The main findings are listed below:

- 37% of migrants have experienced human trafficking, but that percentage rises to 73% in Central Mediterranean and drops to 14% in Eastern Mediterranean;
- 48% of migrants crossing Central Mediterranean have been the victims of exploitation or human trafficking compared to 31% in Eastern Mediterranean;
- migrants with lower levels of education are more likely to be the victims of abuse (unfortunately, the research does not provide data on gender violence);
- migrants coming from war zones are more vulnerable to exploitation or human trafficking;
- the vulnerability⁴ factors to be considered for unaccompanied children are the same as those for adults, but children are more likely to be held by non-governmental authorities⁵.

This has led the European Commission to issue a communication to the European Council and Parliament, devising some action plans for the protection of minors. The European Commission and Member States should:

- prioritise actions aimed at strengthening child protection systems along the migratory routes, including in the context of implementing the Valletta Summit political declaration and Action Plan and the Partnership Framework, as well as in the framework of development cooperation;
- support partner countries in developing strong national child protection systems and civil registration services as well as cross-border cooperation on child protection;

⁴ Vulnerability is the limited capacity to assert one’s rights, face, resist to or recover from exploitation and abuse.

⁵ See: <http://www.italy.iom.int/it/notizie/1%E2%80%99oim-pubblica-un-nuovo-rapporto-sulle-vulnerabilit%C3%A0-dei-migranti-che-percorrono-le-rotte>.

- support projects targeting the protection of unaccompanied children in third countries along migratory routes, in particular to prevent child trafficking or smuggling;

- actively implement the EU Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child. As of 2017, with the support of the Commission and the EU agencies, the Member States are encouraged to:

- collect and exchange comparable data to facilitate the cross-border tracing of missing children and the verification of family links;
- apply child-friendly and gender-sensitive approaches when collecting fingerprints and biometric data;
- ensure that a person responsible for child protection is present at an early stage of the identification and registration phase and that child protection officers are appointed in each hotspot;
- put in place the necessary procedures and protocols to systematically report and respond to all instances of unaccompanied children going missing.

As of 2017, with the support of the Commission and the EU agencies, the Member States are encouraged to:

- ensure that individual gender- and age-sensitive vulnerability and needs assessments of children are carried out upon arrival and taken into account in all subsequent procedures;
- ensure that all children have timely access to healthcare (including preventive care) and psychosocial support, as well as inclusive formal education, regardless of the status of the child and/or of his/her parents;
- ensure that a range of alternative care options for unaccompanied children, including foster/family-based care, are provided;
- integrate child protection policies in all reception facilities hosting children, including by appointing a person responsible for child protection;
- ensure and monitor the availability and accessibility of a viable range of alternatives to the administrative detention of children in migration;
- ensure that an appropriate and effective monitoring system is in place with regard to reception of children in migration;
- make full use of the forthcoming EASO guidance on operational standards and indicators on material reception conditions for unaccompanied children.

In 2017:

- the Commission and the EU agencies shall establish a European guardianship network, to develop and exchange good practices and guidance on guardianship in cooperation with the European Network of Guardianship Institutions;
- EASO shall update its guidance on age assessment.

With the support of the Commission and the EU Agencies, the Member States are encouraged to:

- strengthen the guardianship authority/institution to ensure that guardians for all unaccompanied children are swiftly in place;
- implement reliable, multi-disciplinary and non-invasive age assessment procedures;
- ensure swift and effective family tracing, within or outside the EU, by making full use of existing cross-border cooperation channels;
- give priority to processing cases (e.g.: asylum applications) concerning children in line with the urgency principle;
- give priority to the relocation of unaccompanied children from Greece and Italy.

1.3. Main associations working in the field of reception of migrants

A number of associations deal with the reception of migrants in Europe. The most important ones are listed below⁶.

Refugees Welcome

Founded on 11 December 2015, it is a non-political, non-party and non-profit organization. It is part of the *Refugees Welcome International* European network, which was started in Berlin in 2014 and is now working in 12 countries. It fosters cultural change and a new approach to reception focused on host families. This seems to be the best approach to facilitate the social inclusion of refugees, as it represents the most effective way to tackle vulnerability and disadvantage, while encouraging the development of personal skills, participation and achievement of wealth. Living within the welcoming environment of a host family provides refugees with the bridge to independence, as local people help them to become part of a community and familiarize with the social and cultural background of the host country. Refugees have the opportunity to meet people and establish relationships, improve their language skills, build professional networks, and set new objectives, such as resuming their studies, finding a job or attending a training course. Focusing on both shared experiences and the relationship between refugees and local people, this approach helps to fight prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes. Furthermore, this strategy proves to be beneficial for all the parties involved, as host families have the opportunity to become more aware of their role as active citizens, experience a different culture, help someone to build their future, and create new networks within their community⁷.

Farsi Prossimo

This association has been working with asylum-seekers since 1993, providing immigrants with shelter and other reception services. Besides providing for basic needs (such as board and lodging or essential guidance), *Farsi Prossimo* has always worked to facilitate a full process of integration, going beyond the immediate response to emergency situations. Supplementary reception services have been improved, and immigrants can now benefit from Italian language courses, vocational training and guidance on the social and cultural background of the host country. The association is supported by the government and other profit and non-profit organizations, and it has been working to strengthen the cooperation with other social cooperatives operating in the same field. *Farsi Prossimo* is a type-A social co-operative carrying out activities on behalf of immigrants in accordance with the provisions of Articles 52, 53 and 54 of Italian Presidential Decree No. 394/99, and involved in the fight against discrimination in accordance with the provisions of Article 6 of Italian Legislative Decree No. 215/03⁸.

Baobab Experience is based in Rome, where it offers primary assistance, psychological counselling services and legal support to migrants in transit. A reception centre run by the association has been recently cleared, after it welcomed about 40,000 people⁹.

⁶ Passerini, C. L. (2017), *Quali sono le associazioni che aiutano i migranti in Europa* [online]. Available from: <http://thesubmarine.it/2017/02/06/quali-sono-le-associazioni-che-aiutano-i-migranti-in-europa/>

⁷ <http://refugees-welcome.it>

⁸ <http://www.farsiprossimo.it/aree-di-intervento/area-stranieri-centri-di-accoglienza>.

⁹ www.baobabexperience.org

SOS ERM is an association based in Milan that provides reception services to refugees in transit. It has offered assistance in the mezzanine located in *Milano Centrale*, the main railway station of the city of Milan, and in other hubs run in cooperation with local authorities¹⁰.

Based in Trento, **Speranza – Hope For Children** has been working in Greece, Turkey, Syria and Serbia. It provides families transiting through the Balkans with clothes, food and other basic services. Moreover, it supports some medical facilities in Syria and hosts vulnerable families in some flats in Greece¹¹.

Advocates Abroad is a non-governmental organization that offers legal support to asylum-seekers across Europe, Greece, Turkey and the Middle East¹².

Mediterranean Hope is a project of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy. It offers assistance, support and protection to migrants and runs an observatory on Lampedusa. Furthermore, **Mediterranean Hope** campaigns for humanitarian corridors to facilitate safe travel for vulnerable refugees who want to reach Europe from Lebanon and Morocco. It is now working to establish a humanitarian corridor involving Ethiopia¹³.

Proactiva Open Arms is a Spanish NGO devoted to search and rescue in the Mediterranean. Set up by a company providing lifeguard and water rescue services in Barcelona, it now carries out its rescue operations in Central Mediterranean, Greece and especially on the Greek island of Lesbos¹⁴.

Are You Syrious? is a Croatian NGO that offers humanitarian aid to refugees transiting through the Balkans, Central Europe, Syria and Turkey. It carries out projects to help women and children, facilitating their access to basic services¹⁵.

Nicras is the only refugee-led organisation in Northern Ireland that supports the integration process of refugees and asylum-seekers and tries to raise awareness of immigration issues¹⁶.

Refugee Aid Serbia is an organization that, by cooperating with other associations, provides asylum-seekers with reception services in Belgrade and the whole country. It offers food, clothes and personal hygiene products¹⁷.

Lighthouse Relief is a Swedish NGO based in Greece, where it has set up *Lighthouse Relief Hellas*. It works with international volunteers to offer humanitarian aid to refugees, and especially women and children. The main objective of *Lighthouse Relief* is to reconcile the needs of migrants with those of local people¹⁸.

¹⁰ www.facebook.com/soserm

¹¹ www.speranza-hopeforchildren.org

¹² www.advocatesabroad.org

¹³ www.mediterraneanhope.com

¹⁴ www.proactivaopenarms.org

¹⁵ www.facebook.com/areyousyrious

¹⁶ www.nicras.btck.co.uk

¹⁷ www.refugeeaidserbia.org

¹⁸ www.lighthouserelief.org

Drapen I Havet, better known as *A Drop in the Ocean*, is a Norwegian non-profit organization that offers humanitarian aid to migrants. It has been working on the islands of Chios, Kos and Lesbos, and in continental Greece, especially in Athens and Northern Greece, since September 2015¹⁹.

Kiron is a German association that works to facilitate access to education for refugees. It offers the opportunity to attend free university courses through international programmes²⁰.

Dirty Girls of Lesbos Island is an organization that collects clothes, blankets, sleeping bags and other objects that refugees leave on the island of Lesbos, in order to wash and redistribute the objects among those who may need them. The association is also working with different local laundries in order to support local economies²¹.

The Swiss association ***Firdaus*** offers humanitarian aid to refugees and asylum-seekers in Italy, Greece, Turkey and Syria. It coordinates multiple projects in order to provide as many services as possible, including medical and education services²².

The ***Jesuit Refugee Service*** has always worked to protect the rights of refugees. This is the ongoing challenge faced by *Centro Astalli* association, in order to help all the people who are trying to build a future in a foreign country²³. *Centro Astalli* is the Italian branch of the Jesuit Refugee Service, an international organization working in more than 40 countries all over the world²⁴.

Despite the large number of important international associations working in the field, none of them deal with the specific issue of migrant women.

1.4. Migrant women

A literature review has indicated that whilst there is substantial literature on the general phenomenon of immigration, little work has been done on the situation of immigrant women. Although almost 50% of immigrants are women, the phenomenon of immigrant women started to be analysed only in the 1970s in Europe, and it is only over the last few years that some studies have been carried out on their situation.

Migrant women face the same challenges as every other migrant. They fight loneliness, want to be included in the community and try to learn the language of the host country. They are anxious that they may become ill, need to find a job to provide for their family, and know they will raise their children far from home. However, the situation for women is even more complex, as they also have

¹⁹ www.drapenihavet.no

²⁰ www.kiron.ngo

²¹ www.dirtygirlsoflesvos.com

²² www.associazionefirdaus.com

²³ <http://centroastalli.it/tag/europa/>

²⁴ These are only the most famous associations working in the field, but the census carried out by the Italian Ministry of the Interior shows that there is a large number of associations dealing with the integration of immigrants in Italy. A complete list is available at <http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it/Aretematiche/PaesiComunitari-e-associazioniMigranti/Pagine/mappatura-associazioni.aspx>.

to face prejudices and stereotypes about their role in society. All these factors increase the risk of social exclusion.

However, an increasing number of immigrant women are overcoming the above-mentioned cultural and practical difficulties, dispelling the prejudices of those who describe them as superstitious, uneducated, submissive, ignorant and close-minded. In Italy, about 570,000 immigrants who were born abroad own a business, with the number of women working in the field steadily increasing. Although being varied, the factors leading a woman to set up a business are linked to two main aspects: the necessity to provide for her family and the need for independence. While some years ago the necessity to take care of the family prevailed over the desire for independence, this trend has been changing.

The change in the trend has also been caused by a change in the types of businesses owned by women. The number of companies providing 'non-ethnic' services and producing 'non-ethnic' products is increasing, which shows that immigrant women first try to move out of the ethnic niche, then challenge gender stereotypes in employment. The report below provides some data on the Italian businesses run by immigrant men and women.

In order to build a statistical picture of self-employed immigrant women, it is essential to analyse the data on female entrepreneurship provided by a report produced in 2016 by *Unioncamere*, the Italian federation of chambers of commerce. However, the data describe the situation up to 2014 and have been only partially updated by a report published by IDOS, the Italian Research Centre on migration.

In 2014, 403,277 businesses were run by immigrant men and represented 8.5% of overall male self-employment. Businesses run by immigrant women were 121,397, less than a quarter compared to those run by men, and represented 23.1% of overall immigrant self-employment. Over two years, numbers increased by about 10% and in 2016, 134,667 (23.6%) businesses were run by immigrant women, representing 9.3% of female-led businesses in Italy.

A high percentage (27.2%) of businesses run by immigrant women were set up in the textile and clothing sector, with 10,000 businesses run by immigrant women. Generally speaking, however, the largest number of businesses were in the commercial sector (more than 40,000, i.e. more than one in three businesses), followed by the food and hospitality sector, with nearly 15,000 businesses.

Data have also highlighted a geographic difference. Three in four female-led businesses were located in central and northern Italy, with more than 90,000 businesses in 2014 and nearly 97,000 in 2016. Lombardy was the region with the highest concentration of businesses run by women (20,182 in 2014 and 22,972 in 2016, therefore one in six businesses), with numbers representing 11.7% of overall self-employed women in 2014. Lombardy was followed by the Lazio region (nearly 15,000 businesses run by immigrant women in 2014, and 16,000 in 2016), Tuscany (nearly 13,000 in 2014, and more than 14,000 in 2016), the Veneto region (10,000 in 2014, and 11,000 in 2016), and the Emilia-Romagna region.

In the South of Italy, good results were achieved by the Campania region, with 8,500 businesses run by immigrant women in 2014 and 9,700 in 2016. Sicily followed, with more than 7,000 businesses. These data show how immigrant women have taken the initiative even in some of the most challenging areas of the country.

Tuscany was the region with the highest number of self-employed immigrant women (13.7% in 2014). In 2014, there were 3,000 businesses in the Tuscan province of Prato, accounting for 38.1% of overall female entrepreneurship, with a preference for the textile and clothing sector. Florence

followed with 4,000 business, accounting for 18% of female entrepreneurship in Italy. Trieste and Milan (around 16%) were the third- and fourth-important provinces respectively, followed by Teramo and Rimini.

Not surprisingly, the Chinese were the most economically active ethnic group in the country, with 21,526 women being sole traders in 2014. Their presence in the commercial sector was unrivalled, with 8,600 businesses, but they also had a strong presence in the textile and clothing sector, with 7,000 businesses. Chinese businesswomen were followed by Romanian women, with 9,717 business owners. Moroccan women led 7,411 business, 5,000 of which were commercial businesses, data that dispel the stereotype of idleness and submissiveness that surrounds women coming from predominantly Muslim countries²⁵.

Women leave their home country not only because of economic reasons and conflicts, but also to visit new places, learn about different cultures and become independent. In all these cases, their situation in the host community is often worse than that they were living in their home country. In addition, they are often forced to do a job that does not use their skills and competences.

In the 1950s, Latin American women were the first women to ever migrate to Europe. They started working as cleaners, elderly and child carers, sending part of their earnings to their families back home. They moved from country to country whenever they found better job opportunities or their stay permit expired. Later, when family reunification programmes started to be implemented, their husband and children had the opportunity to join them in Europe. As a result of family reunification, the attitude of these migrant women, described as “pioneers”, changed. They needed a more stable source of income to support their children’s studies and facilitate their social inclusion. However, many of them decided to reduce their working hours to take care of their children, asking their husband to provide for the family. This attitude caused them further social isolation.

The mechanisms governing the migration process of pioneer women can be used also to describe the situation that an increasing number of migrant African women are living today. Also in this case, African women migrate for different reasons. Once in Italy, or more generally in Europe, they have to dispel the prejudices of those who describe them as ignorant, superstitious, uneducated and submissive. They often suffer from social isolation, as their poor knowledge of the target language prevents them from integrating in the host community.

However, thanks to practices for social inclusion focused above all on language learning, these women have managed to establish some contacts with native citizens, finding a job and sometimes even running their own businesses.

One of the biggest challenges migrant women have to face is giving birth far from home, as the birth of a child is not only a natural biological process, but also a social phenomenon. African women usually spend the period before and after childbirth with their mother and the other women in the family, who take care of their needs. It is the grandmother who massages the newborn every day, as the mother is excused from every activity during the first month after childbirth. She needs to take care of herself, as her body needs to return to its pre-pregnancy state. Sometimes, this process involves painful practices, such as hot water baths causing burns that, according to their customs, stimulate skin regeneration, helping women to return to pre-pregnancy beauty.

²⁵ Ambrosini, M. (2017), *Un volto nascosto dell’immigrazione* [online]. Available from: <https://welforum.it/un-volto-nascosto-dellimmigrazione>. The website also provides a mapping of the Italian businesses run by foreign women.

It is also customary to hide the pregnancy from people outside the family, in order to prevent them from jinxing it.

Migrant women giving birth in Europe have highlighted the fact that, although having access to better healthcare services, they have often felt lonely, missing their families. Furthermore, migrant women have pointed out that pregnancy cannot be described as a private matter in Europe, as it is almost impossible not to be seen when going to hospital for childbirth or medical checks. As a result, hiding the pregnancy is often difficult.

1.5. Conclusions and recommendations for good practices

In the last few years, the issue of immigration has been widely covered by the media, thus attracting the attention of sociologists and institutions. As a result, a number of studies have been carried out and measures have been taken. Following the first repressive measures, many different projects have been implemented over the last 10 years, in order to facilitate the integration of migrants into host communities. However, these initiatives have proven to be insufficient for ensuring long-term integration, as they do not represent a well-established approach, but are linked to specific cases and niche projects. If Europe wants to tackle the so-called “immigration issue” effectively, it should increase funding for good practices, in order for the said projects not to be carried out in single communities, but spread across Europe.

Another critical aspect is represented by the fact that little work has been done on female migration and the situation of immigrant women, as we have pointed out at the beginning of this report. As a result, data on the phenomenon have been difficult to collect, and the information we have managed to find has been summarised and analysed in this report.

Only understanding can lead to respect. The EU and its Member States should focus on this aspect, funding projects and events which should take place after school or during Religion classes, as in the 21st century religion teachers should facilitate the integration process. When carrying out these kinds of activities, the most suitable methodology to be used includes peer interviews and focus groups, with an expert in the field acting as a moderator. The evaluation process should be carried out by the participants in the project. This requires the development of questionnaires to be administered in schools before and after the implementation of the project. The questionnaires should help to assess the degree of acceptance/non-acceptance of other cultures, highlight the most common prejudices and stereotypes, and understand the degree of integration. The comparisons of the results from pre-project and post-project questionnaires will show if the project succeeded in reducing prejudice, improving social relationships with the members of another culture and increasing integration and participation in intercultural events. Furthermore, qualitative interviews can also be combined with this strategy, in order to determine the satisfaction with the project or the aspects to be improved. This good practice can be implemented not just in schools, but also in local community meetings, in order to involve adults. With a few changes, this approach can be used with people of all ages.

Another example of good practices are cultural and language tandems, paired with games and pastimes. This approach is currently being used by the associations carrying out activities for Erasmus+ students in Lecce. In this case, however, the activities aim to improve language skills and facilitate the social inclusion of students coming from all over Europe. This project can easily be adjusted to facilitate the integration of immigrants into host communities. Language tandem activities

should be carried out in two phases. A first phase should be focused on improving the immigrant's language skills, with the immigrant being paired with a local native speaker participating in the project. At a later stage, culturally-diverse groups will discuss some topics from different cultural perspectives, in order to overcome stereotypes, facilitate understanding and highlight shared cultural aspects. Experts in the field should act as moderators, while the evaluation process should be carried out through questionnaires and qualitative interviews. Questionnaires will assess the degree of prejudice before and after the project, while qualitative interviews will determine the satisfaction with the project and the aspects to be improved.

The success of an integration process is determined by an increase in both the funding for good practices and the number of events and projects aimed at facilitating the integration and involvement of disadvantaged groups into host communities. Disadvantaged people tend not to leave their family or community, isolating themselves. This means that policies should be aimed at helping these people to come out of the bubble and participate in social life. It is important to point out that advertising materials are essential in order to reach as many people as possible and encourage them to participate in the projects.

2. INTERVIEW WITH A SOCIOLOGIST AND EXPERT IN MIGRATION: ANTONIO CINIERO, TEACHER UNIVERSITA' SALENTO, PREVIOUSLY ISTAT RESEARCHER (ITALIAN NATIONAL STATISTICS INSTITUTE)

Interviewer: You have been studying the phenomenon of immigration for ten years now, so what can you tell us about the concept of discrimination in this context?

Expert: The concept of discrimination, or better, discriminations, in the plural, is extremely complex, as it is multidimensional. It is never unambiguous and is always linked to a series of different aspects.

First of all, we should focus on research methodology. When talking about social research, everything depends on the type of analysis you want to carry out. If you need a qualitative analysis on discrimination, you will talk to women, who are usually the most discriminated against group. The other important thing to consider is the survey tool you want to use. The results you can obtain from a qualitative interview are very different from the findings you can obtain from a questionnaire or from an analysis of employment data.

