Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

**Work Package 1
Introduction
to the Results**

The Work Package 1 of the ERLAIM Project analyzes in depth some integration policies designed and implemented in some European regions. The study shows how the existence of certain issues associated with international human mobility are shared across the European space, though in different forms and to different degrees. The commonality of these issues calls for increased cooperation and exchange across regions: it is at the local level that practical experience provides a fertile ground for innovative solutions. At the same time, the study reveals how such issues cannot be dealt within a standardized, uniquely prescriptive way. From Cyprus to Berlin, from Andalusia to Yorkshire, from Olympia to Slovenia, there are such wide differences in the migratory systems involved, in the reception of foreigners, in their demographic and socio-economic adaptation that a standardized solution would inevitably turn quickly to be a negative straightjacket.

The report argues in favor of the development of a shared conceptual frame for the discussion of some migration issues across these regions. Such frame is needed to acknowledge the existence of some structural commonalities that gets often lost in the emphasis on specific contextual features. At the local level, practitioners and policy-makers have often to deal with similar problems and within similar constraints. Whenever possible, the report will use the available empirical evidence to qualify the features of the migratory situation that appear to be present in similar – albeit not identical – form across Europe.

As a matter of fact, it should never be forgotten that there is definitely a certain degree of convergence across the European societies involved.

No more than three decades ago, a report such as the present one would have been unthinkable. At the time, some of the regions here involved would have been considered "classical" emigration countries, often sending sizable number of their population to the others. Today - although the countries analyzed are very different in terms of foreign presence, ranging from Slovenia's 50,000 to Germany's 7.000.000 - all the countries involved have a sizable foreign resident population, ranging from the 2% of Slovenia to the 13% of Cyprus. Of the countries covered in this report, only Cyprus has a foreign population where EU citizens are a majority. In all the others cases, the number of third country nationals is a massive one and keeps growing, albeit at different rates.

No more than two decades ago, the migratory concerns of certain countries would have been nearly exclusively marked by the irregular migration of workers along the South-North axis, while others would have been struggling with inflows of asylum seekers and refugees as well as with the legacies of guest-workers and postcolonial migrations. Today, asylum applications across the EU in 2006 have been less than 200,000. They are also much more evenly distributed among the EU member states[1]. At the same time, the existence of a sizable segment of irregular resident foreigner is acknowledged also by the EU states that until recently defined it as somebody else's problem. Within the

---

[1]. See Eurostat, 2007, *Statistics in Focus. Asylum Applications in the European Union*, 110/2007, Bruxells: Eurostat.

Council of Europe, even the heated issue of regularization has been recently treated as a technical option that all member states should consider if needed[2]. It is indicative of such convergence that in the questionnaires filled by the ERLAIM partners the concern with irregular migration is reported by all as a top priority at both national and local level. Far from being inserted in separated migration regimes, the EU countries are today inserted in a variety of different migration situations, many of them overlapping in various ways. Unsurprisingly, the migration policy field across Europe has shown a quick trend toward convergence[3].

Ten years ago, the geographical distribution of the flows would have been largely different across regions: some would have been involved largely in Mediterranean migratory systems; others in postcolonial trajectories, some others would have dealt mostly with East-West migrations. Now the situation is much more mixed, with a variety of flows directing to many regions across the European space.

The migratory maturation of the countries with a shorter immigration history has also contributed to an increased convergence. No more than ten years ago, concerns crucial for certain regions – such as the ones associated with the social inclusion of members of foreign ancestry – would have been hard to imagine in others. As the report will document, today there is an agenda of issues and concerns widely shared by public opinion, the policy-makers and civil society in the regions involved in the ERLAIM project.