I will make an example. If you examine employment rates, you will notice that the percentage of employed foreign women is larger than the percentage of employed Italian women. So, from this perspective there is no discrimination against foreign women, at least in the access to the labour market. However, the fact they have a job does not necessarily mean that they are doing a job they like. They are employed in the peripheral labour market, working as caregivers for the elderly, for example. So, although they are not discriminated against in access to the labour market, they have to be satisfied with a job they do not like because the labour market decided for them. And you can understand this only through a qualitative interview.

I: 2006 was the year of the global economic crisis. How did the processes of discrimination change in that period?

E: The economic crisis reached its peak between 2009 and 2010. Immigrant men working in factories were the worst affected by the crisis, while women were spared because they worked in a sector that was not hit by the crisis. The majority of them were caregivers for the elderly, so they were paid with pension money.

In the labour market, the process of discrimination against immigrants is not only vertical. It does not only start with employers discriminating against immigrant workers, as employers often want to hire foreign citizens because they can pay them less than natives. In the labour market, the process of discrimination is also horizontal, as it takes place between workers. Native workers feel threatened by immigrant workers, because they think that immigrants can “steal” their jobs. So, the so-called “battle of the have-nots” occurs, although it should be called competition between workers.

Generally speaking, findings from qualitative interviews show that foreign citizens tend to declare that they are less discriminated against here than in the north of Italy or other north European countries.

I: What type of discrimination are we talking about?

E: Immigrants say that they feel more accepted here. If you read *Porte chiuse*, a book written by Luigi Perrone, you can read stories about different African immigrants who left Lecce to build a better a life elsewhere, but then decided to come back. They always come back because even if the economic situation is not good here, social conditions are better than in the north of Italy or other countries.

For example, a research I carried out on Romanian people has shown that they live here because of the better social conditions. I asked them why they live here, despite their precarious conditions. They answered that they are less discriminated against here, because police officers are more tolerant, so they manage to make a living and live in the street without being forced to move, especially if they live on the outskirts of town.

So, to sum up, these people are less discriminated against at a local level, but we do not have any quantitative data to support this claim. However, if you ask the same question to the people living in SPRAR, CAS and reception centres or those who commute by train – and you can see them on SudEst trains – they will give you a different answer, as they feel very discriminated against. And especially on trains a lot of immigrants often become the victims of discrimination.

I: So, is a spatial sociological approach also important when studying processes of discrimination? I mean, can the place where discrimination happens – a train, a bus, or a large space like a square – change and influence the process? Being so close to migrants on a daily basis, commuting to work knowing that you have to share your private space with somebody else, can that lead to hostility and stereotypes describing immigrants as dirty, smelly pickpockets?

E: Yes, it can work that way. However, we need to bear in mind that this happens when no relationship has been built with the migrant. On the other hand, if we start building a relationship with them, we can notice that they are passengers like everybody else. The fact is that we tend to see reality from an ethnical perspective, so we see diversity, and we see it through the colour of somebody's skin. This leads us to describe some people as foreigners, just because they are people of colour or wear certain clothes.

Those who experience these perceptions at a spatial level are not isolated subjects, but they are part of a global system that absorbs information coming from different sources, so they process reality starting from a series of elements. Clearly, if you often see a subject invading what you consider your private space, and if you do not build a relationship with this person, it can happen that you feel that your private, vital space is being threatened. It is no coincidence that regimes have always fostered the so-called theory of invasion, in national contexts where there are few resources.

I: So, are you talking about a relation between few resources and too many foreign people?

E: Exactly. As a matter of fact, there are not too many foreign people in Italy and at a national level there are no areas where the presence of certain ethnic groups is particularly strong. If we do not take into account the situation in the city of Prato or in some areas in Rome and Milan, there are

no places where ethnic groups have built their own community within a host community, and this is due to a series of reasons linked to the Italian urban system.

I: Inclusion and integration seem to be two different processes. Does the word 'integration' imply some negative aspect?

E: Yes, there is some negativity in the word 'integration', and that is the reason why I use it only when I need to follow European guidelines on writing reports and documents. In Italy, but also elsewhere, this word is used as a synonym for 'cultural assimilation', and from a semantic point of view these processes basically mean that a culture should integrate into another. This approach does not take into account the bidirectionality of the process, which, on the other hand, is highlighted at a European level, where 'integration' means mutual sharing of experiences and cultures.

I: So, can we describe this process of integration as a process of enculturation as it happened during the European colonization of Africa in the 19th century?

E: Exactly. That is the reason why I use the word 'interaction' when I write a document in Italian, as this word conveys an idea of complexity. On the other hand, at a European level, documents talk about processes of integration, but the way of interpreting the word is always clarified. Integration is described as a bilateral process in which no culture should integrate into another one. Or better, this can happen, but if we talk about integration, we also need to be honest and admit that we live in a society of asymmetrical power relationships, and that those who we think should integrate are always those on the weaker side.

Moreover, the concept of integration did not develop with foreign immigration, but when farmers started moving to cities, where they had to integrate into city life and working hours in factories. So, the process of integration started with a movement from an environment, like the countryside, where life had a natural pace that later had to be adjusted to the rhythm of production.

In Italy, the word 'integration' is often used – more or less consciously – as a synonym for 'cultural assimilation', as that is the philosophy that lies behind it. For example, the Chicago School and Park posited four stages in the process of acculturation: contact, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. It is seen as a linear process through which an external subject becomes part of a group and acquires its cultural and behavioural patterns, thus becoming integrated into that group. This is clearly a rigid perspective, because there is not a single group in a society. Migrants who arrive in the country should integrate, but into which group? Should they integrate into my lifestyle or yours? There is not a single culture shared by every member of a society.

Theoretically, all the models work. The problem is that they are often detached from reality. I know that we need to simplify reality if we want to understand some of its basic dynamics, but we always need to bear in mind that we are interpreting a specific section of a much more complex reality.

I will make an example. When we want to study the processes of discrimination in the foreigners' access to the labour market, we cannot use quantitative data, because they provide information only about the access to the labour market, but do not show the segmentation that discrimination creates.

Some processes of discrimination are developed by the government. This is what is called institutional racism, meaning a series of laws that discriminate against some individuals. If the government does not recognize your qualification, this will become an element of discrimination contributing to the segmentation of the labour market, which will determine your subordinate role in society.

I: Let's go back to migrant women and their working conditions. What are the most common jobs they do?

E: The majority of immigrant women work in the service sector, as caregivers for the elderly, but also babysitters and domestic workers. There is not a job that identifies a specific ethnic community, except for Filipinos, because working processes do not depend on the attitudes of a community, but are determined by the relationships that subjects build.

We have already said that women tend to work as caregivers, as this is an expanding sector, although also being the sector with the highest rates of discrimination and exploitation. This happens because women cannot separate work life from private life, as their employer's house becomes their house. So, they do not have any time for themselves because their time is completely devoted to work, and a lot of women feel like someone is stealing their life. I remember the story of a Ukrainian woman who was threatened to be fired just because she had started seeing someone, and a boyfriend could be a distraction from work. The problem is that these kinds of jobs are based on a patriarchal approach.

Talking about domestic workers, on the other hand, we need to consider the fact that people get the job thanks to a network of personal connections, which prevents them from accessing other sectors of the labour market. So, if you start working in the domestic sector, you will find yourself trapped in it, especially if you do not have the opportunity to build different social relationships. However, as soon as you settle, you can start building your network of connections, and you will have more opportunities to find a better job, as Granovetter explains in *The Strength of Weak Ties*. Unlike weak ties, which imply that you can meet different people in different places in order to get different types of information, migrants' ties are dense, so they always meet the same people in the same places, being trapped in the same working context.

A lot of immigrant women are agricultural workers, and they are often the victims of exploitation and sexual abuse, like immigrant women who live in the Sicilian cities of Ragusa and Vittoria, in the Sele Plain and here in Apulia.

I: What about prostitution?

E: Prostitution is a serious issue, because it is also linked to human trafficking, in which the majority of Nigerian girls you see in the streets were involved. In 99% of cases, these girls are prostitutes not because they chose to be, but because they experienced situations that pushed them in that direction. They got into debt, as they were taken to Europe and led to believe they would have a job.

I: Who took them here? Their fellow countrymen and women?

E: Yes, criminal organizations run by their fellow countrymen, sometimes even their boyfriends.

The majority of Nigerian prostitutes come from Benin City or from villages in the hinterland. They were lured to Europe with promises of well-paid jobs to help their families in Nigeria, instead they were trapped in criminal circles, subjugated to psychological torture. We need to bear in mind that the majority of them believe in the juju religion, which includes voodoo rituals. Before leaving Nigeria, they swear to be faithful to their traffickers in a traditional ritual. Nigerian traffickers use dark magic to trick thousands of women. So, the women we see in the street are forced into prostitution, and if they refuse to prostitute themselves, they have to pay a sum of money. If you monitor the area, you can notice that there are always the same girls, who are always supervised. They are enslaved, hit and raped. And this situation occurs also in rural slums.

A number of surveys – although I do not know to what extent they are scientifically reliable – show that prostitution is the most profitable business sector for some Nigerian gangs in the Campania region, where a partnership has been established between Camorra and Nigerian mafia. Prostitution is the most profitable business sector for these gangs, because these women think that they owe their traffickers up to €30,000 or €40,000, but they have no idea of the real value of these numbers because they come from countries where the minimum wage per hour corresponds to few euros, and that is why they end up working for years. It is often their boyfriend who mediates with the criminal organization, basically a person they know and trust. That is why a lot of girls find it difficult to press charges. They think they are leaving with their boyfriend, who actually becomes their exploiter.

When they are here on the street, they are monitored by a complex “social” reality, because they have a sort of supervisor and a *Maman*, who is an older woman, most of the times a former prostitute, who has been freed and now exerts her control over these women. The control a *Maman* exerts does not seem to be based on violence, although it actually is, so girls have difficulties in pressing charges, because *Mamans* take care of their children while they are out on the street. *Mamans* exert their control over them without any need of resorting to physical violence.

3. SURVEY ON PERCEPTION, STEREOTYPES AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

3.1. Introduction

A single analysis of the quantitative data collected by the different partners has not been possible for a number of reasons. First of all, some of the partners have not administered the original questionnaire developed by the Lead Partner, but have decided to shorten it and modify some variables. This has meant developing a matrix per each of the areas where the data have been collected, although some of the matrices are partially similar. Furthermore, in some cases, the matrix ‘cases per variables’ has not been completed following the guidelines provided.

The first quantitative analysis examines the data collected by the Italian partner *Arci-Lecce* and the Spanish partner *Alianza por la solidaridad*, as they have used the same original questionnaire and completed the matrix following the guidelines provided. Then, the analysis of the data collected by the other partners involved in the project will be carried out.

3.2. Arci-Lecce and Alianza por la solidaridad

3.2.1. Teenage respondents

In order to allow for a meaningful statistical analysis, incorrect codes and incomplete or erroneous questionnaires have been removed from the matrix, as a high number of respondents skipped some questions or failed to follow the guidelines provided. This process has led to 625 complete questionnaires, a suitable number to carry out a significant analysis and provide recommendations for good practices.

Description of the sample

Over half the questionnaires came from Spain (52.0%, 36.8% of which from Las Palmas). Furthermore, 53.1% of respondents were boys and 45.4% were girls. The mean age was 16, with a range of 11 – 23. As for ethnicity, 87.7% of respondents were locals, while 7.8% came from EU countries. Respondents stated that their parents are locals (more than 80% of mothers and fathers), but there is also a small percentage of parents coming from other EU countries (9.4%). According to the respondents, their parents have a medium/high level of education, a different situation from that highlighted by the answers of parent respondents, which will be analysed later.

Table 1. Qualifications (%)	father (N = 552)	mother (N = 573)
No qualifications	4.9	4.7
Primary School Certificate	9.4	8.6
Middle School Certificate	28.6	25.1
School Leaving Certificate	31.0	34.0
University Degree	17.8	19.2
Higher University Degree	8.3	8.4
	100.0	100.0

Table 2. Occupation (%)	father (N = 556)	mother (N = 568)
Legislators, entrepreneurs (> 50 employees), managers	7.2	2.6
Scientific and intellectual occupations, jobs requiring high qualifications	6.7	9.0
Technical occupations (physics, chemists, engineers, IT technicians), senior military officials	12.8	6.0
Office employees, qualified jobs in the business and service industries, junior military officers, entrepreneurs (< 50 employees)	34.2	30.6
Artisans, workmen, farmers, drivers, soldiers	31.5	5.8
Non-qualified jobs	4.3	9.7
Housewives, people who are not looking for a job, unemployed looking for a job	3.4	36.3
	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

However, data about the occupations of the respondents' parents have shown that two-thirds of the fathers are employed in low- to medium-level jobs, while the majority of the mothers are either white-collar workers (30.6%) or do not work at all (36.3%), which describes the common situation of women coming from male-oriented welfare cultures. To sum up, according to two important indicators, the respondents' parents seem to show a medium socio-cultural level, as the majority of them has a high level of education but medium- to low-level jobs.

Teenage respondents were also asked to provide information about their membership in associations and organizations. Like parent respondents, also teenage respondents showed a low level of participation in volunteering activities having an important social impact. The majority of the respondents (36.8%) – a small percentage compared to overall higher European rates – are members of sports clubs and recreational associations. They are followed by members of religious groups, which usually represent cultures with an inclination towards a conservative approach, not so open to culturally diverse perspectives. Moreover, 14.4% of respondents are members of associations helping people in need, while 9.1% are interested in promoting culture and the development of their local areas, which does not necessarily mean facilitating integration processes.

Table 3. Type of association you are a member of (%)	
Sports associations, recreational associations	36.8%
Religious associations	17.1%
Support associations helping people in need	14.4%
Cultural associations and organizations promoting local development	9.1%
Environmental associations	7.8%
Political organizations	6.1%

Another interesting aspect that can help us analyse the respondents' opinions on, and attitudes towards, immigrants is their interest in politics. Despite their young age, teenage respondents tend to keep up with politics at a national and international level (32.3% of respondents said that they "often"/"always" manage to do so). Unfortunately, although this shows civic-mindedness, it does not necessarily mean that teenagers are well-informed, as a number of studies on media manipulation techniques have pointed out. However, their interest in politics at such a young age will hopefully lead to a further development of their analytical skills.

Table 4. Do you keep up with politics? (%) (N = 617)

Never/rarely	15.1
Occasionally	19.4
Sometimes	33.2
Often	23.7
Always	8.6
	100.0

Immigrants and local people: perception, awareness and similarities

Like adult respondents, also teenage respondents thought that their towns have been "invaded" by immigrants, and the percentage in this case is even higher than that specified for their parents. Respondents believed that the majority of immigrant men come from Africa (94.2%), followed by Asians (74.7%), non-EU immigrants (53.1%) and Americans (45.6%). The same data were collected about immigrant women, something that would have been unthinkable 20 years ago.

When asked whether they know and often meet immigrants, have a chat with them or are friends of theirs, teenage respondents gave us reassuring answers. Over 40% of respondents have close relationships with immigrants and about 45% have friends belonging to a different cultural group. Social interactions with other cultures should reduce negative perception and xenophobia.

However, when asked to express their opinions on the immigrants' traditions, lifestyle and values, respondents answered in a way that supports the perception of being "invaded" by immigrants. Furthermore, although schools should play a leading role in promoting social inclusion, only 5% to 18% of students confirmed the presence of fellow students coming from other cultural groups.

Table 5 (.1, .2, .3, .4, .5, .6) shows some clear aspects that characterize the differences of immigrant cultures. Respondents tended to notice quite a difference in some important aspects of life that could even trigger social and political conflict.

First of all, the respondents' opinions diverged on child-raising methods, as 38% of respondents thought that immigrants have a different way to raise children, while 30.8% of respondents stated the opposite. Larger differences can be observed in terms of values and religious practices, as 2 in 3 respondents were certain of the difference.

Table 5. Compared to your community, how do you judge... (%)

.1 the immigrants' child-raising methods		.2 the immigrants' religious beliefs and practices	
Very different	24.6	Very different	47.4
Quite different	13.4	Quite different	19.0
Partially different	31.2	Partially different	18.7
Quite similar	17.9	Quite similar	8.7
Very similar	12.9	Very similar	6.2
	100.0		100.0

On the other hand, when it came to family life and community rules, the difference was perceived by a smaller number of respondents, although being strongly highlighted by a fifth or a sixth of them.

.3 the immigrants' values and family life		.4 the immigrants' respect for community rules	
Very different	22.9	Very different	17.5
Quite different	14.6	Quite different	10.9
Partially different	24.7	Partially different	21.0
Quite similar	22.9	Quite similar	21.2
Very similar	15.0	Very similar	29.4
	100.0		100.0

Huge differences were highlighted in terms of clothes and relationships between men and women.

.5 the way immigrants dress		.6 relationships between immigrant men and immigrant women	
Very different	38.3	Very different	28.9
Quite different	17.0	Quite different	14.8
Partially different	20.3	Partially different	24.9
Quite similar	14.3	Quite similar	17.3
Very similar	10.1	Very similar	14.1
	100.0		100.0

Openness to social interactions

The respondents' willingness to build a close relationship with immigrant men and women has also been analysed (see Tables 6.1, .2, .3, .4).

Also in this case, a certain percentage of respondents kept immigrants at a distance, as 30.5% of them stated that they do not want to have close relationships with immigrant men or immigrant women (see Table 6.1), while a small percentage (7.4% and 11.5%) declared the impossibility of

making friends with immigrants (see Tables 6.2 and 6.4 respectively). Furthermore, 22.1% of respondents did not want to have immigrant in-law relatives (see Table 6.3).

Table 6. Willingness to build close relationships (%)

.1 I would have a love story with an immigrant		.2 Local people can never feel at ease with immigrants, not even in a context of friendship	
Strongly disagree	22.8	Strongly disagree	78.9
Quite disagree	7.7	Quite disagree	6.2
Partially agree	10.9	Partially agree	7.4
Quite agree	13.4	Quite agree	1.7
Strongly agree	45.2	Strongly agree	5.7
	100.0		100.0

.3 I do not object to a family member having a love story with an immigrant		.4 I would not mind having friends of different nationalities	
Strongly disagree	16.8	Strongly disagree	9.0
Quite disagree	5.3	Quite disagree	2.5
Partially agree	5.7	Partially agree	3.5
Quite agree	8.6	Quite agree	7.2
Strongly agree	63.7	Strongly agree	77.8
	100.0		100.0

3.2.2. Parent respondents

In order to allow for a meaningful statistical analysis, incorrect codes and incomplete or erroneous questionnaires have been removed from the matrix, as a large number of respondents skipped some questions or failed to follow the instructions provided. This process has led to 449 complete questionnaires, a smaller number than planned, but still suitable to carry out a significant analysis and provide recommendations for good practices.

Description of the sample

The majority of the questionnaires came from Italy (64.8%, compared to 35.2% from Spain). Gender balance has been reached, with 44.1% of respondents being men and 54.6% of respondents being women (other: 1.3%). This has allowed a significant gender-based comparison that will also help us better understand the answers of teenage respondents, as we know that parents tend to influence their children's attitude and opinions, above all in terms of stereotypes and different cultures.

The distribution of respondents' age (see Figure 1 and Table 1) shows that the sample consists of parents at least 30 years older than their children. Generally speaking, the respondents are in their mid-40s.

Figure 1. Distribution (%) of respondents' age in 2017 (N = 448)

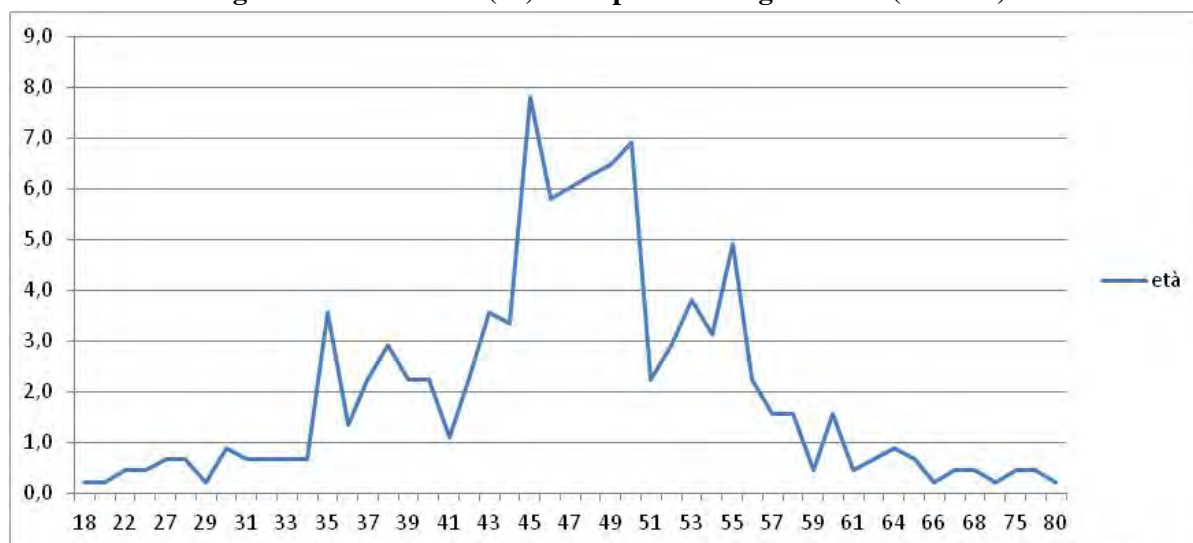


Table 1. Respondents' age in 2017 (N = 448)

Central tendency and Variability			
Mean	47.1	Std. Deviation	8.9
Median	47.0	Minimum	18
Mode	45	Maximum	80

Another aspect to consider is the level of education, as it contributes to building opinions and attitudes. As Table 2 shows, respondents tend to have a medium-low level of education, as only a fifth of them have a university degree.

Table 2. Level of Education (%) (N = 449)

Low	42.5
Medium	35.0
High	22.5
100.0	

The skill level of occupation also needs to be mentioned, as it contributes to determining the socio-cultural status and behavioural patterns of individuals. The situation reflects the level of education only partially, as the skill level of occupation is slightly lower than the level of education. At least half the respondents have a low-skilled job, which can be explained by the strong presence of women in the sample, as we know that women suffer from gender discrimination in the Italian and Spanish labour market.

Table 3. Skill level of occupation (%) (N = 432)

High	16.9
Medium	32.2
Low	50.9
100.0	

Being an active member of an association also contributes to building a positive attitude towards diversity, as it involves a continuous dialogue with oneself and the others. Clearly, not all the associations have the same impact on society, but we have tried to include the most significant types of organizations. Data have established a relation between a low socio-cultural level and a low participation in associations. On average, only one fourth of the respondents stated to be members of at least an association (see Table 4). However, some of them (less than 9%) said to have joined more than one association.

Table 4. Participation in associations (%) (N = 396)

A) What type of association are you a member of?		B) How many associations have you joined?	
Cultural associations and organizations promoting local development	18.7	0	54.6
Sports associations, recreational associations	23.0	1	24.6
Environmental associations	12.1	2	8.9
Political organizations	12.6	3	5.8
Support associations helping people in need (women, people with disabilities, children, the elderly)	15.9	4	2.9
Others (religious groups, activist groups, LGTB associations, and so on)	17.7	5	1.8
	100.0	6	1.3

Immigrants and local people: perception, awareness and similarities

We asked respondents to express their perception of the number of immigrants in both their country and town. These variables are significant indicators for the level of fear of, or positive attitude towards, those who are not considered members of a community. Individuals with a low/medium-low social status tend to have a higher perception of the presence of immigrants. This is due to their diffidence and fear, which distort the factual situation, as it happened and is still happening in Italy. If we analyse the respondents' perception based on their level of education, our data confirm the hypothesis.

Table 5. In your opinion, how widespread is the presence of...

A) immigrant men				
	Low	Medium	High	
Not widespread	1.7%	2.1%	1.1%	1.7%
Not so widespread	-	2.1%	3.2%	1.5%
Quite widespread	12.5%	23.9%	24.5%	19.2%
Widespread	21.0%	28.2%	34.0%	26.5%
Very widespread	64.8%	43.7%	37.2%	51.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

B) immigrant women

	Low	Medium	High	
Not widespread	4.0%	3.5%	4.3%	3.9%
Not so widespread	2.8%	9.2%	10.6%	6.8%
Quite widespread	21.0%	31.0%	34.0%	27.4%
Widespread	21.6%	21.8%	23.4%	22.1%
Very widespread	50.6%	34.5%	27.7%	39.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

As the table shows, the differences in perception between respondents with a high level of education and respondents with a low level of education are rather significant. The gap is not so wide between individuals with a high level of education and individuals with a medium level of education. In terms of gender, data differ by 10 percentage points, with female respondents tending to be less detached and analytical in describing the phenomenon.

Differences based on gender and level of education are lower if analysed with reference to the presence of immigrants at a local level. In this case, it is easier to observe the presence of immigrants directly and personally, which allows to be more *objective*. A similar result was obtained when analysing the presence of immigrants based on their nationality. When talking about Africans and Asians (compared to Americans and non-EU Europeans), there is a big gap between the answers of individuals with different levels of education. However, the gap is not so wide, although still significant, when it comes to immigrant women.

Table 6. Presence of immigrants combined with respondents' levels of education

A) Africans

	Low	Medium	High	
No immigrants	3.1%		1.1%	1.6%
Few immigrants	5.6%	9.8%	8.9%	7.8%
Some immigrants	15.6%	17.3%	30.0%	19.6%
Many immigrants	75.6%	72.9%	60.0%	71.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

B) Asians

	Low	Medium	High	
No immigrants	4.6%	4.6%	3.4%	4.3%
Few immigrants	19.0%	14.5%	18.0%	17.2%
Some immigrants	22.9%	28.2%	41.6%	29.2%
Many immigrants	53.6%	52.7%	37.1%	49.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Respondents were also asked to estimate the percentage of immigrant men and immigrant women working in some specific sectors, even illegal and unregulated. There is no significant difference in the answers given by the respondents, regardless of their level of education.

Furthermore, many respondents, and especially those with a lower level of education, failed to express an opinion (see Table 6A and B), which partially contradicts the previous answers. The presence of immigrants was perceived as very widespread, but respondents were not able to give information about their occupation. This is due to two factors: the issue is hardly ever covered by the media, and the majority of the respondents do not keep up with politics (only 43% of them stated that they “often” or “always” keep up with politics). In any case, this lack of information results in diffidence.

Table 7 shows central tendency (mean and median values) and variability (standard deviation values), but also valid and blank answers. Some stereotypes are easy to notice, as immigrant men were described, on average, as either pitchmen or criminals. Caregivers come next, while percentages for legally employed immigrant men are very low.

Table 7. What percentage (%) of immigrants work as...

A) Immigrant men					
	Mean	Median	St. dev	Answers	I do not know
Pitchmen, door-to-door salesmen	46.1	50	29.8	325	27.6%
Criminals	45.6	45	30.7	316	29.6%
Caregivers	40.0	40	28.7	331	26.3%
Providers of food services	34.2	30	28.1	327	27.2%
Beggars	28.0	20	24.1	316	29.6%
Undeclared workers	27.7	20	26.2	332	26.1%
Providers of health and beauty services	27.4	20	27.9	311	30.7%
Retailers	26.8	20	25.9	322	28.3%
Domestic workers	24.9	20	25.0	331	26.3%
Legally employed highly skilled workers	23.4	15	23.1	329	26.7%
Legally employed low-skilled workers	18.2	10	22.9	327	27.2%

The respondents’ perception of immigrant women was not so different, as the majority of them were described as being employed in the peripheral labour market, working as undeclared workers or caregivers.

B) Immigrant women					
	Mean	Median	St. dev	Answers	I do not know
Undeclared workers	49.4	50	29.6	327	27.2%
Caregivers	49.0	50	28.8	331	26.3%
Domestic workers	45.1	50	28.9	337	24.9%
Pitchwomen, door-to-door saleswomen	32.6	20	28.5	311	30.7%
Criminals	30.3	20	29.4	295	34.3%
Providers of food services	29.7	30	24.7	310	31.0%
Legally employed low-skilled workers	26.9	20	26.0	325	27.6%

Beggars	26.9	20	26.9	309	31.2%
Providers of health and beauty services	26.4	20	26.0	320	28.7%
Legally employed highly skilled workers	21.0	10	24.7	336	25.2%

Existing literature shows that sharing experiences with other individuals breaks down stereotypes and prevents xenophobia. For this reason, the degree of contact between immigrants and locals has been analysed. The possibility to share experiences with other individuals can be determined by both external factors (such as urban areas, the real estate market and personal economic situation) and an attitude of openness (a cultural element). In this context, individuals make their own choice, either meeting or avoiding the other. However, citizens tend to move to urban areas where immigrants do not generally settle.

Table 8 shows the respondents' positive answers²⁶ and highlights a difference in terms of their level of education. Respondents with a higher level of education tended to have a larger number of contacts with immigrants.

Table 8. Level of social interactions with immigrants

	Low	Medium	High	
I meet immigrant men and we have a chat	38.2%	33.8%	57.4%	41.0%
I meet immigrant women and we have a chat	35.6%	33.1%	52.5%	38.5%
Some immigrant men are friends of mine	29.8%	29.9%	38.6%	31.8%
Some immigrant women are friends of mine	29.3%	24.2%	30.7%	27.8%

Answers to questions describing the most common stereotypes about immigrants are also interesting. Respondents were asked to express their opinion on a series of statements focusing on both positive and negative aspects and approaches linked to the presence of immigrants in a country. The respondents' answers have been combined with the data on their level of education.

Table 9. "Immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of our country" combined with the respondents' level of education

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	38.3%	32.9%	10.4%	29.8%
Quite disagree	15.6%	18.9%	9.4%	15.3%
Partially agree	15.6%	26.6%	30.2%	22.9%
Quite agree	15.0%	5.6%	22.9%	13.5%
Strongly agree	15.6%	16.1%	27.1%	18.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

²⁶ Respondents were asked to answer "yes" or "no".

By adding up the answers backing the statement (“quite agree” and “strongly agree”), it was easy to notice a difference of opinions in terms of the respondents’ high or low level of education. Half the respondents with a high level of education agreed on the fact that immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of their country.

Numbers are reversed when the statement is reversed too. When talking about illegal acts, immigration started to be perceived as a negative issue. As can be seen, 59.2% of respondents with a low level of education thought that the presence of immigrants leads to an increase in drug dealing and prostitution. Furthermore, 38.1% of low-educated respondents held immigrants responsible for criminal acts, compared to 11.9% of respondents with a higher level of education (see Table 11).

Table 10. “An increase in immigration flows leads to an increase in drug dealing and prostitution” combined with the respondents’ level of education

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	10.9%	9.3%	22.7%	<i>13.0%</i>
Quite disagree	16.0%	25.2%	30.9%	<i>22.7%</i>
Partially agree	14.3%	19.2%	17.5%	<i>16.8%</i>
Quite agree	11.4%	13.2%	9.3%	<i>11.6%</i>
Strongly agree	47.4%	33.1%	19.6%	<i>35.9%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Table 11. “Immigrants are responsible for criminal acts” combined with the respondents’ level of education

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	23.1%	14.1%	32.6%	<i>22.1%</i>
Quite disagree	17.3%	22.5%	33.7%	<i>22.9%</i>
Partially agree	21.4%	21.1%	21.7%	<i>21.4%</i>
Quite agree	9.2%	16.2%	6.5%	<i>11.1%</i>
Strongly agree	28.9%	26.1%	5.4%	<i>22.6%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Other common stereotypes have also been analysed, and data have always shown the same trend: the higher the level of education, the higher the openness towards other cultures and ethnicities.

The most common stereotypes in Italy – but also in other European countries – are linked to housing and jobs. Also in this case, respondents with a lower level of education showed a negative attitude (see Table 12). Not surprisingly, 71.5% of low-educated respondents (see Table 13) “quite” or “strongly” agreed with the fact that immigrants should solve their problems in their own countries. Generally speaking, this shows that disadvantaged local people are not sympathetic to immigrants, despite having their same quality of life.

**Table 12. “Immigrants ‘steal’ houses and jobs from local people”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	31.0%	29.7%	41.4%	<i>33.0%</i>
Quite disagree	10.3%	18.2%	26.3%	<i>16.9%</i>
Partially agree	16.7%	22.3%	17.2%	<i>18.8%</i>
Quite agree	14.9%	5.4%	9.1%	<i>10.2%</i>
Strongly agree	27.0%	24.3%	6.1%	<i>21.1%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

**Table 13. “Immigrants should solve their problems in their own countries”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	11.6%	14.6%	20.6%	<i>14.8%</i>
Quite disagree	8.1%	16.7%	16.5%	<i>13.1%</i>
Partially agree	8.7%	10.4%	20.6%	<i>12.1%</i>
Quite agree	12.8%	9.0%	11.3%	<i>11.1%</i>
Strongly agree	58.7%	49.3%	30.9%	<i>48.9%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The contrast between different disadvantaged groups becomes even more evident when it comes to social expenditure. When asked if the presence of immigrants negatively affects national social expenditure, 42% of low-educated respondents strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 13.8% of respondents with a higher level of education.

**Table 14. “The presence of immigrants negatively affects national social expenditure”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	17.8%	24.2%	24.5%	<i>21.6%</i>
Quite disagree	5.7%	19.5%	19.1%	<i>13.7%</i>
Partially agree	13.8%	13.4%	25.5%	<i>16.3%</i>
Quite agree	20.7%	15.4%	17.0%	<i>18.0%</i>
Strongly agree	42.0%	27.5%	13.8%	<i>30.5%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

If low-educated respondents thought that immigrants negatively affect national social expenditure, they also believed that immigrants should integrate into society without benefiting from any favouritism. Table 15 shows that 49.7% of low-educated respondents agreed with the statement, compared to 26.1% of respondents with a higher level of education. In other words, half the low-educated respondents compared to a fourth of highly educated respondents.

**Table 15. Level of agreement with the media on the fact that
“Immigrants should integrate into society without benefiting from any favouritism”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	18.2%	20.5%	20.7%	<i>19.5%</i>
Quite disagree	6.1%	20.5%	10.9%	<i>12.1%</i>
Partially agree	5.5%	15.9%	18.5%	<i>12.1%</i>
Quite agree	20.6%	11.4%	23.9%	<i>18.3%</i>
Strongly agree	49.7%	31.8%	26.1%	<i>38.0%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

A similar stereotype is shown in the approach to public assistance, although in this case there is no big gap between low-educated and highly educated respondents. Only 17.6% of highly educated respondents “quite” or “strongly” agreed with the fact that immigrants could often avoid resorting to public assistance, compared to 40% of respondents with a lower level of education (see Table 16).

**Table 16. Level of agreement with the media on the fact that
“If they made a greater effort, immigrants could often avoid resorting to public assistance”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	26.1%	31.9%	34.1%	<i>30.0%</i>
Quite disagree	19.9%	24.8%	29.7%	<i>23.9%</i>
Partially agree	14.3%	15.6%	18.7%	<i>15.8%</i>
Quite agree	13.0%	11.3%	12.1%	<i>12.2%</i>
Strongly agree	26.7%	16.3%	5.5%	<i>18.1%</i>
	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The different groups of respondents seemed to have very different opinions on the attitude of the political establishment towards immigration (see Table 17). Although nearly all the respondents seemed to agree on the fact that many politicians care more about immigrants than local citizens, low-educated respondents represented the largest group agreeing with the statement (47.4% of low-educated respondents “strongly” agreed, compared to 23.7% of respondents with a higher level of education).

**Table 17. “Many politicians care more about immigrants than local citizens”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	17.9%	21.7%	32.3%	22.5%
Quite disagree	8.7%	15.4%	19.4%	13.4%
Partially agree	17.3%	18.2%	12.9%	16.6%
Quite agree	8.7%	10.5%	11.8%	10.0%
Strongly agree	47.4%	34.3%	23.7%	37.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

However, if low-educated respondents thought that immigrants can integrate into society without any help from the host government, they did not believe that they can do that in highly skilled sectors and occupations. Only 17.1% of respondents with a higher level of education agreed with that statement, compared to 34.3% of low-educated respondents. In other words, one in three low-educated respondents (compared to one in six highly educated respondents) considered immigrants inferior to local citizens (see Table 18).

**Table 18. Level of agreement with the media on the fact that
“Immigrants come from less developed populations, so they cannot develop their skills in the same
way as people in modern societies do”
combined with the respondents’ level of education**

	Low	Medium	High	
Strongly disagree	34.1%	46.2%	43.6%	40.6%
Quite disagree	14.6%	24.5%	22.3%	20.0%
Partially agree	17.1%	11.2%	17.0%	15.0%
Quite agree	8.5%	7.7%	7.4%	8.0%
Strongly agree	25.6%	10.5%	9.6%	16.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

3.3. Spain (Granada)

3.3.1. *Spanish parent respondents*²⁷

Description of the sample

The questionnaire was administered to 600 parents, 55% of whom were women. The distribution of respondents’ age (see Table 1) shows that the sample consists of young parents, with half of them

²⁷ An analysis of the answers of teenage respondents has not been possible, due to the large number of questions skipped by the respondents.

being younger than 39 years old. However, some parents older than 60 years old were also present (N = 14)

Table 1. Respondents' Age

<i>Valid answers</i>	588
<i>Blank answers</i>	12
Mean	38.1
Median	39.0
Mode	41
Std. Deviation	9.3
Minimum	20
Maximum	80

The majority of respondents have a high level of education, as 55.3% of them hold a university or higher degree.

As for civic-mindedness and participation in associations, more than half the respondents (54.2%) said that they are members of an association. In particular, 29.3% of them are members of recreational associations, 28.1% of them have joined cultural associations and organizations promoting local development, 15% of respondents are members of environmental associations, 10% of them participate in political organizations, while 5% of respondents work with support associations helping people in need.

Immigrants and local people: perception, knowledge and similarities

The majority of respondents seemed to be worried by the presence of immigrants, with 80% of both male and female respondents agreeing on the fact that the presence of immigrants is very widespread in the country. The percentage rose to 84-5% when respondents described the presence of immigrants in their towns. If one in four respondents said that their presence in Spain is very widespread, two in five and one in three respondents stated that the presence of immigrant men and immigrant women respectively is very widespread in their towns. In particular, respondents said that the majority of immigrants come from Africa and Asia, while only one fourth of the sample said that many come from other countries in the world, non-EU countries included.

Respondents were also asked to express their opinion on the presence of immigrants working in some specific sectors, even illegal and unregulated. We will concentrate on immigrant women, as they are the focus of this project. The majority of them are said to work in the commercial sector, have low-skilled or unregulated jobs, and provide health and beauty services. In addition, respondents were sure that 70-80% of immigrant women work as caregivers or cleaners. Finally, respondents in the province of Granada thought that only 25% of immigrant women are beggars.

As for the exposure to the phenomenon of immigration, 50.9% of respondents said they have immigrant neighbours, while only one third of respondents stated that they usually have a chat with them, and one fifth said that they have immigrant friends. The percentage is slightly higher when talking about immigrant women. As Table 2 shows, slightly more than half the respondents have

immigrant women as their neighbours. However, only about 40% of respondents usually have a chat with immigrant women, and only one in five respondents have made friends with immigrant women.

Table 2. Level of contact with immigrant women²⁸

	%	Valid %	Total	Blank answers
They are my neighbours	52.5	52.7	99.7	0.3
We meet and have a chat	39.2	39.4	99.3	0.7
They are friends of mine	21.0	21.1	99.7	0.3

Compared to the parents living in other countries involved in the project, Spanish respondents seemed to be more positive when expressing their opinions on common stereotypes about immigrant men and women. Data show that 52.1% of Spanish respondents thought that immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of the country, while only 10% of them stated the opposite. Furthermore, 60.3% of respondents did not agree on the fact that immigration leads to an increase in drug dealing and prostitution. In addition, 60% of them thought that immigrants are exploited in the workplace, while 73.9% of respondents said that immigrants fled their country in a desperate attempt to escape terrible situations. A small number of respondents (7 to 17%) believed that immigrants ‘steal’ houses and jobs from local people, bring in dangerous diseases and negatively affect Spanish social expenditure.

The percentage against general tolerance increases when dealing with topics not clearly linked to intolerance towards foreign people. First of all, 33.2% of respondents agreed and 33.1% partially agreed on accepting immigrants with a stable job. In addition, 40.8% of respondents thought that immigrants should integrate into society without benefiting from any favouritism, while 30.4% stated that they should make a greater effort to have the same quality of life as that of local people, and 45% of respondents partially agreed with the statement. Respondents continued to be coherent with their statements, as 31.1% of them agreed, and 41.1% of them partially agreed, on the fact that immigrants could often avoid resorting to public assistance if they made a greater effort. Furthermore, 32.2% of respondents believed that immigrants come from less developed populations, so they cannot develop their skills in the same way as people in modern societies do. The latter represents a clearly racist statement based on biological/anthropological issues that seem to have the inevitability of natural laws.

Another interesting variable is represented by the solution to the phenomenon of immigration. This variable is a borderline statement that causes problems in terms of curvilinear answers, which happens when individuals with opposite ideologies answer a question in the same way, making it difficult to identify the difference in opinion. This variable, which usually helps to notice the presence/absence of racism, is represented by the level of agreement on the fact that immigrants should solve their problems in their own countries. Data show that 77.7% of respondents agreed with the statement, with 54.3% of respondents who “strongly” agreed. In this case, there are two extreme positions to consider: the racist one and that of bleeding heart liberals. The racist position is well exemplified by *Lega Nord*, the Italian party whose supporters think that foreign people should be expelled and solve their own problems in their own countries. On the other hand, bleeding heart

²⁸ The first column shows the percentage calculated based on the whole sample (N = 600), while the column labelled “valid” shows the percentage of valid answers. The column labelled “total” shows the percentage of the whole answers given, while the column “blank answers” shows the percentage of blank answers that have not been included in the matrix.

liberals think that western people should leave countries of immigration free to act, honestly helping them to solve their own problems and social conflicts.