At the same time, a common agenda does not mean a common view, and even less a common solution. The analysis shows the existence of several distinct migratory patterns across Europe – linked to a variety of long term factors – as well as distinct differences in the institutional and social context that receive migrants. As it will be seen, the various European regions are still involved in quite different and distinct migratory systems. They have sharply divergent migratory histories, which is reflected by the significant differences in the percentage of foreigners in the general population (tab. 1) as well as in the different composition of their resident foreign population (tab. 2)

---

[2]. *Assembly debate* on 1 October 2007 (29th Sitting) (see Doc. 11350, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, rapporteur: Mr John Greenway).
[3]. For an analysis, see Sciortino G., Pastore F., "Immigration and European immigration policy. Myths and realities". In: *Justice and home affairs in the EU. Liberty and security issues after enlargement.* Apap J. (a cura di), Cheltenham: Elgar, 2004, p. 191-209.

Tab. 1 – Native and Foreign Population in the Countries involved in the ERLAIM project.

	Germany	Greece	Spain	Italy	Cyprus	Slovenia	UK
Population	82.437.995	11.125.179	43.758.250	58.751.711	766.000	2.003.358	60.393.000
Foreigners	7.289.149	884.000	4.002.509	2.670.514	98.000	48.968	3.425.000

Source: Eurostat (2007).

Tab. 2 – Nationals and Foreigners in the Countries involved in the ERLAIM Project (2006)

	Nationals	Foreigners	EU citizens	Europe	Africa	America	Asia	Oceania
Germany	75.148.846	7.289.149	77.405.690	80.524.026	274.929	208.200	826.432	10.157
Greece	10.241.000	884.000	:	:	:	:	:	:
Spain	39.755.741	4.002.509	41.081.869	41.244.509	762.273	1.522.081	226.123	2.534
Italy	56.081.197	2.670.514	56.620.050	57.343.161	694.988	255.661	454.793	2.486
Slovenia	1.954.390	48.968	1.957.138	2.002.092	72	401	727	41
United Kingdom	56.968.000	3.425.000	:	:	:	:	:	:

Source: Eurostat (2007).

These differences cannot be considered as the consequence of a common migratory dynamic developed unevenly in the various countries. Although there is for sure a convergence in certain aspects of the migratory situation, the empirical evidence shows that other aspects of the phenomenon maintain quite a specific outlook:

- There is no hard evidence of a structural convergence among European countries as far as migrants' countries of origins, destinations and individual characteristics are concerned;

- There is only very weak evidence of a structural convergence among migratory trends, with only a few countries experiencing in the last decade dramatic changes in the nature of migratory flows;

- There is positive evidence of the enduring – somewhat increasing – differences across countries as far as the composition of the stock of resident foreign population, its labor market participation rat and its sectoral employment. Whenever some convergence may be found, it is usually explained by an underlying convergence among the countries' occupational structures;

- There is positive evidence that sub-national and cross-national homogeneities are very limited and almost never taking place among contiguous units;

- The attractive capacities of countries, and increasingly of their sub-regions, appear to be highly different across Europe[4];

Given the structural and historical differences among European countries and regions, such a situation is far from surprising. Most of the migratory systems involving European countries have already reached the stage of cumulative causation, thus becoming partly independent from the regulatory framework. The development of others is highly path-dependent, thus making them sensitive to conditions rooted in processes going on for decades. In migration issues, history matters. Far from being surprising, a high heterogeneity of the migratory conditions across European regions is precisely what any sophisticated theory of migration would lead us to expect[5]. It is therefore appropriate to provide a brief introductory description of the migratory situation in the various countries, which will sensitize the reader to the variety of situations and contexts that local and regional administrations have to take into account.