Parent respondents in the province of Granada tended to see immigrants in a different way, although data show that percentages change depending on the cultural aspects considered. More than half the respondents considered the immigrants' dressing style similar to theirs, while 48.7% of respondents described the immigrants' child-raising methods as "similar" or "very similar" to theirs. The percentage drops to 32.5% when values and religious practices are analysed. The majority of the respondents thought that the immigrants' family and community life is similar to that of the other Spanish people in the country. However, opinions diverge when the relationship between men and women is examined, as 39.7% of respondents thought that the relationship between immigrant men and immigrant women is similar to the relationship between Spanish men and Spanish women, while 26.3% of respondents stated the opposite. In other words, the main differences between western people and immigrants seem to be linked to culture and religion, as it also emerged from qualitative interviews with journalists and politicians.

The findings arising from the comparison between Spanish and immigrant women are even more interesting, as respondents perceived a number of differences between the two groups in terms of the variables analysed. To begin with, respondents were asked to compare the situation of Spanish women with that of immigrant women with regard to men. More than half the respondents (see Table 3) thought that the situation of immigrant women is worse than that of Spanish women. These findings were confirmed in qualitative interviews, where interviewees stressed the fact that immigrant men tend to have a gender-biased and patriarchal attitude.

Table 3. Compared to women of your same nationality,

a) situation of immigrant women in terms of equal rights to immigrant men

	v.a.	%
worse	352	58.8
the same	221	36.9
better	7	1.2
	581	100.0%

The next variable shows that respondents are aware of the fact that immigrant women experience a double discrimination in the labour market: being women and being immigrants (see Table 3b).

b) presence of immigrant women in the labour market

	v.a.	%
worse	394	65.7
the same	188	31.3
better	5	0.8
	587	100.0%

Percentages slightly dropped when respondents were asked to compare the situation of Spanish women and immigrant women with regard to abuse from men (see Table 3c).

c) extent to which immigrant women are the victims of violence from men

	v.a.	%
worse	223	37.2
the same	346	57.7
better	14	2.3
	583	100.0%

Moreover, the majority of respondents (about 30%) thought that the situation of immigrant women as mothers and wives is worse than that of Spanish women.

Percentages were reversed when respondents were asked whether immigrant women respect traditions and religious practices more than Spanish women do (see Tables 3d and 3e). This shows that individuals who have a western and secular perspective perceive religion and traditions as aspects that distinguish a culture from another, “them” from “us”.

d) level of respect that immigrant women have for their traditions

	v.a.	%
worse	117	19.5
the same	323	53.8
better	139	23.2
	579	100.0%

e) level of respect that immigrant women have for their religion

	v.a.	%
worse	20.8	20.8
the same	47.0	47.0
better	28.0	28.0
	575	100.0%

As for public life, the majority of respondents (about 30-33%) thought that the situation of immigrant women is worse than that of Spanish women, while only 3% of respondents stated the opposite. In particular, respondents were asked to express their opinion on the participation of immigrant women in local decision-making processes, their awareness of human rights and social services available.

When asked to compare the situation of immigrant women to that of immigrant men, respondents thought that the situation of women is worse with reference to some common western themes, such as the labour market, public spaces, civic-mindedness in social relationships, adaptation to the lifestyle of the host country (see Table 4).

As Table 4a shows, more than half the respondents thought that immigrant women are less serious and professional in the workplace than immigrant men. It is easy to understand how this perspective will negatively affect not only the possibility for immigrant women to have a highly skilled and well-paid job, but also their access to the labour market.

Table 4. Compared to immigrant men,**a) level of professionalism of immigrant women in the workplace**

	v.a.	%
worse	325	54.2
the same	229	38.2
better	19	3.2
	573	100.0%

Respondents expressed a negative opinion also on immigrant women's civic-mindedness, as they were said to have little respect for public spaces. This perception negatively affects the possibility for immigrant women to build social relationships with local people.

b) level of respect for public spaces

	v.a.	%
worse	379	63.4
the same	178	29.8
better	11	1.8
	568	100.0%

If paired with another complementary value (see Table 4c) focusing on social relationships, these findings show how complex the situation is.

c) level of respect for other people

	v.a.	%
worse	261	43.5
the same	301	50.2
better	27	4.5
	589	100.0%

More positive opinions were expressed on the adaptation of immigrant women to the lifestyle of the host country, as only 30.2% of respondents thought that immigrant women are less willing to adapt than men.

3.4. Slovenia

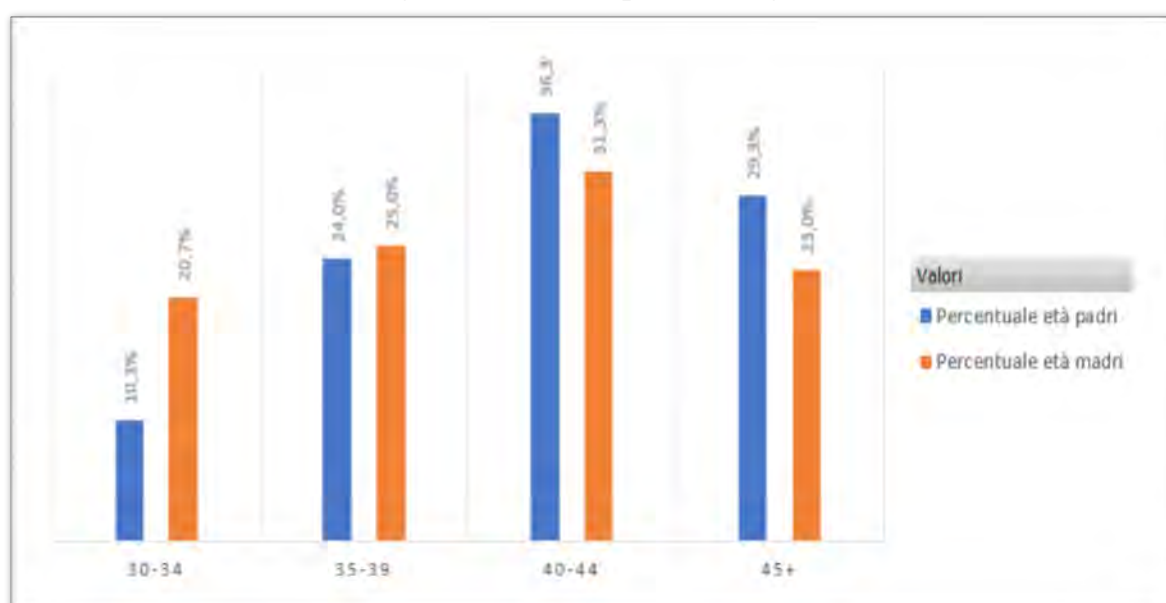
3.4.1. Slovenian respondents²⁹

Description of the sample

Slovenian parent respondents are older than the parents in the samples previously analysed, as the majority of them are in their 40s or older (see Figure 1).

Their level of education has also been analysed, because it is one of the cultural factors that are usually connected to different attitudes and opinions either in favour of or against immigrants. As Figure 2 shows, the higher the level of education, the lower the proportion of men compared to women. The difference, however, is not so significant, but it shows that the gap between men and women with a high level of education will become bigger and bigger also in this country. Slovenian parent respondents have a medium level of education, although there is a significant 17% of them who hold a higher university degree.

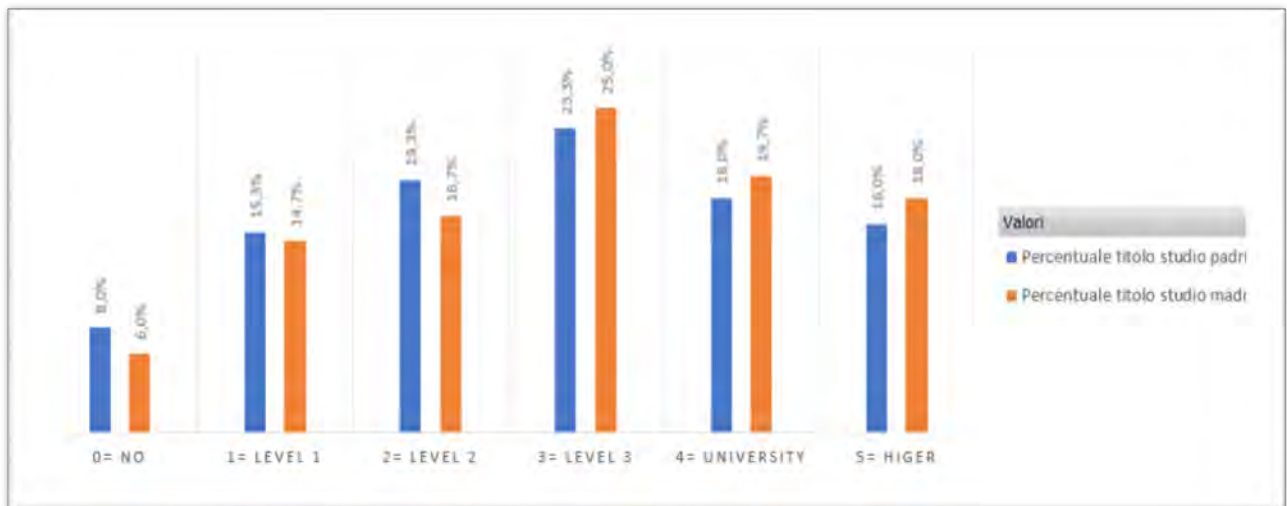
Figure 1. Parent respondents' age³⁰



²⁹ This analysis has been developed based on preliminary data processing carried out by Slovenian partners.

³⁰ Legend: Blue = age of male parent respondents; Orange = age of female parent respondents.

Figure 2. A comparison of female respondents' and male respondents' level of education³¹



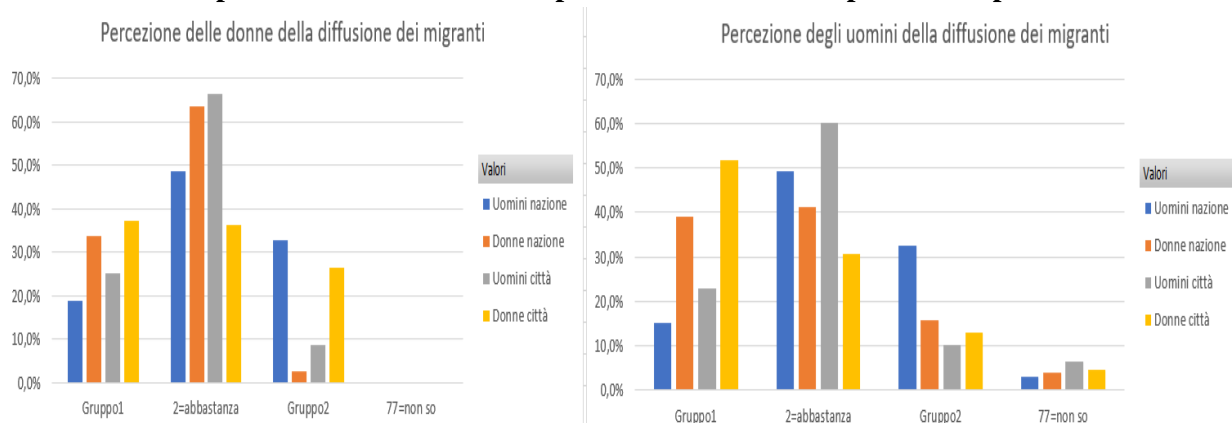
Immigrants and local people: perception, awareness and similarities

Parent respondents were asked to say how widespread is the presence of immigrant men and women in both the country and their town. Their answers have been divided into three groups, labelled “not widespread/not so widespread”, “quite widespread” and “very widespread”.

Female respondents tended to perceive the presence of immigrant women in the country less than male respondents. The data were reversed when the respondents commented on the presence of immigrants in their towns, with Slovenian women perceiving the presence of immigrant women more than men (see Figure 3). Data do not show a significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to the presence of immigrant men at both national and local level, although male respondents were more uncertain when asked to express their opinion on the presence of immigrant men in their towns. Both graphs suggest that respondents do not feel that they have been “invaded” by immigrants, as the majority of them answered that the presence of immigrants is “quite” widespread. This shows that the presence of immigrants is perceived, but not at an extreme level. The difference in perception may be due to the fact that female respondents have more opportunities to meet immigrant women in terms of times and places, as perhaps immigrant women tend to go to places that are usually frequented by local women rather than local men.

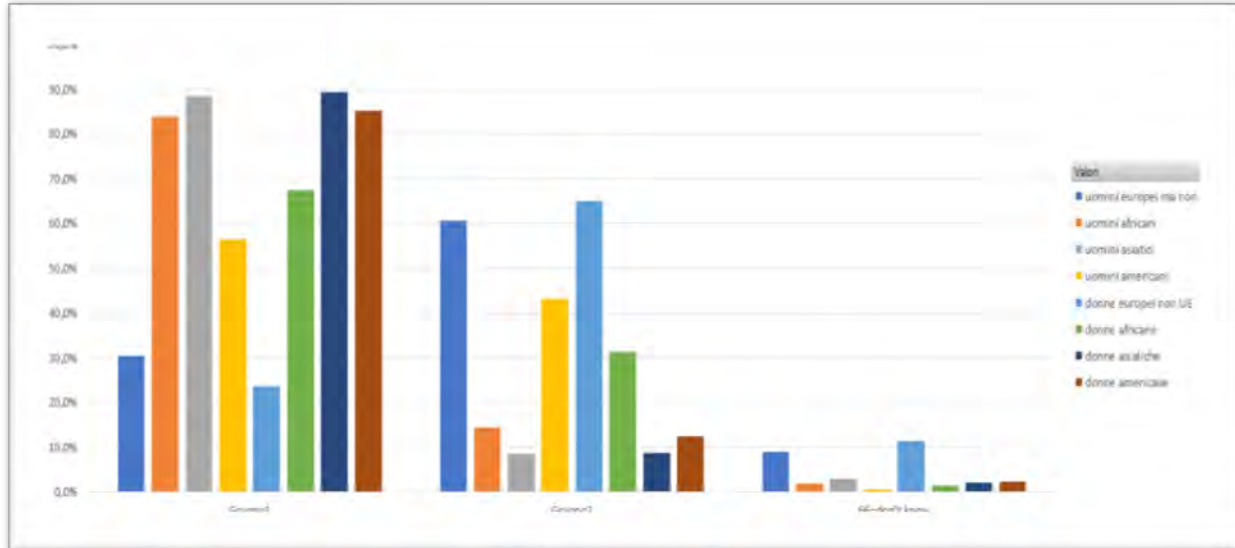
³¹ Legend: Blue = male respondents' level of education; Orange = female respondents' level of education.

**Figure 3. Perception of the presence of immigrants:
a comparison between female respondents' and male respondents' opinions³²**



Respondents were also asked to comment on the presence of immigrants based on their nationality. In this case, answers have been divided into two groups labelled “no/few immigrants” and “some/many immigrants” respectively. As Figure 4 shows, Slovenian respondents thought that the majority of immigrants come from non-EU countries, while they believed that only a small number of them come from Africa, Asia and Latin America. As for Latin American immigrants, however, there is not much difference in the percentage of respondents who thought that a large number of Latin American immigrant men are present in the country and those who believed the opposite.

Figure 4. Presence of immigrants based on their nationality³³



³² Figure 3a. Female respondents' perception of the presence of immigrants. Legend: Blue = immigrant men in the country; Orange = immigrant women in the country; Grey = immigrant men in town; Yellow = immigrant women in town. Group 1 = “not widespread/not so widespread”; Group 2 = “quite widespread”; Group 3 = “very widespread”; Group 4 = “I do not know”.

Figure 3b. Male respondents' perception of the presence of immigrants. Legend: Blue = immigrant men in the country; Orange = immigrant women in the country; Grey = immigrant men in town; Yellow = immigrant women in town. Group 1 = “not widespread/not so widespread”; Group 2 = “quite widespread”; Group 3 = “very widespread”; Group 4 = “I do not know”.

³³ Legend: Blue = non-EU men; Orange = African men; Grey = Asian men; Yellow = American men; Light blue = non-EU women; Green = African women; Dark blue = Asian women; Brown = American women. Group 1 = “no/few immigrants”; Group 2 = “some/many immigrants”; Group 3 = “I do not know”.

Another variable that determines and/or influences attitudes and stereotypes towards immigrants is the frequency of social interactions between immigrants and local people. When asked if they usually meet immigrants, have a chat with them or have immigrant friends, Slovenian respondents answered very differently from respondents in other countries. Only a small number of Slovenian respondents said that they have a few immigrant friends, although they do not usually meet them. The situation is different when it comes to immigrant women, as they seem to have more opportunities for social interactions with local people, and especially local women.

Also Slovenian parent respondents were asked to comment on some stereotypes and opinions either in favour of or against immigrants. When asked if they agreed on the fact that immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of the host country, a large number of Slovenian respondents agreed with the statement, as Figure 5 shows. However, the majority of respondents also believed that an increase in the presence of immigrants results in an increase in drug dealing and prostitution.

The majority of respondents also agreed that local people are usually willing to help immigrants, they thought that immigrants are exploited in the workplace, and 78% of respondents pointed out that immigrants do jobs that local people do not want to do. However, 20% of respondents believed that immigrants ‘steal’ houses and jobs from local people. Finally, Slovenian respondents stated that immigrants make them feel unsafe, and agreed that they have a lower level of education and come from less technologically advanced countries.

Figure 5. Level of agreement with statements about immigrants³⁴

	Strongly disagree	Quite disagree	Partially agree	Quite agree	Strongly agree
Immigranti arricchiscono culturalmente	9,0%	12,7%	35,0%	19,3%	11,7%
Immigrazione = droga e prostituzione	4,0%	18,7%	19,3%	25,7%	21,7%
Immigranti sono sfruttati	3,7%	11,3%	18,0%	30,7%	28,3%
Dobbiamo aiutare i migranti	4,3%	15,3%	27,0%	30,7%	11,3%
Immigranti rubano case e lavori	26,0%	32,3%	18,0%	6,3%	17,3%
Migranti fanno lavori evitati	0,0%	0,3%	5,0%	9,3%	78,7%
Immigranti = malattie	41,3%	23,3%	10,0%	9,7%	12,3%
Solo i migranti con lavoro stabile devono rimanere	11,0%	15,0%	26,7%	21,7%	28,7%
Ringiovaniscono la popolazione	16,0%	26,7%	17,0%	12,3%	16,0%
Immigranti meno educati e meno avanzati tecnologicamente	17,7%	7,3%	6,7%	56,0%	6,0%
Immigranti gravano su servizi sociali	19,7%	7,3%	29,0%	25,3%	10,7%
Problemi dei migranti vanno risolti nei loro paesi	17,7%	25,0%	18,3%	15,3%	21,7%
I migranti ci aiutano a finanziare le pensioni	30,3%	27,3%	13,0%	11,7%	10,0%
Immigranti = criminali	10,0%	15,0%	31,0%	17,0%	15,3%
Immigranti influiscono negativamente su lavoro specializzato	16,3%	18,3%	16,3%	9,3%	16,7%

³⁴ Legend: Blue = immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of the country; Orange = immigration means drug dealing and prostitution; Grey = immigrants are exploited; Yellow = local people need to help immigrants; Light blue = immigrants ‘steal’ houses and jobs; Green = immigrants do jobs that local people do not want to do; Dark blue = immigrants bring in dangerous diseases; Brown = only immigrants who have a stable job should stay in the country; Dark grey = immigrants rejuvenate the population of the country; Ochre = immigrants are less educated and come from less technologically advanced countries; Azure = immigrants negatively affect social expenditure; Dark green = immigrants should solve their problems in their own countries; Cobalt blue = immigrants contribute to supporting the national pension fund; Pink = immigrants are criminals; Light grey = immigrants negatively affect highly skilled occupations. Column 1 = “strongly disagree”; Column 2 = “quite disagree”; Column 3 = “partially agree”; Column 4 = “quite agree”; Column 5 = “strongly agree”.

The majority of respondents thought that immigrants teach their children values similar to those of local people. However, a large number of both male and female respondents did not have an opinion on the issue, which shows that the debate on immigrants is always focused on stereotypes about crime and competition in getting a job or a house.

As for community rules, a significant difference can be observed in the answers given by male and female respondents, as only male respondents thought that immigrants give the same importance to community rules as Slovenians do.

A difference in terms of female respondents' and male respondents' answers is also present with regard to dressing style, as only male respondents said that immigrants wear clothes very similar to theirs, although with very few exceptions. The most significant difference in the answers of male and female respondents lies in their opinions about the relationship between men and women. Male respondents thought that the relationship between immigrant men and immigrant women is similar to that between local men and local women. Slovenian women, on the other hand, seemed to be more careful in agreeing with the statement, being not so sure that immigrant men treat their women in the same way as Slovenian men treat theirs.

Figure 6a. Similarities perceived by male respondents³⁵

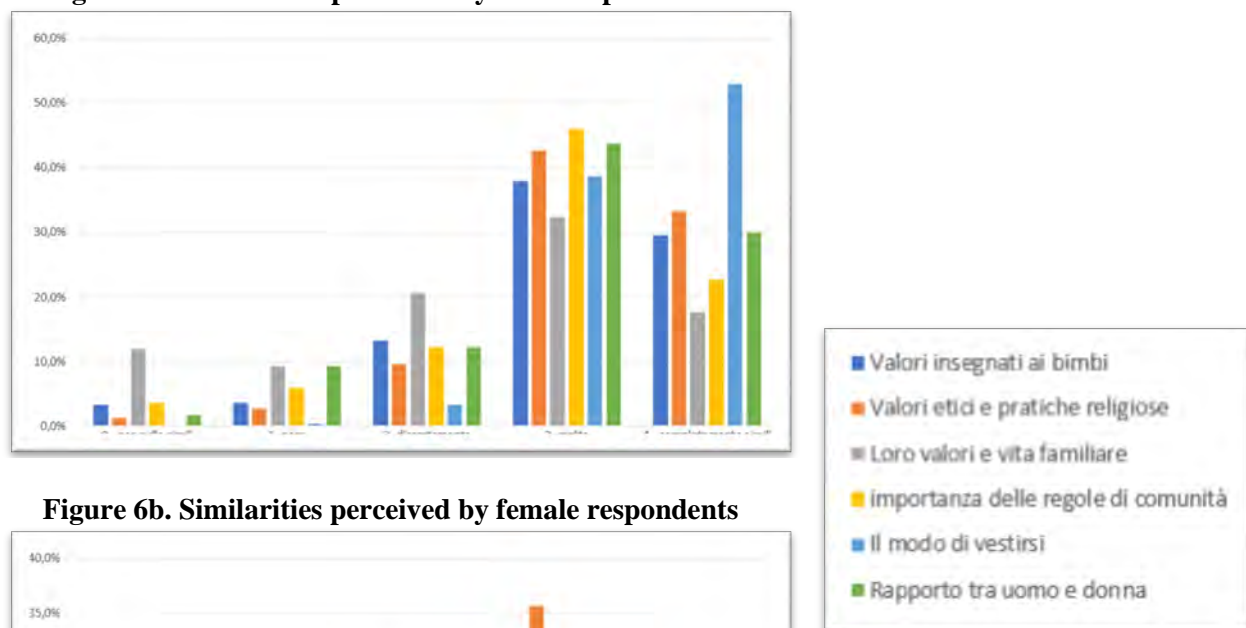
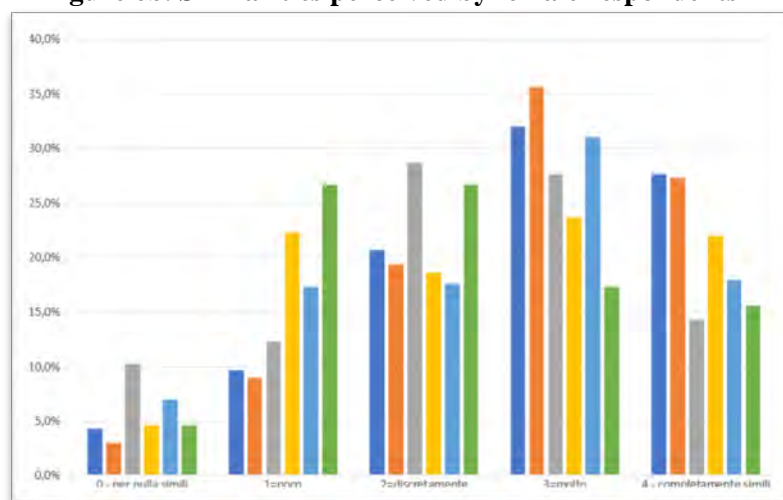


Figure 6b. Similarities perceived by female respondents



³⁵ Figures 6a and 6b. Legend: Blue = values taught to children; Orange = moral values and religious practices; Grey = their values and family life; Yellow = importance of community rules; Light blue = dressing style; Green = relationship between men and women. Group 1 = "very different"; Group 2 = "quite different"; Group 3 = "quite similar"; Group 4 = "very similar".

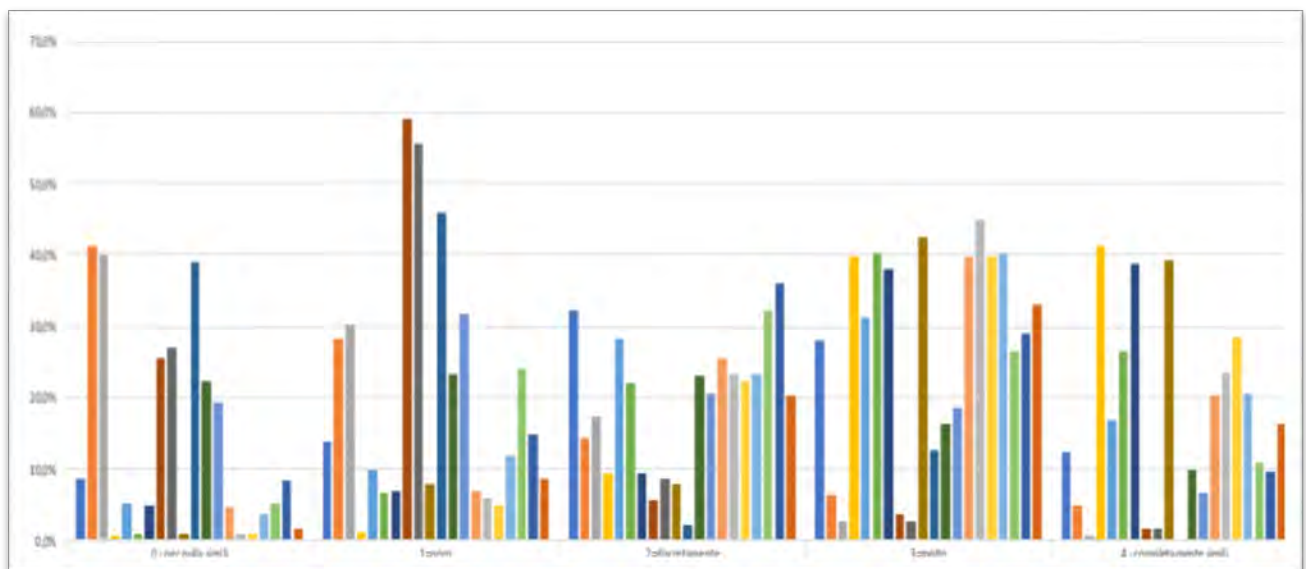
As for attitudes (see Figures 7a and 7b), Slovenian respondents thought that immigrant men tend to get drunk, an attitude which is not so widespread among immigrant women. Furthermore, respondents did not think that immigrant men have a cultural inclination towards theft, while only male respondents said that immigrant women seem to be more involved in this kind of crime.

A small percentage of respondents thought that immigrants are involved in procuring, while the majority of respondents said that immigrants are forced to do humble jobs and are the victims of racist violence.

A positive perception of immigrants comes from the fact that Slovenian respondents described immigrants as friendly and respectful of their traditions. Furthermore, immigrant men are said to follow good personal hygiene practices more than immigrant women do, and respondents also believed that they are involved in drug dealing less than immigrant women are.

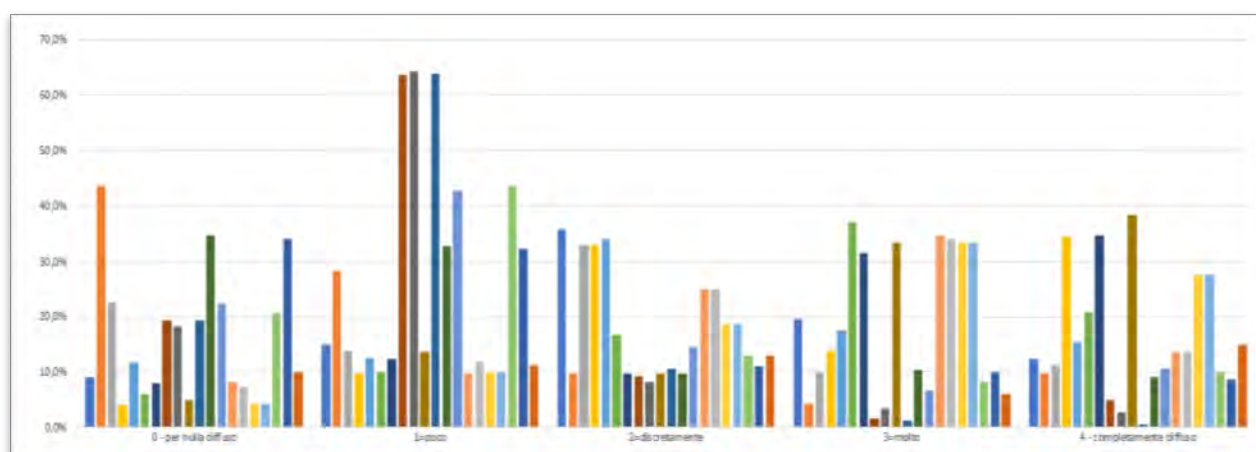
A large number of respondents (20% of male respondents and 44.7% of female respondents) skipped the question about exploitation of women in the workplace, although male respondents tended to think that immigrant women are generally exploited.

Figure 7a. Male respondents' perception of immigrants' attitudes³⁶



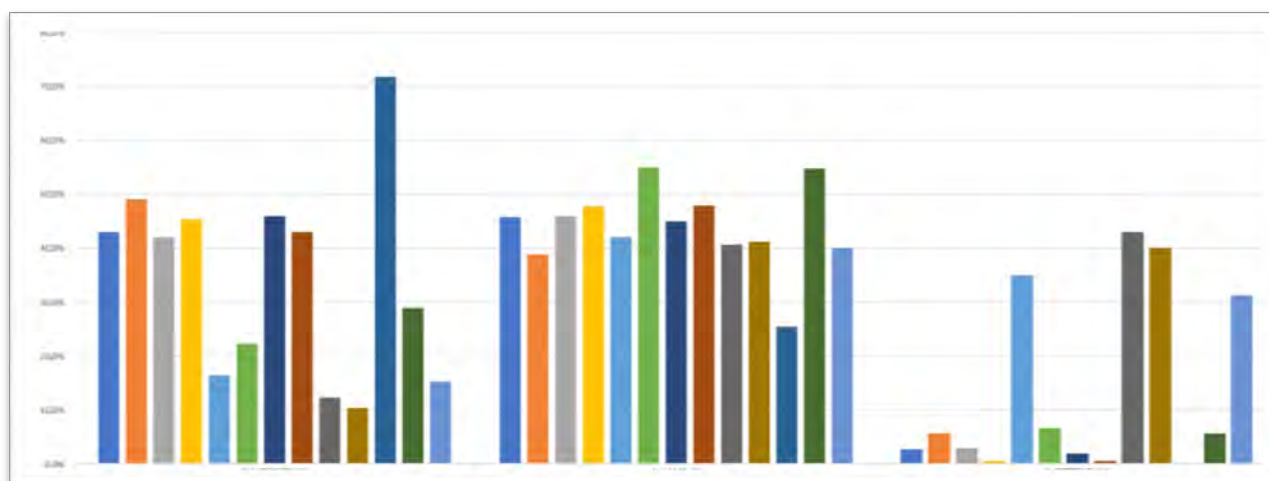
³⁶ Figures 7a and 7b. Legend: Blue = men who get drunk; Orange = men who are thieves; Grey = men involved in procuring; Yellow = men who have a humble job; Light blue = men who are the victims of racist violence; Green = friendly men; Very dark blue = men who respect their traditions; Brown = men who do not follow good personal hygiene practices; Dark grey = men involved in drug dealing; Ochre = men exploited in the workplace; Azure = women who get drunk; Dark green = women who are thieves; Cobalt blue = women involved in procuring; Pink = women who have a humble job; Light grey = women who are the victims of racist violence; Light yellow = friendly women; Very light blue = women who respect their traditions; Light green = women who do not follow good personal hygiene practices; Dark blue = women involved in drug dealing; Dark orange = women exploited in the workplace. Group 1 = “very different”; Group 2 = “different”; Group 3 = “partially similar”; Group 4 = “similar”; Group 5 = “very similar”.

Figure 7b. Female respondents' perception of immigrants' attitudes



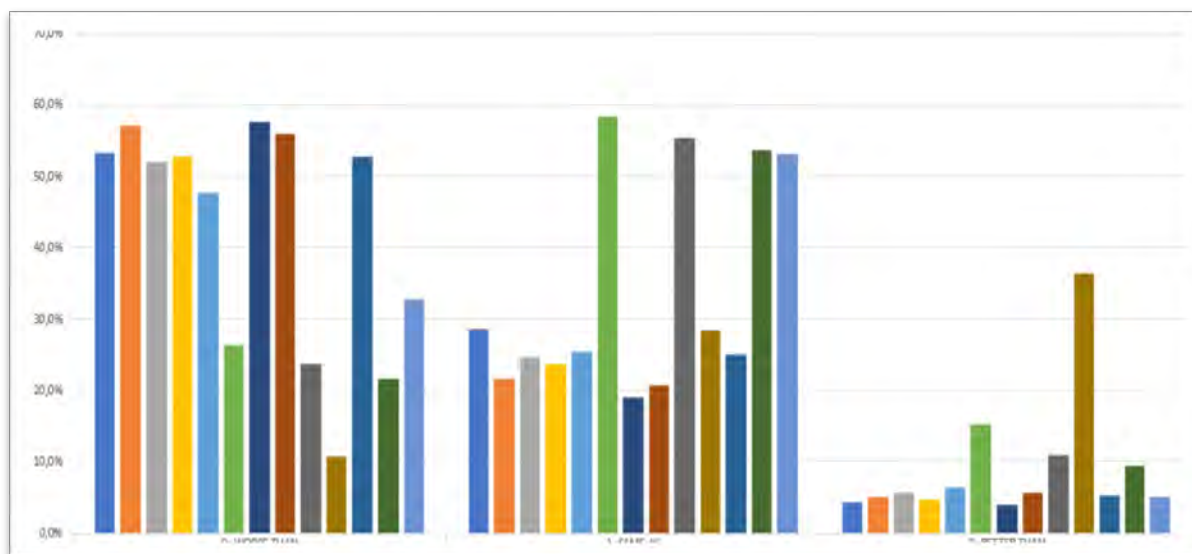
Another important set of variables compares the situation of immigrant women to that of local women. More than male respondents, female respondents perceived the situation of immigrant women as similar to, or worse than, that of Slovenian women with regard to the labour market, and especially in terms of low-skilled jobs and exploitation in the workplace. On the other hand, male respondents thought that immigrant women respect their role as wives more than, or in the same way as, local women, while female respondents stated the opposite. Both male and female respondents, however, said that immigrant and local women have the same idea of their role as mothers. Male respondents thought that immigrant women are exploited in the workplace more than, or in the same way as, local women, while Slovenian women stated that immigrant women are more exploited than they are. Furthermore, respondents agreed on the fact that immigrant women are less free to participate in social and public life than local women are.

Figure 8a. Male respondents' perception of the situation of immigrant women compared to that of local women³⁷



³⁷ Figures 8a and 8b. Legend: Blue = the same rights as men; Orange = presence in the labour market; Grey = low-skilled jobs; Yellow = victims of male violence; Light blue = respect for their role as wives; Green = respect for their role as mothers; Dark blue = respect for other people; Brown = exploitation in the workplace; Dark grey = respect for traditions; Ochre = respect for their religion; Azure = participation in local decision-making processes; Dark green = awareness of their rights; Cobalt blue = awareness of their accessibility to rights. Group 1 = "worse than"; Group 2 = "the same as"; Group 3 = "better than".

Figure 8b. Female respondents' perception of the situation of immigrant women compared to that of local women



To sum up, data show that women respondents described the situation of immigrant women as worse than that of Slovenian women in every aspect of everyday life.

When asked to compare the attitude of immigrant men to that of immigrant women, respondents depicted the same picture, as the situation of immigrant women is worse also in this case. First of all, female respondents described immigrant women as less professional than immigrant men, while male respondents thought that immigrant women are as professional as immigrant men. In addition, both male and female respondents stated that immigrant women respect public spaces and other people less than, or in the same way as, immigrant men. Furthermore, male respondents said that both immigrant men and women follow good personal hygiene practices, while women respondents stated that immigrant men follow good personal hygiene practices more than immigrant women do.

Slovenian respondents thought that immigrants, regardless of their gender, are able to adapt to the lifestyle of the host country, although 29.3% of female respondents thought that immigrant women are less able to adapt.

Furthermore, immigrant women are thought to be less able to participate in public life, while respondents stated that they are as aware of their rights as immigrant men are.

Figure 9a. Male respondents' perception of the situation of immigrant women compared to that of immigrant men³⁸

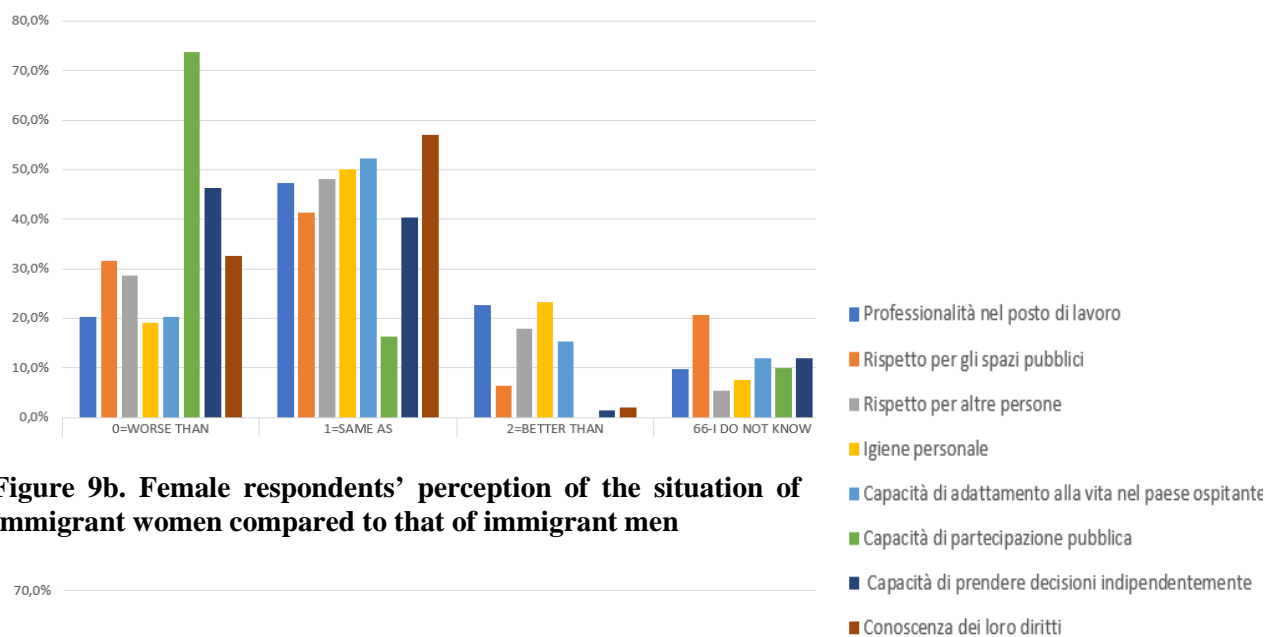
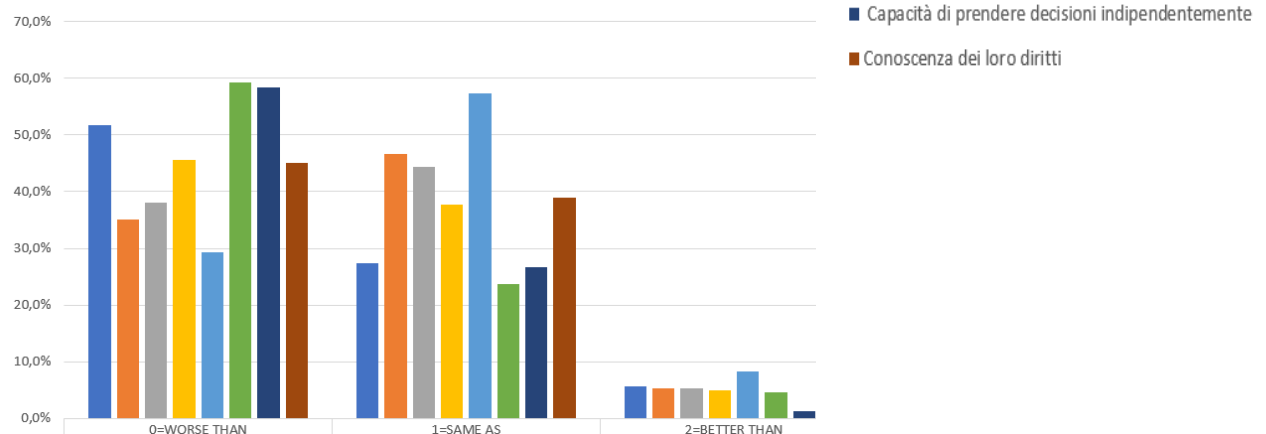


Figure 9b. Female respondents' perception of the situation of immigrant women compared to that of immigrant men



All things considered, data have shown that Slovenian respondents are not well-informed about immigrants, as they described them using the most common stereotypes and superficial attitudes usually mentioned by the media. Furthermore, immigrant women tend to be depicted in the worst way: they are more exploited, less free, less honest and less willing to participate in public life than immigrant men.

³⁸ Figures 9a and 9b. Legend: Blue = professionalism in the workplace; Orange = respect for public spaces; Grey = respect for other people; Yellow = personal hygiene; Light blue = ability to adapt to the lifestyle of the host country; Green = ability to participate in public life; Dark blue = ability to make decisions; Brown = awareness of their rights. Group 1 = "worse than"; Group 2 = "the same as"; Group 3 = "better than"; Group 4 = "I do not know".

3.5. Germany

3.5.1. *German respondents*³⁹

An essential basis for local activities and other projects, the project EnFeM should take into account the views of young people and multipliers.

A sociologist of the University of Salento, appointed as the coordinator of the project by the Lead Partner, has submitted a questionnaire to all the partners, who have given their feedback. After consultation with the Lead Partner, the Lawaetz Foundation has decided to use a modified version of the original questionnaire, in order to carry out an analysis considering a larger number of regional challenges. As a result, a separate report has been written to summarize the findings. Data already published in other scientific papers have also been added to the report.

Italian partners had suggested that research groups working with local partners should directly administer the questionnaires to teenage respondents. However, for various reasons, this goal could only be achieved in one of the four participating schools in Hamburg. In the other schools involved, the questionnaires were handed out and collected by cooperative school staff. Queries about the meaning of the questions and answer options could be answered only to a limited extent.

This methodological approach has reduced the validity of the survey. Some answers could not be analysed because of a lack of meaning, there was a high proportion of blank answers or multiple answers to the same question. For example, these problems were present in the answers to the questions asking the teenage respondents to describe their circle of friends, as the information varies too much in terms of the number and ethnicity of the friends. The same happened for the questions about the level of education and the occupation of teenagers' parents, although in this case the youth lacked appropriate information. Furthermore, it can be assumed that situations of unemployment or unstable jobs in the family influenced the answers of teenage respondents.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the small number of non-immigrant teenage respondents involved in the survey makes it difficult to differentiate between respondents with and without a migration background. Unfortunately, this has limited the options for evaluation.

Migration and Ethnic Diversity

Immigrants and local people have been living side by side for more than 50 years in the western states of the Federal Republic of Germany and the city-state of Hamburg in particular, with 16.4 million inhabitants (20%) having a migration background.

About one quarter of adolescents and young adults emigrated alone or came in the country with their parents, while the percentage of younger children is significantly higher. However, some drastic differences are associated with this migration-related reality. These include massive regional differences in the presence of immigrants. In some West German cities and districts, Berlin included, the proportion of young people with a migration background reaches more than 50%, while many young people in the five federal states part of the former East Germany have little or no everyday experience with migrants.

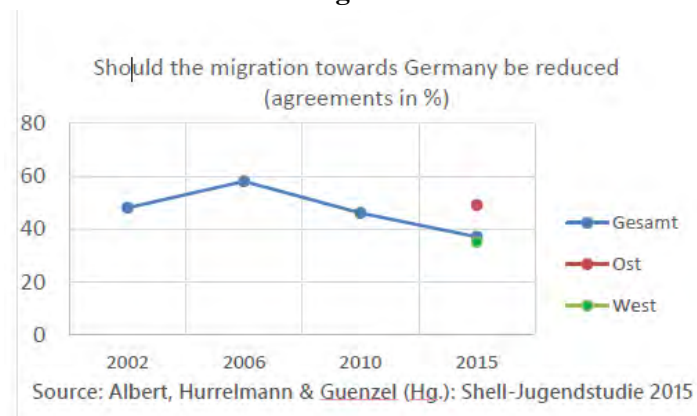
³⁹ This analysis has been carried out by German partners, as they decided to use a simplified version of the questionnaire. The analysis will only examine the answers given by teenage respondents, as German partners have stated that it was difficult to contact and involve parents. However, the partners have also pointed out that there is no scientific evidence that German parents are influencing their children's attitude towards migrants.

Young People and Migrants

Adolescents and young adults are particularly affected by the phenomenon of an increasingly multicultural society, as their opportunities for development and future living conditions will be determined by that trend. Their attitudes and perspectives have therefore been repeatedly analysed in recent years, and the Shell Youth Study (*Shell Jugendstudie*), has carried out several studies on the issue.

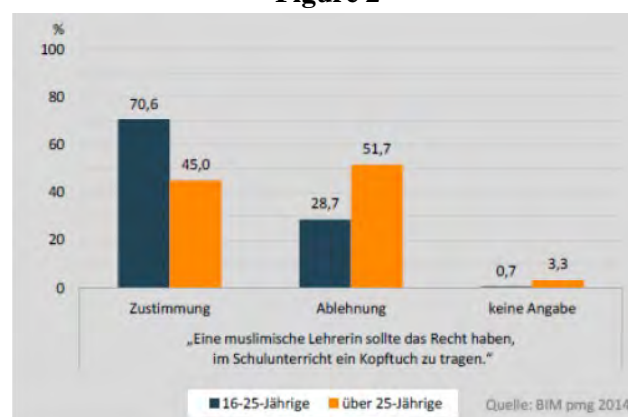
In 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2015, young people were asked whether immigration to Germany should be reduced. The approval rate has decreased from a maximum of 58% in the past to 37% in 2015. A clear difference can be noticed between the old and the new federal states: in the areas of the former Federal Republic of Germany only 35% of young people advocated a reduction of migratory flows, while in the areas of the former German Democratic Republic 49% of respondents agreed with that.

Figure 1



The Federal Republic of Germany has recently debated whether teachers can wear a headscarf on school premises as a symbol of their religious community. When asked to express their opinion on the issue, over two thirds of young respondents (71%), but only 45% of respondents older than 25, said that Muslim women should be allowed to wear a headscarf in the classroom.

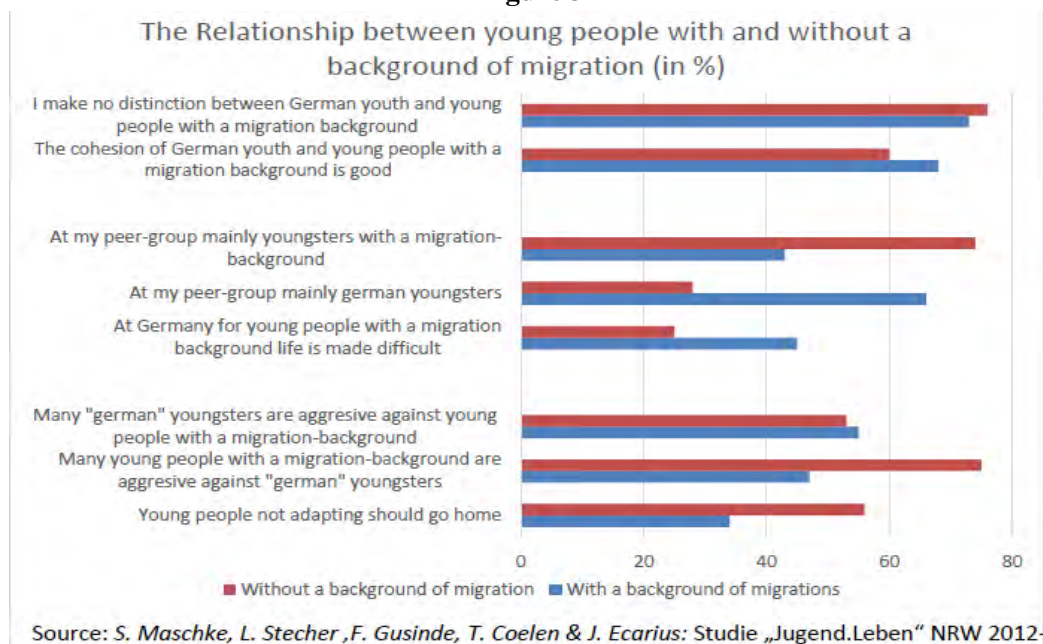
Figure 2



A group of German scientists has examined the relationship between young people with and without a migration background. Their findings show that respondents seem to make no distinction between those who have and those who do not have a migration background and think that the two

groups are close. Roth and Terhart come to a similar conclusion: “All in all, various studies on the living conditions of migrant youth show that multicultural friendship circles are clearly outweighed.” However, the respective circles of friends consist predominantly of young people coming from the same ethnic group, while multicultural circles of friends are obviously the exception. This helps to understand why, when assessing responsibilities, it is always the *other* group that is to be blamed for any hostility.

Figure 3



The German survey

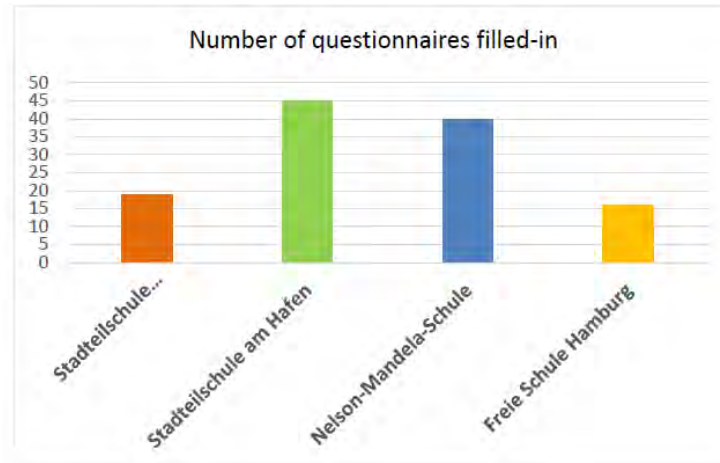
Methodology and description of the sample

The analysis has been carried out through 120 questionnaires. They have been administered to students attending Integrated Comprehensive Schools offering courses leading to different qualifications. The *Gymnasium*, a type of school attended only by students who aim to reach the highest level of education, is not represented as, despite extensive contact, Gymnasium students did not participate in the survey. Therefore, this study is not representative of all the young people living in Hamburg.

The questionnaire is only partially based on an original questionnaire developed to be administered by every project partner, as it has been adapted to national conditions after consultation with the other project partners. Due to the impact of migration in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Lawaetz Foundation has also asked to allow for the participation of different migrants living in the neighbourhood of young respondents.

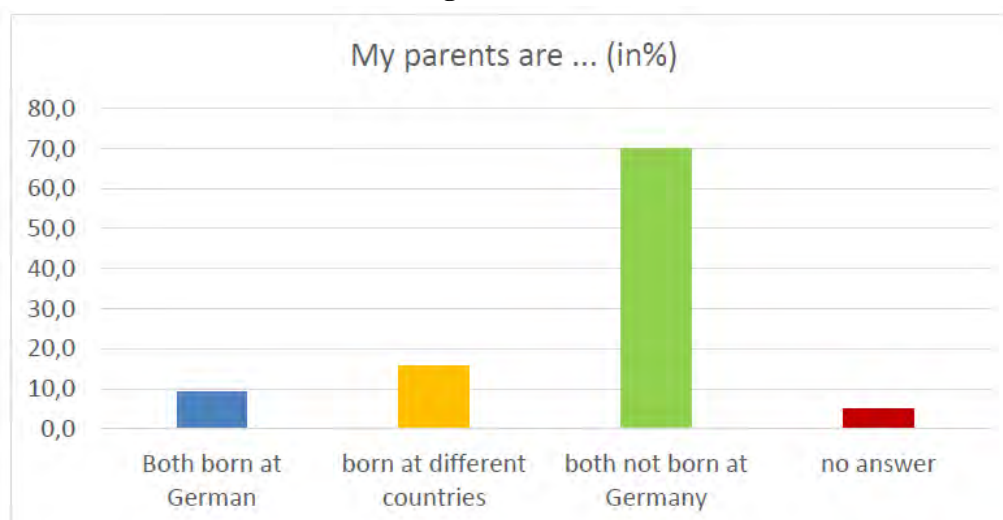
The questionnaires have been administered by teachers and educators. The process has been supervised by a project manager only in one of the schools involved.

Figure 4



A significant proportion of teenage respondents have parents with an immigration background. Only 8% of them said that both their parents were born in Germany, while 70% of respondents stated the opposite.

Figure 5 [sic]⁴⁰



Two thirds of the young respondents themselves were born in Germany. The sons and daughters of first generation immigrants, they can be described as representatives of the second generation of immigrants living in Germany. Students participated in the survey in 2017, and 90 out of 120 teenage respondents were born between 2001 and 2002. The majority of teenage respondents were female, with 62 girls being involved in the survey, while male teenage respondents were 52.

⁴⁰ Figure 5. My parents were... (%). Blue = both born in Germany; Yellow = born in different countries; Green = both not born in Germany; Red = blank answer.

Figure 6 [sic]⁴¹

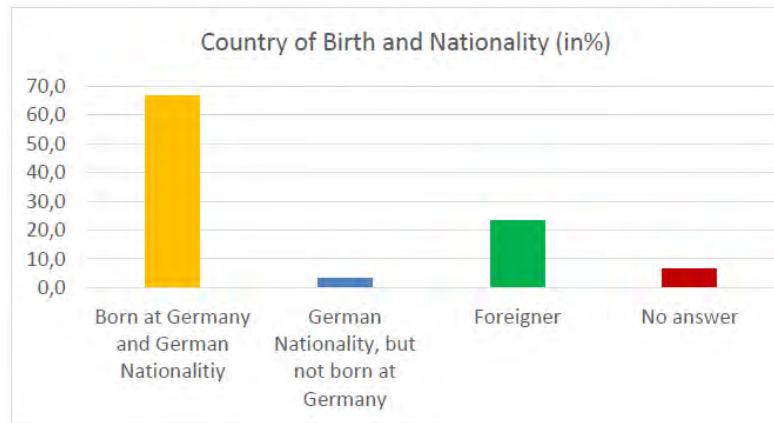
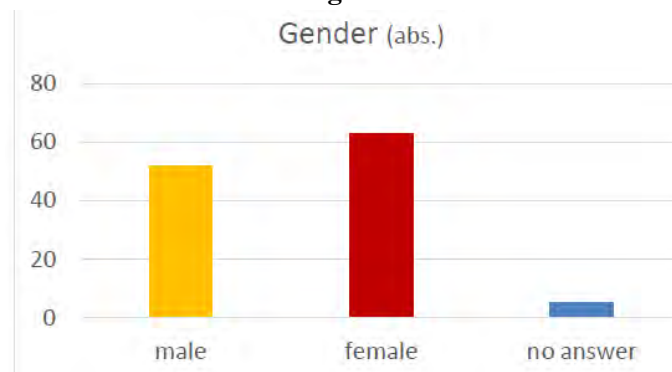


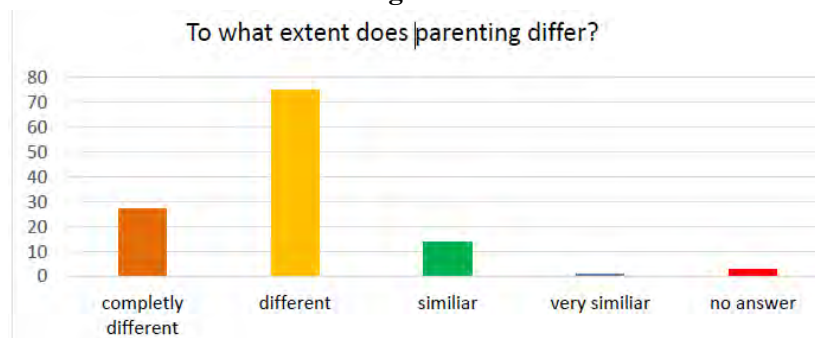
Figure 7



Main results

More than 100 out of 120 teenage respondents stated that immigrants use “different” or “completely different” child-raising methods from those used by parents who have been living in Germany for a longer period.

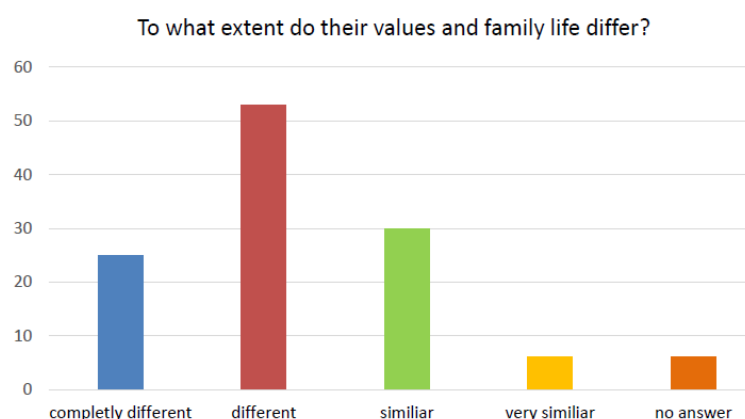
Figure 8



In the same way, when asked to comment on values and family life, 80 teenage respondents stated that immigrants’ values and family life are “different” from those of local people, while only 35 respondents described them as “similar”.

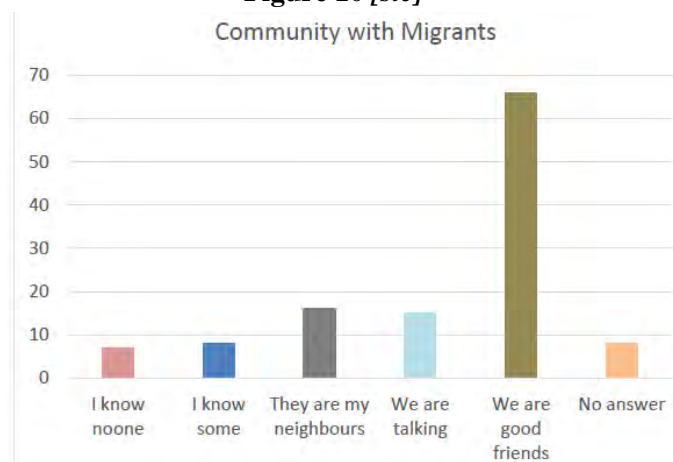
⁴¹ Figure 6. Country of Birth and Nationality (%). Yellow = born in Germany and German; Blue = German, but not born in Germany; Green = foreigner; Red = blank answer.

Figure 9



In the light of their own immigration background, not surprisingly 66 respondents said that they have immigrant friends.

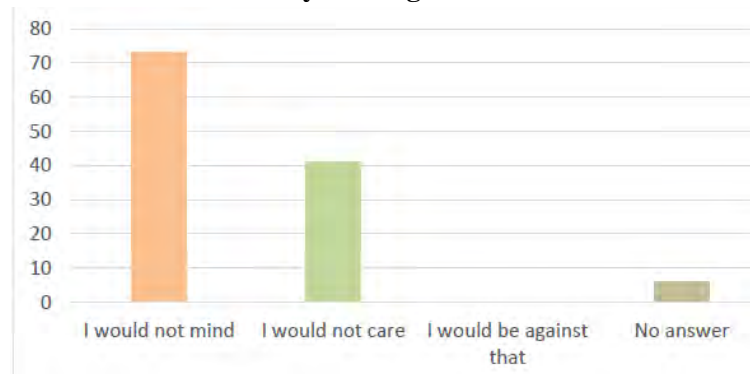
Figure 10 [sic]⁴²



However, different answers were given when respondents were asked to express their opinion on the acceptance of different ethnic groups in their neighbourhood. For example, when asked if a family of Russian immigrants with two children could move to their neighbourhood, the majority of respondents said that this does not make any difference to them, and no respondent was against the idea.

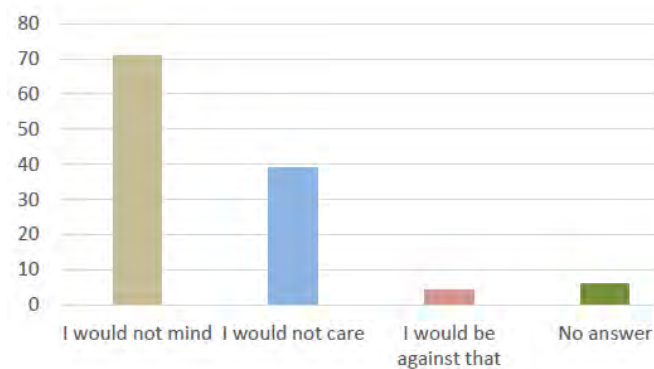
⁴² Figure 10. Presence of immigrants in the community. Dark pink = I know no immigrants; Blue = I know some immigrants; Grey = they are my neighbours; Light blue = we usually have a chat; Dark green = we are good friends; Orange = blank answer.

Figure 11. Could a family of Russian immigrants with two children move to your neighbourhood?



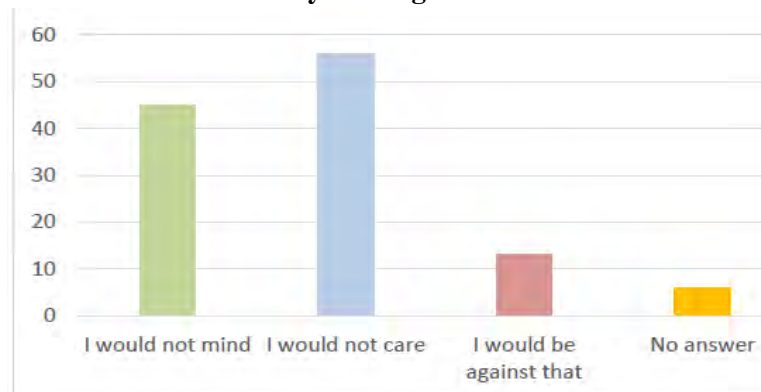
The same applies to a non-immigrant family with four children, who would also be welcomed in the respondents' neighbourhoods.

Figure 12. Could a German family with four children move to your neighbourhood?



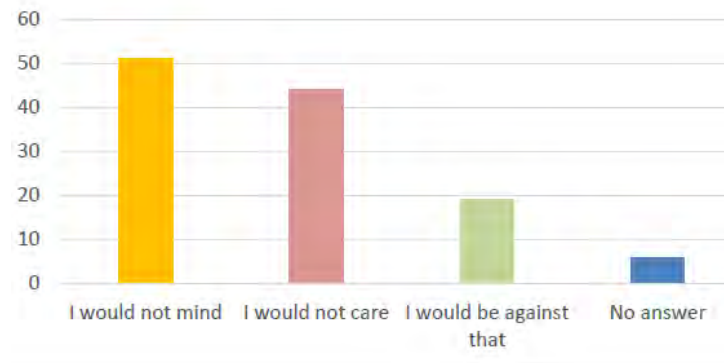
However, opinions were not so positive when it came to welcoming a group of students sharing a flat. Although the majority of respondents had a predominantly neutral attitude, a significant number of them expressed a negative opinion. It would be interesting to examine to what extent the social interaction between migrants and non-migrants could help to reduce these negative perceptions.

Figure 13. Could a group of students sharing a flat move to your neighbourhood?



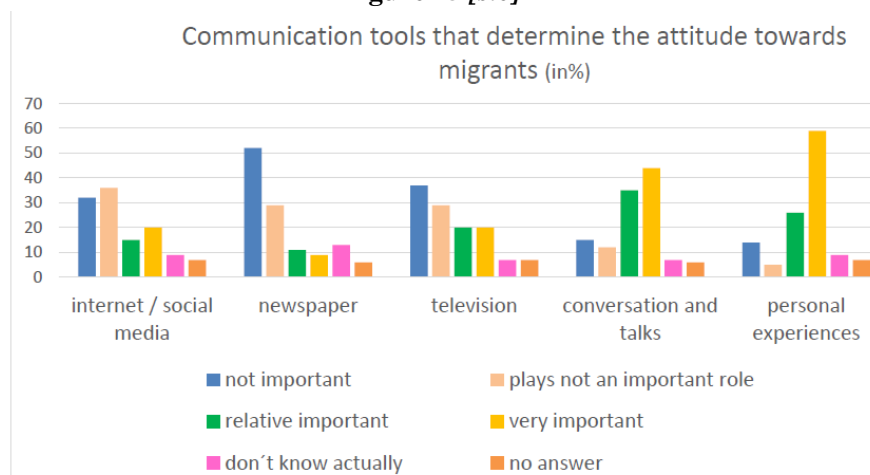
The same opinions were expressed on families receiving welfare benefits: even those without an immigration background would be predominantly, but not fully, welcomed in the respondents' neighbourhoods.

Figure 14. Could a family receiving welfare benefits move to your neighbourhood?



The survey has also focused on the communication tools that may influence the respondents' opinions. Findings have shown that traditional communication tools, such as newspapers and television, but also new social media play a relatively minor role in influencing the respondents' opinions. On the other hand, conversations with other people and personal experiences were described as more important. Just to make an example, 48.3% of respondents said that they gained knowledge from conversations with Muslims, while 41.9% of respondents stated that they acquired information at school and/or university. The great importance of personal contacts can be considered secure scientific knowledge. For example, Foroutan et al. pointed out that, unlike older respondents, 16-25 year-olds tend to be more influenced by social interactions and personal experiences than other sources of knowledge.

Figure 15 [sic]⁴³



⁴³ Figure 15. Communication tools that determine the attitude towards immigrants (%). Blue = not important; Green = relatively important; Purple = I do not know; Light orange = does not play an important role; Yellow = very important; Orange = blank answer.

The importance and positive effects of personal contacts between members of different groups have been highlighted also by Fritsche & Wieszorek and others. Furthermore, a number of studies shows that typification of foreigners and xenophobic attitudes can be reduced by facilitating contacts between people of different backgrounds. The willingness to meet immigrants and the quality of social contacts are also very important. On the other hand, families seem to have no importance in the socialization process.

Summary

Findings show that teenage respondents have an increasingly cosmopolitan and immigrant-friendly attitude.

The high proportion of teenage respondents with immigrant parents needs to be taken into account, as this situation is to be found in several cities and districts in West Germany. However, the respondents' answers can still be considered as representative of large parts of the urban centres in West Germany.

In this context, the type of school involved in the research also plays a key role. Students attending *Gymnasium* did not participate in the survey. Therefore, this study cannot be said to be representative of all the young people living in Hamburg.

When expressing their opinions, teenage respondents seem to be increasingly influenced by conversations and personal experiences, while newspapers and electronic media tend to play a much smaller role in this context. On the other hand, working directly with families and pupils in schools, youth centres or other places seems to be more time-consuming, but also more promising and more sustainable.

3.6. Belgium

3.6.1. Belgian respondents⁴⁴

Description of the sample

The sample of parent respondents consists of 42 parents, 18 of whom are women, while 21 are men⁴⁵. When asked about their nationality, the majority of parent respondents stated that they are Belgian (see Table 1), while only 8 of them said to be immigrants.

Table 1. What nationality are you?

Belgian	22
Immigrant	8
Neither Belgian nor immigrant	9
Blank answers	3
	42

⁴⁴ Teenage respondents' answers have been examined by Belgian partners. Furthermore, due to the small number of parent respondents, a univariate analysis has been carried out.

⁴⁵ Three respondents did not answer the question.

When asked a similar question, the majority of parent respondents said to be Belgian, while only 9 respondents described themselves as foreigners.

Table 2. What is your origin?

I was born in Belgium	14
I am Belgian, but I was not born in Belgium	18
I am a foreigner	9
Blank answers	1
	42

The mean and median age show that the majority of parent respondents are in their 40s, with the oldest ones being 53 years old.

Table 3. Respondents' age

Mean	40.3
Median	43
Std. Deviation	11.2
Maximum	53

Finally, the respondents have a medium-low level of education (see Table 4).

Table 4. Qualifications

No qualifications	8
Primary and Middle School Certificate	8
High School Leaving Certificate	14
Bachelor's Degree	6
Master's Degree	2
Higher University Degree	1
Blank answers	3
	42

Belgians and immigrants: a cross-cultural comparison

Parent respondents were asked a series of questions about the cultural differences they perceive between foreign immigrants and Belgian people. To begin with, the majority of respondents said that the two groups use quite different child-raising methods (see Table 5).

Table 5. Compared to Belgian methods, how do you judge the immigrants' child-raising methods?

Very different	5
Quite different	20
Similar	10
Very similar	6
Total answers	41
Blank answers	1
	42

The immigrants' behaviour is described as being even more different when it comes to religious beliefs and practices. This is one of the biggest problems in social interactions involving western people, who usually have a secular perspective, and individuals having more solid religious traditions.

Table 6. Compared to Belgian practices, how do you judge the immigrants' religious beliefs and practices?

Very different	14
Quite different	17
Similar	8
Very similar	3
	42

Opinions diverge on the relationships within the family, as nearly half the respondents (20 out of 42) thought that the relationship between men and women in immigrant families is similar to that in Belgian families.

When asked about the role immigrants have in society, 24 out of 42 respondents said it is similar to that of Belgian citizens.

Respondents were divided about the relationship between men and women outside the family.

Table 7. Compared to Belgian relationships, how do you judge the relationship between immigrant men and immigrant women?

Very different	7
Quite different	12
Similar	15
Very similar	6
Blank answers	2
	42

Perception and attitudes towards immigrants

Respondents were asked to express a preference about the neighbours they would like to have. As Table 8 shows, the majority of respondents stated that the nationality of their neighbours makes no difference to them. However, respondents were not so willing to have students and children as their neighbours, probably due to the trouble they could cause.

Table 8. Who would you like to have as your neighbour?

Attitude towards	I would rather not	It makes no difference to me	I would love to
a Russian couple with two children	2	32	7
a Flemish couple with four children	4	28	10
a group of students	9	21	12
a mother with two children	-	29	11
two elderly people	-	29	11
people who are on income support	3	32	5
	18	171	56

Another set of variables asked the respondents to express their opinion on some different types of relationships they or their family members could have with immigrants. Table 9 shows a clear trend, with respondents expressing a positive opinion on social interactions with people having a different ethnic origin, even when it comes to close relationships such as friendship ties and love stories.

Table 9. Opinion on different types of possible relationships with immigrants

	I do not know	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
It is difficult to have a relationship with immigrants, let alone be their friend	4	13	17	5	2
There is nothing strange in the fact that an immigrant and a Belgian are good friends	3	2	3	15	18
I would not object to a family member having a love story with an immigrant	5	4	6	13	13
I often have a chat with people of a different ethnic origin	4	2	2	18	16
I have no problems with making friends with people of a different ethnic origin	3	-	2	9	28
	19	21	30	60	77

A last set of variables asked respondents to focus on the most common positive and negative stereotypes about immigrants. Table 10 suggests that the majority of Belgian parent respondents did not think that immigration is a negative phenomenon, although a significant number of answers also showed some unfavourable attitudes towards immigrants.

Table 10. Common stereotypes about immigrants

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know
Immigrants contribute to the cultural enrichment of the country	1	1	6	12	14	6
Immigration causes an increase in crime rates	6	11	12	5		6
Immigrants have the skills to do highly qualified jobs	1	2	6	15	12	5

Immigrants help to improve national welfare, as they pay social contributions	2	3	9	4	7	15
Immigrants should respect local culture	2	7	8	10	9	5
Immigrants 'steal' jobs from Belgians	14	10	4	2	3	6

It is important to highlight that the answers of the 42 respondents who filled in the questionnaire cannot depict a clear picture of the general attitudes that parents have in the Belgian city where the analysis has been carried out. A larger number of respondents is necessary to reach this aim, as it had been pointed out before administering the questionnaires. Therefore, this analysis only describes the attitudes of the respondents, while no generalization can be made.

4. THE ISSUE OF INTEGRATION: AMBIGUOUS CONCEPTS, COMPLEX ACTIONS AND NON-EXISTENT SYSTEMS

4.1. Introduction

Project partners have carried out some short semi-structured interviews with journalists and politicians, privileged witnesses of the phenomenon of migration. This phase of the study aims to analyse the social and political situation linked to both the general phenomenon of immigration and the specific conditions of immigrant women. The following interviews have been sent to the Lead Partner:

Country	Journalists	Politicians
Italy (1 partner)	5	5
Spain (2 partners)	27	19
Belgium (1 partner)	0	11
Slovenia (1 partner)	5	10
Germany (1 partner)	0	0

The analysis of the interviews has highlighted three main themes: degree of integration, processes of discrimination hidden behind integration processes, actions and political-administrative gaps.

The information collected is based on the interviewees' opinions, attitudes, ideologies and perspectives on reality. Data can be described as objective only in a few cases, as interviews aimed to examine the perception that well-informed citizens have of the phenomenon, although they may not always be well-informed about quantitative data. Our privileged witnesses may provide a picture – more or less faithful to reality – of a community or population.

This paragraph is divided into three sections, each one dealing with one of the main themes. Every section is divided into subsections analysing the different countries involved in the project and includes some specific closing remarks. Final conclusions end the report.

4.2. Degree of integration. Situation in the countries involved in the project

Interviewees were asked some questions about the presence of immigrants, and especially immigrant women, in the countries involved in the project. Moreover, interviewees were asked to express their opinion on the degree of integration of immigrant women and their participation in the social, economic and political life of the host community. Although the women and men interviewed had different political views, their answers have shown some common points, which, however, have sometimes been interpreted in different ways due to their diametrically opposed ideologies.

4.2.1. Spain

Interviews have highlighted that Spain has had one of the highest rates of immigration in the world since 2000, three times higher than the United States and eight times higher than France. Together with the UK and Germany, Spain is the country that welcomes the highest number of immigrants.

Apart from Moroccans, who represent the largest community in the country, the other immigrants who choose Spain come from the UK, Germany, Portugal, France, Peru, Argentina, Italy,

the Dominican Republic and the Netherlands. Recently, Colombians and Ecuadorians, followed by Bolivians, have become the largest groups coming from Latin America. The largest number of immigrant women coming from North Africa, and especially Morocco, lives in Granada, where the percentage of Chinese women is also high.

The perception local people have of the phenomenon varies, and much depends on the way immigrants entered the country, whether legally or illegally. The main problem is represented by racism. Amnesty International has urged the Spanish government to develop a plan against racism to be implemented at a national, regional and local level. This plan should include different actions and consider different perspectives, including political, social, educational and raising-awareness views. It should fight anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and general intolerance towards immigrants.

The number of immigrant women in the country is steadily increasing. Due to language reasons, the majority of them come from Latin America. In the city of Granada, the majority of immigrant women come from Latin America, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. Although offering limited job opportunities, the city of Granada attracts many immigrants, maybe due to the fact that immigrants have always been welcomed or maybe because of its Muslim past, according to a journalist. This, however, does not necessarily mean that immigrants are integrated into society. They are welcomed, but do not have an active role in society. Women, in particular, do not participate in social life, although there are some associations that work to help them and their families. The integration process of immigrant women is hindered by their low level of education and poor language skills. In addition, their husbands do not accept the fact that they may leave the household. Women are often submissive and vulnerable, have problems to integrate and show clear signs of violence. Some politicians stated that immigrant women do not want to integrate into the host community, as they do not accept a culture that is more free and different in terms of dressing style, general attitudes, behaviours, and relationships between men and women. Those coming from more conservative cultures are only used to working at home and are not used to being paid for their job. They do not even speak Spanish, and it is difficult for them to find help centres with social workers who speak their language. If they emigrate with their children, they also have to find a school where their sons and daughters can learn Spanish.

Spain is usually described as an open-minded and tolerant country, but the opinion of Spanish citizens on immigrants depends on a number of factors, such as age, social class and level of education. Generally speaking, Spanish public opinion agrees on the fact that immigration from developing countries should be restricted.

In Granada, events and meetings are usually organized to offer immigrants the opportunity to share their culture. Furthermore, different studies are being carried out on the phenomenon of immigration. The first politician interviewed said that in Spain in general, and in the city of Granada in particular, there are different public and private bodies, trade unions included, that are implementing some good practices to facilitate the integration of immigrant women⁴⁶. Interestingly, the second politician interviewed stated that “there is [...] a federation of associations working with immigrants that facilitates the process of integration of those at risk of social exclusion into Spanish society.” This is also because the process of integration is complicated in terms of “access to social, political, health, education, cultural and recreational services.”

⁴⁶ The good practices implemented are only briefly mentioned in the interview. Therefore, a deeper analysis on the subject should be carried out in order to find out more information about integration activities.

The interviews carried out by our partner *Alianza por la solidaridad*, however, have depicted a more negative picture: the majority of immigrant women do not participate in associations or political life because they are afraid of being identified and sent back to their home countries. Furthermore, many women have been the victims of violence and abuse, which makes them more vulnerable and fearful of participating in the life of a community they do not know. In the specific case of Canary Islands, many of the migrants on the islands come from the Identification and Expulsion Centres on the Iberian Peninsula, which makes their process of integration even more difficult and complex. In addition, as one of the journalists interviewed pointed out, how can immigrant women engage in political activities if they have an all-consuming job or spend their whole time working in the household?

Some interviewees thought that problems linked to access to the labour market and housing are caused by both poor regulation and discrimination against some specific ethnic groups. The majority of immigrant women work as waitresses, kitchen assistants and cleaners in the food and hospitality sector. Therefore, these women experience a double discrimination: being women and being immigrants. There seem to be no other job opportunities and, if they live with their husbands, they are more likely to be forced to work only in the household. This is particularly true if they come from Africa.

A system that does not know how to welcome people shows discrimination and unwillingness to facilitate integration. This triggers the immigrants' hostile attitude towards the host community, leading to distrust and processes of self-discrimination even when good practices are implemented at a local level. Furthermore, hidden immigration needs to be considered. Many immigrant women are involved in the phenomenon, and most of the times they are unaware of their rights. One of the initiatives in this field aims to economically support women with large families, in order to help them overcome social invisibility. Interviewees were not able to quantify the percentage of immigrant women compared to immigrant men.

A journalist pointed out that immigrant women are more willing than men to participate in projects aimed at improving the quality of their life. However, they are still socially excluded, underrepresented, ignored and discriminated against in their access to the labour market by both locals and immigrants. Immigrant women are integrated in the neighbourhoods where they live, but remain invisible outside the context of NGOs that work to help them become socially visible. The problem lies in the lack of a network of associations to reach all the immigrant women. Furthermore, the associations of immigrant women are run by men, who tend to be gender-biased. Being excluded from social life, immigrant women have also more difficulties in learning the language of the host country, which makes any form of integration and application for benefits impossible.

Their socio-occupational condition prevents them from having a bigger role in the community and building relationships with the locals. They work for most part of the day, above all as caregivers, or have to take care of the children and the house while their husbands participate in social life. According to Spanish interviewees, more attention should be paid to the gender of migrants, as both home and host countries tend to be gender-biased. More work should be done to help immigrant women become independent political subjects.

The main obstacles to integration seem to be access to the labour market and language, but also religion for immigrants coming from Africa and Asia. Finding a job does not represent a priority for a large number of immigrants, but "it should", some interviewees pointed out. The cultural aspect linked to the building of personal relationships needs also to be considered, as it can play an important

role depending on the fact that women are single, married or part of a family. On the other hand, immigrants tend to experience better processes of integration if they arrive in the host country when they are still young, thus having the opportunity to study and become independent.

4.2.2. Italy

The interviews carried out in Lecce and its neighbouring towns have shown that immigrant women do not participate in social and political life. They do not build relationships with local women and if they participate in some events, it is only because they have been involved in some project implemented by SPRARs. This situation is due to both the detached approach of immigrants and the prejudice of local people. Italy is failing because, despite the huge amount of money invested, it is not able to welcome such a large number of individuals. Furthermore, being left alone by the other European countries, it is often forced to improvise.

Some of the interviewees also pointed out that immigrants often refuse to take any responsibility and only demand their rights, which does not facilitate integration and intercultural dialogue. However, some families managed to integrate into both the labour market and educational institutions, with an increasing number of kids going to school in Lecce.

Stating that respect comes before integration, some interviewees highlighted that focusing on immigrant cultures may be the key. Immigrant cultures have a strong religious component, but Italy lacks places and organizations where immigrants can meet their religious needs. Clearly, this is a complex issue, as some of their religious practices may not be consistent with national and local laws. Therefore, measures need to be taken at a political level.

In small towns, the situation seems to be different thanks to SPRARs. Immigrants play a key role in society as they may help rejuvenate communities where the elderly represent the fastest growing segment of the population and the youth leave the country to study or work abroad. The local government is trying to meet immigrant women's needs through counselling, language courses and other activities to facilitate social inclusion.

The politicians interviewed did not use the word "integration" to describe the phenomenon of immigration, but preferred to talk about "invasion". Some of them stated that the number of immigrant women in particular has rapidly increased recently, and they can be seen everywhere in Lecce. Another politician firmly stated that "in Italy and especially in my town, Lecce, there is a large number of immigrant women and, honestly, I am under the impression that they represent a larger percentage than local people"⁴⁷.

Also this group of interviewees thought that, despite their number, immigrant women do not participate in institutional public life, as they spend most of their time working as cleaners or are forced to – or even willing to – prostitute. The interviewees also pointed out that African women in particular do not work at all, as they can always be seen in the streets. These different perspectives on the phenomenon lead to different, and sometimes drastic, conclusions, which, however, may prompt a deeper analysis. Immigrant women do not participate in public life, and it seems that they have no intentions of integrating into host communities.

Interviewees who live in small towns, on the other hand, had the opportunity to observe a different phenomenon. Immigrant women are present in the community, where they work as

⁴⁷ According to ISTAT, the Italian National Institute of Statistics, in 2017 immigrant women represented 6.92% of female population and 3.68% of residents in Lecce.

caregivers or cleaners, but their process of integration is hindered by the approach of men from their ethnic group.

“Immigrant women are perfectly integrated into the community, but do not participate in local activities due to both family issues, as their husbands allow them to go out only for family reasons, and religious leanings that prevent them from having an active role in any political and cultural project”.

4.2.3. Slovenia

A significant percentage of immigrants live in the capital and there seems to be a balanced number of women and men. The number of immigrant women in Ljubljana, however, is larger than in any other city in Slovenia. Immigrants come from different European cities and countries. They have entered Slovenia as refugees, to look for a job or potential partners. They have not built any important relationships with local people, and contacts with the host community only occur in reception centres.

The integration process of married immigrant women is usually hindered by their family, and they do not seem to be willing to learn the language. One of the politicians interviewed stated that immigrants do not come to the country to integrate, but to live an easier life preserving their customs and traditions. Some interviewees, however, expressed a different opinion on the phenomenon, saying that many immigrants have had access to the labour market, and especially in the tourist industry, thanks to their language skills.

Children may help adult immigrants, and women in particular, to build a life outside their family and cultural community, as they have a series of needs that require the intervention of the state, such as health, social and educational services.

Therefore, the main problems in the process of integration are cultural and religious, but poor language skills also need to be considered. According to a politician, integration represents a problem above all for Muslim immigrants: if they wear traditional clothes, local people tend not to communicate, as they think that those clothes are designed to cover, hide and prevent contact. Due to the religious aspect, the word “adaptation” should replace “integration”, otherwise an interaction between local and foreign people will never occur.

A specific group of immigrant women were cast in a bad light by some interviewees: Muslim women, who do not seem to be described in a positive way by the majority of the population.

“They do not work (generally speaking), they stay at home and receive social benefits. They spend their time at home and do not integrate into society. They could be members of Muslim networks trying to destabilize the Slovenian country. They do not want to integrate. Otherwise, they should first get divorced and renounce their religious beliefs. Clearly, if they are married, they cannot integrate, as they are ‘owned’ by their husbands and cannot go out or talk to local people. They should change their dressing style! If Slovenians see that they are wearing a hijab, they will never establish a contact with them. I will not use the word ‘integration’, but I will talk about ‘correct use of the system’, which allows them to live thanks to social benefits, simply receiving and without giving anything to society.”

The same politician explained what a number of citizens would like to say. An extract of the interview helps to understand the seriousness of the situation in terms of integration and reception:

“Slovenia provides them with protection, accommodation, food and money. From a social and political perspective, this is a mistake. Immigrants should receive support only if they try to integrate into the country. Nothing should be given without an exchange. I do not know anything about best practices. If our party wins the general elections, there will be good practices:

- We will decrease the level of social support (we will provide them with food and accommodation, but not money).
- We will ask them to learn Slovenian language and culture.
- Other members of the family will lose the opportunity to join immigrant men already in the country.
- They will gain access to the labour market through compulsory voluntary work, if they cannot find a paid job.
- We will shut down the mosque and we will not allow them to build any other place of worship, as Islam is not a religion, but a political and legal system conflicting with Slovenian culture.
- Islamic preaching should be criminalised and perpetrators should be arrested or sent back to their home countries.
- Muslim women and children should enter the country without any men.
- Non-Muslim immigrants may enter the country if they are willing to work and contribute to social life.”

This approach is clearly based on Islamophobia, as Muslims are seen as potential terrorists. On the other hand, another interviewee who fostered integration highlighted the problem of tolerance in Slovenia.

“There is still a certain hostility towards immigrants in the country, regardless of their gender. However, coercion is not the answer. The country needs to grow up and be more open-minded – we cannot consider immigrants our enemies. We should understand who are the people we need in our labour market, people we can help to build a better life.”

Although the previous answer fosters integration and the fight against prejudice, it also shows the main idea supported by conformists, even from left-wing parties: welcoming immigrants based on economic needs. Capitalism becomes the discriminating factor in welcoming men and women who leave their home country due to despair, danger and war. These statements are very common and show the victory of modern capitalist logic.

4.2.4. Belgium

Immigrant women usually arrive in Belgium together with their husbands or families, and they come from Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. There are a few cases in which they arrive in the country alone, and these women are usually from South America and Eastern Europe. Women represent 40% of immigrants, whose presence in the country varies from 5% to 8%, depending on the interviewees' perception. Most immigrants arrive in Belgium due to humanitarian, political and/or economic reasons.

The majority of immigrant women work as caregivers and cleaners, while a very small number are forced into – or resort to – prostitution.

Most interviewees stated that a significant percentage of immigrant women, and especially African women, participate in associations and political organizations. There are some associations involving both immigrant and local women, and some immigrant women have also joined a political party. They usually take part in activities aimed at improving their quality of life and spreading knowledge about their culture.

The main problems in the process of integration seem to be the language and a low level of education that does not allow immigrants to access the labour market easily and flexibly. Furthermore, other obstacles are represented by factors linked to their lifestyle and rules, often determined by their religious beliefs. According to some of the interviewees, the latter is one of the reasons why immigrant refuse to abide by the rules of the host country.

4.2.5. *Closing remarks*

Although having different perspectives on the concept of integration, the interviewees agreed on some points. First of all, integration is considered as a one-way process: immigrants should adjust to the host country. For example, Western people tend to prioritize their job over social life, and some of the interviewees criticized immigrants because they “do not want to work”. However, the fact is that they definitely have a different opinion on work and another perspective on life. Therefore, the question revolves around who is right. Should Western people re-think their lifestyle based on their contact with other cultures? Should there be a shift in priorities? In order to answer these questions, we have dedicated a section to practices of integration that actually hide processes of discrimination. This happens because the activities carried out to facilitate integration tend – even involuntarily – to erase the immigrants’ culture and foster the spread of western culture, which is based on instrumental rationality and profit.

Many interviewees complained that associations run by immigrants tend to isolate themselves from the host society, not integrate into it. However, we need to look at the phenomenon from a different point of view and understand what the objectives of immigrants, and especially immigrant women, are. Do they want to integrate into a different country? Or do they hope to go back to a home country that they reluctantly left in search of a better economic situation? We need to understand if immigrants actually want to integrate into the host country, or if they are scared of being absorbed into a socio-cultural system that forces them to change their identity, or if they are not interested in staying in the host country as they are just hopefully waiting to go back to their home country.

4.3. When integration means discrimination

4.3.1. *Spain*

As we have already pointed out, language is one of the main obstacles to integration, as poor language skills do not allow to communicate nor share ideas and cultural aspects. When immigrants arrive in the host country, they do not have an employment contract in their pockets, they do not have any money and do not know the laws, customs and traditions of the host country. In addition, as soon as they are in the host country, their odyssey begins, as they are moved from one place to the other, left under the impression that the host country wants to expel them as soon as possible.

In this context, host institutions and associations make a resigned effort to communicate and create cultural dialogue, which is often impossible due to different perspectives on lifestyles and values. In other words, discrimination lies in reception practices, as immigrants, and especially

women, are stripped of their values, visible in their dressing style, food traditions and daily routines. Therefore, rather than the integration of immigrant women, the absorption of their identity occurs. Conditions should be created for immigrant women to adjust to the host country while respecting their own culture. Their children show the complexity of the phenomenon: they were born in the host country, where they have to go to school, thus absorbing western culture while their parents see them forget about their roots.

An African journalist interviewed stated that many of the projects carried out to facilitate integration are actually implemented more to please associations than to find real solutions to the problem: the cultural identity of immigrants is not protected, but they are only asked to choose between their culture and that of the host country. Nobody tries to understand the immigrants' needs, different depending on their culture, gender and age. Only pseudo-inclusive standard packages are offered.

Mass media tend to have a pseudo-welcoming approach, as they describe immigration as a dangerous and inconvenient phenomenon. Women are not a political subject, but they are always depicted only as caregivers or the victims of violence and trafficking. Media spread the same unchanging information: immigrants seem to be all the same, their cultural and behavioural differences are not explained, and the various causes and factors leading them to leave their home country are not mentioned.

The media have created three stereotypes about immigrant women: 1) they seduce local men; 2) they are obliging and do humble jobs; 3) they are exploited by their own men. Some more investigative reports are needed to show the positive aspects of the phenomenon, otherwise immigrants will always be described as dangerous people who are also trying to steal jobs. Field research should be carried out, with journalists collecting information in the streets, where the immigrants' everyday life can be observed, using the approach the Chicago School used up to the 1940s.

Low-skilled jobs are among the worst forms of integration. Immigrants should fight for better working conditions. As they accept low-paid jobs, employers prefer hiring them, which causes unfair competition, a reduced protection of rights and a normalization of exploitation – typical of Old Capitalism. Furthermore, the biased access of immigrant women to the labour market prevents their participation in associations. They work 12-14 hours a day and they spend their free time keeping in touch with people in their home country, as a journalist from Granada pointed out. They isolate themselves from society in order to integrate into the labour market.

4.3.2. Italy

In a peripheral area such as Lecce and its neighbouring towns, immigrant women work as babysitters, caregivers for the elderly, cleaners, and, although in a small percentage, they are also present in the commercial sector, above all as pitchwomen. These are all respectable jobs that explain a lot about the relation between work and Italians, which is linked to that between exploitation and foreign people. These jobs allow employers to avoid making national insurance contribution and pay workers less than they should. If immigrants want to work, they have to accept the employers' conditions, conditions that Italian people would never accept.

A number of women participate in illegal activities, and especially women coming from Eastern Europe and Africa are involved in prostitution. Furthermore, large percentages of immigrant women do not work at all or just beg for money. Therefore, immigrant women are integrated/absorbed

in the labour market to a certain extent, but they do not participate in public life. This is due to a double cultural problem: on one hand, immigrant women are submissive, while on the other hand people in the host community are not able to understand their cultural and religious needs.

In the area around Lecce, but also in the rest of Italy, two forms of integration lead to a process of discrimination against immigrant women, and they are both linked to market demand. The first problem is represented by the always flourishing sex market, while the other problem is the agricultural market, where immigrants are exploited to harvest fruit and work in the fields. These two phenomena, however, respond to the laws of supply and demand, which makes integration sound like fraud.

4.3.3. *Slovenia*

A politician stated that integration represents a problem especially for Muslim immigrants: if they wear traditional clothes, local people tend not to communicate, as they think that those clothes are designed to cover, hide and prevent contact. Furthermore, immigrant women are seen as exotic.

Some citizens highly criticize immigrants as they think they live in better conditions than local people do. An interviewee stressed the divide between local people and immigrants resulting from the competition for low-paid and humble jobs. Also in Slovenia, and in Ljubljana in particular, immigrants isolate themselves for a number of reasons, including the lack of activities planned by public and private institutions in order to encourage contacts between locals and immigrants outside the labour market or reception services. Immigrants can access the labour market and enjoy some economic stability, but they cannot integrate completely, due to the classic dichotomy between production and consumption.

Also in Slovenia, immigrant women divide their time between work and family life. Being employed as caregivers and cleaners, they work long hours, and then they have to take care of their family without any help from their husbands. Furthermore, we should also consider that we are analysing the situation of immigrants in big towns and cities, where modern life has radicalized individualism. Individuals – both locals and immigrants – live their life without being surrounded by a large circle of friends, they do not participate in political life or associations, and are not interested in meeting people and sharing different lifestyles. As an interviewee pointed out,

“Everything is overlooked. There is no integration, and nobody really wants it. There are too many differences in terms of culture, religion, lifestyle and language. People do not usually have time to do extra activities after working long hours, taking care of their family and living their routine life.”

4.3.4. *Belgium*

Among Belgian interviewees, only one highlighted friction between immigrants and the government, stating that the government has secret immigrant quotas and conducts house-to-house searches to find immigrants and expel them. The houses of Belgian families who welcome immigrants are also searched. Although this statement needs to be corroborated, in this case it is the government that carries out integration practices leading to discrimination.

4.3.5. *Closing remarks*

The process of discrimination includes three different aspects: gender, social category and type of work. In this context, immigrant women have difficult access to the labour market and are forced to

work in some specific sectors. This ‘triple’ process of discrimination occurs not only in the host community, but also in immigrant communities, most of which have a patriarchal system.

4.4. Actions and political-administrative gaps

4.4.1. Spain

Associations are helpful, but there is little or no cooperation between institutions and citizens. Several interviewees pointed out that current ineffective laws and insufficient resources could never facilitate the socio-economic integration of immigrants, and especially immigrant women, who are often ignored. Poor language skills and prejudice against them will always prevent immigrants from finding accommodation and a job.

Some interviewees, immigrant themselves, highlighted some flaws in the political system, not only in terms of parties. Immigrants are a subject of debate, but they are not actively involved in political organizations. “We should reverse the situation and become political subjects”, an interviewee said. In addition, not many associations focus on immigrant women. Someone stated that the whole concept of integration should be rethought, in order for it not to hide something else, but always protect human dignity and cultural differences. Some interviewees pointed out that the concept of inclusion should replace that of integration. Mediators are necessary, so that they can encourage intercultural dialogue and help citizens appreciate cultural diversity, thus preventing the assimilation of minorities into the dominant culture.

Some interviewees also stated that some of the politicians who have a positive approach on migration are only looking for the immigrants’ political support in general elections, while association members are only trying to keep their job and continue to receive funding.

Some interviewees highlighted the importance of a code of conduct which should be respected by every journalist. The main rules of the code are listed below:

- a. Any reference to race and ethnicity shall be avoided if not necessary in order to understand the news (ethnicity and race do not determine somebody’s behaviour).
- b. News about ethnic minorities shall be reported providing sufficient elements in order to explain the general context. Images that do not correspond to the facts reported shall not be used, in order not to foster negative stereotypes.
- c. Journalists shall not focus only on migratory flows, criminality, human rights and war when reporting news about immigrants. Economic and cultural news are also necessary in order to explain the complexity of different immigrant groups.
- d. Ambiguous concepts and words shall be avoided.

This code should be respected above all when reporting news about immigrant women, as they are the most badly covered group. Cases of successful integration are hardly ever reported, and immigrant women are usually described as the victims of abuse and violence. In the best of cases, they are depicted as cleaners or people who want to improve their quality of life by marrying local men.

Policies have been developed to help immigrant women at a national level, but their situation in local communities is worse, as they lack support and useful information. The level of disinformation is high, maybe due to the fact that national policies are not well covered and have a limited approach to immigrant women.

4.4.2. Italy

In Lecce and its neighbouring towns, one of the problems linked to immigration is the lack of information at a local level. The process of inclusion or integration, however, should begin at a local level, as in small towns it is easier to understand the specific situation of immigrants and different ethnic groups.

Local news stories do not help: immigrants often take part in robberies, thefts and violent acts. As a result, the projects that involve them are overshadowed by criminal acts. In addition, every time a project requires their active participation, local people complain that “Italians now count for nothing in their own country.”

Italian media always use the phrase “emergency situation” when covering the phenomenon of immigration, but the analysis of the percentage of arrivals shows that the situation is not so drastic. The phenomenon of migration tends to be used to create social conflict. Many reception centres are well managed and effective, but organized crime gangs overshadow their good work. As immigration has become an important subject of debate, national media have started to follow the approach of political parties, losing objectivity. This is not an issue at a local level, where the biggest problem is represented by social media, which misinterpret already misleading national information. Some interviewees thought that local journalists are more honest than those who work for national media, even when they report negative news about immigrants or local people who take to the streets venting their anger on a government that creates barriers and division.

This analysis, which summarizes the content of 10 interviews carried out in the area of Lecce, highlights the relation between information provided by the media, local and national actions and success of processes of inclusion/integration. If the media provide negative information, citizens tend not to appreciate integration projects. This may lead local governments to decrease the number of initiatives to help immigrants, thus negatively affecting the efforts of those who work to facilitate full or partial processes of integration.

4.4.3. Slovenia

The majority of interviewees seemed to agree on the fact that the country has appropriate reception centres. Different associations and NGOS then involve immigrants in activities that allow them to overcome the initial difficulties in terms of environment and culture. Besides that, however, there are no long-term initiatives that can help immigrants to stay in the country and access the labour market.

Some Slovenian movements and media are supporting a policy of a regulated immigration, in order to encourage only the immigration of well-educated, well-informed and richer people, following the approach of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. They think this approach needs to be adopted in response to the policies of the EU and its Member States, and in particular Italy and Germany, but also the region of Brussels.

National media provide an unrealistic picture of the situation: the majority of them describe a positive situation, while a few right-wing media use immigration to create stereotypes in terms of crime and security. No sociological studies have been carried out to understand the effective situation in the country, and the phenomenon of immigration is only depicted through personal impressions and misleading information.

One of the politicians interviewed highlighted the situation of uncertainty around integration policies in Slovenia.

“The country does not have a real strategy or, if it has it, the government is not doing enough. Strategies are more linked to informal groups, to the citizens. The activities are carried out above all by associations and NGOs.”

In other words, the situation in Slovenia is not so different from that in other European countries.

4.4.4. *Belgium*

Belgian interviewees were certain that their country provides good reception services, while the process of integration is still difficult. A number of organizations, such as schools, education centres, language centres and groups of citizens, carry out activities focused on immigration and do an admirable job in terms of reception and integration.

An interviewee stated that some European policies are unfavourable for immigrant women, as they force them into dangerous situations, such as prostitution and human trafficking⁴⁸. Also in Belgium, however, immigrant women are invisible to institutions, as national policies aim to help immigrants in general, or at least immigrant men.

In the city of Brussels there are associations working to help immigrant women, but specific actions cannot be carried out due to the fact that some of the women are illegal immigrants. Furthermore, most of the times immigrant women are unaware of their rights. As controls on asylum-seekers have been tightened and it has become easier to expel illegal immigrants, some interviewees thought that initiatives should be carried out to help immigrant learn about national and local traditions.

4.4.5. *Closing remarks*

The interviews have shown a complex situation. There is a lack of cooperation between public and private sectors, as well as associations and institutions, both at a national and local level. Governments undo the achievements of their predecessors. The media tend to standardize information about immigrants and/or condemn them, without helping citizens understand cultural and behavioural differences. Citizens are divided, as some of them want to welcome immigrants, while others would like to limit their presence in the country. Some good practices have been implemented, but only at a local level and by single associations and institutions. All these components, however, are not sufficient to bridge the gap between political, legislative and structural flaws in terms of reception and integration.

⁴⁸ The interviewee did not mention any reason to explain this opinion.

4.5. Conclusions

The interviews have highlighted a chaotic picture of the phenomenon of immigration. There is chaos in the implementation of appropriate policies, due to a lack of coherent institutional guidelines to be followed regardless of the governing party. The media add more confusion to the situation, as they foster competition in an already rigid labour market and negatively influence the relationships between citizens and immigrants. Immigrants are confused, as they feel the inconsistency between national and local policies, institutional and informal actions, and tend to isolate themselves from society and develop processes of self-discrimination. This often prevents the implementation of good practices aimed at facilitating the integration of immigrants into society. In this context, immigrant women are the main victims, overwhelmed by national and local gaps, gender stereotypes, different forms of discrimination and exploitation.

Therefore, a systemic work is needed. The phenomenon of migration should be studied in its different forms by research centres, with the media being only one of the actors providing information. Consistency should be created between the law system, the resources promised and the actual resources available. Furthermore, institutions and private associations are the stakeholders that make more efforts to implement good practices coherent with local areas. However, sometimes actions are not well-organised and their success is only determined by the willpower and good intentions of the implementers.

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Aim of the EnFeM Project

The main end purpose of the Project is to change the negative collective image of “migrant women”. Also to offer a concrete opportunity of access to educational facilities, local social and cultural life while minimizing the isolation of migrant women at the local level. Develop innovative educational tools as well as concrete initiatives facilitating the integration of migrant women in the host society, more particularly in the creative, cultural and educational sectors.

Give local communities physical instruments in order to be better involved on the spot at the local level, to guarantee a fuller integration of migrant women. foster their participation in community life/citizenship and restrict their isolation.

Change the negative and racist attitudes against Muslims from certain segments of civil society. The Project aims at reducing the isolation and separation of migrant women: through the implementation of joint creative workshops between women belonging to different cultures; through awareness-raising activities in educational establishments and civil society as well as in the medias.

The objective is to make migrant women active members of our society, thus increasing their chance of successful insertion in urban local districts; strengthen the citizen participation of migrant women in their host communities.