Cyprus counts 6% of its population holding a third country nationality, with a significant proportion of them composed of asylum seekers and international students. Foreigners have a large impact on Cyprus' labor market, as their employment rate is markedly higher than that of natives. The main countries of origins are Russia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Public opinion in Cyprus is highly critical of unemployed migrants and skeptical of the assessment of the value of cultural diversity;

Germany, though registering a steady decline in long-term immigration in recent years, documents a large proportion of its population made of third country nationals (6%) and of born-abroad residents (13%). Germany has also the strongest European inflows of temporary, mostly seasonal, workers. Foreigners are markedly less active in the labor market than native citizens, and they are more likely to receive welfare support. The main countries of origin are Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro and Croatia. German public opinion is highly critical of unemployed migrants and it has a skeptical view of the value of cultural diversity;

Greece has 7% of its population made of third country nationals. They are mostly foreign workers as shown by the presence of a very high rate of

---

[4]. All these points have been documented regularly in reports such as those produced by the Oecd's *International Migration Outlook* series, the European Committee on Migration's *Current Trends in International Migration to Europe* and by Eurostat in his *Pattern and Trends in International Migration in Western Europe*.

[5]. For current overview of migration theory, see: Massey, D. S., J. Arango, Hugo G., A. Kouaouci, Pellegrino A., and J. E. Taylor. 1998. *Worlds in Motion. Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium.* Oxford: Claredon Press; Brettel, C. B. and J. F. Hollifield, 2000, *Migration Theory,* Routledge, London.

employment in comparison to natives. In recent years, Greece has had a large volume of new inflows, estimated for some years as close to half a million entries per year. The main countries of origin are Albania, Bulgaria and Romania, thus making the post-enlargement dynamics particularly critical. On the whole Greek public opinion views cultural diversity as an enriching society, though a significant majority has tough views on unemployed immigrants;

Italy has around 4% of its population made of third country nationals. They are largely foreign workers, as shown by the high employment rate of the foreign population, markedly higher than that of natives. Although Italy's migration history is by now fairly long, the country has witnessed a large number of new arrivals, as a result of both family re-unification and the development of a new migratory systems. The main countries of origin are Albania, Morocco, China and Ukraine. Italian public opinion supports tough measures for unemployed immigrants but has a fairly liberal outlook as far as cultural diversity is concerned;

Slovenia is – among the ERLAIM countries – the one with the smallest percentage of third country nationals. Resident foreigners, often refugees from the '90s, are more often unemployed than natives are, and much more often employed with temporary contracts. The main countries of origin are those of the former Yugoslavia. Slovene public opinion is very skeptical of cultural diversity.

Spain is a strong receiving country, with more than 7% of its population made of third country nationals. The foreign population is very active, with an employment rate markedly higher than natives are. The main countries of origin are Morocco and the labor-exporting countries of Latin America. A large minority of Spanish public opinion supports tough measures for unemployed immigrants, while there is a broad consensus for cultural diversity being enrichment for society.

The United Kingdom has a long and complex migratory history, spanning centuries. It is a large receiver of immigration from third countries (4%) as well as one of the main destinations for post-enlargement migration. The employment rate of third country nationals in UK is markedly lower than for natives. The main countries of origin are India, South Africa and Australia. Public opinion in the United Kingdom expresses a broad consensus for cultural diversity as an enriching factor although it has a fairly restrictive view concerning new inflows.

As this cursory description reveals, amongst the ERLAIM countries there are significant differences in reference to the size of the third country population and their composition by country of origin. Even more crucially, however, the ERLAIM countries experience significant differences in the role played by third country nationals in the

respective labor market and in ways in which migration is framed in the country's public opinion.

Differences appear even higher when the comparison is made at the level of subnational regions. Within the ERLAIM project, cooperation involves cities (municipalities), regional bodies and (partly) autonomous polities. Consequently, a certain degree of difference is to be expected. Even where the institutional background is similar, there is reason to expect many other differences to be apparent. Moreover, all migratory flows react to an opportunity structure nearly always embedded in local conditions. Even within sub-national units, there can be notable differences across a locality. For example, in 2007, around 10% of Andalusia's a population was made of foreigners, more than the national average. The distribution of the foreign population across its provinces, however, ranges from around 18% in Almeria to 2% in Cordoba. In Catalonia, foreigners account for more than 12% of the population. While 70% of them are clustered within the province of Barcelona, other areas of Catalonia have a much lower presence. The same applies even to irregular migration. As the ERLAIM partner documented, during the 1998 Greek amnesty, 44% of applications were received by the single prefecture of Hlia. The migratory situation of (geographically close) territories may consequently be very different according to the structure of opportunities, related to labor demand, housing supply, migratory infrastructure and social networks. A brief analysis of the migratory situation of some ERLAIM partners highlights the involvement of those areas in many different kinds of migratory systems, producing similarities and differences at the same time:

- 10% of the population of **Andalusia** has a foreign citizenship, around half of which are third country nationals. The main provinces of concentration are Almeria and Malaga. Although the main single country of origin is Morocco, there is a plurality of independent migratory systems active in the area. A large majority of employed foreigners are men working in agriculture, manufacturing and construction. Women are particularly active in agriculture, hospitality and domestic services. Andalusia receives irregular migrants crossing Spain's sea border illegally, although their impact has been decreasing in recent years. The frequency of illegal entries reflects in substantive numbers of asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors. The local government place a particularly strong emphasis on the inclusion of migrants in the system of universalistic services as well as in fighting native prejudices;

- **Barcelona** province is for sure the main area of concentration for foreigners in Cataluña. It has a large share of its population made of third country nationals, and their presence has been growing fast in recent years. The overall gender composition appears balanced, although many specific migratory flows are not. The main countries of origin are Morocco, Ecuador, Colombia and China. Foreign workers are mostly employed in the service sector (including a high rate in the domestic service), there are quite significant numbers in construction while their presence is marginal in manufacturing;

- **Berlin** has always been an immigration area. Foreigners account currently for 14% of the city's population, a quarter of them Turkish nationals. Other significant

countries of origins are Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the Russian federation. There is also a sizable presence of Asian immigrants, including a large segment of Vietnamese, a legacy of East Germany's guestworker schemes. Quite a large segment of the foreign population is actually Berlin-born or German-born. The main sector of employment is the service sector, but foreigners in Berlin are also more likely than natives to receive welfare support. In Berlin's public opinion, cultural diversity is positively appreciated, but there are also serious concerns for welfare overuse and criminality, particularly concerning the second generation;

- **Emilia-Romagna** has around 7% of its population made of foreigners, nearly all of them nationals of third countries or the new EU member states. Emilia-Romagna recorded the first inflows of foreign workers in the early '70s, who were employed mostly in the manufacturing sector, agriculture and domestic services. A marked increase was recorded in the early '90s, and the rate of growth of the third country national population has intensified in recent years. Foreigners are highly active in the labor market, where their supply alleviates serious labor shortages in many sectors. Public opinion in Emilia-Romagna demonstrates an acceptance of the conversion of the region into an immigration area and it has a fairly progressive view of the rights of immigrants. There are however quite sustained fears concerning the immigrants' contributions to crime rates and, more recently, about alleged welfare over-use;

- **Ileia** welcomes many kind of migrants, including co-ethnic returnees, family members and foreign workers. The main country of origin is Albania, with separate flows originating in the former USSR and South Asia. The gender composition is varies. Albanian workers have a balanced gender composition, reflecting also the presence of a sizeable number of families. Eastern European flows are mostly made of women employed in the domestic service sector. According to the ERLAIM partner, Hlia's migratory situation is not particularly different from the one registered in general for Greece;

- **Nicosia municipality** hosts more than a third of the foreigners living in Cyprus and (allegedly) a larger share of the sizable undocumented foreign population of the island. The main countries of origins are India and Pakistan (for males) and Sri Lanka and Philippines (for women). There is also a significant presence of families of Pontic origins. Within the old Nicosia walled city, it is likely that natives have become actually a minority. The main sectors of employment are domestic services, the hospitality industry and construction work, although there also seems to be a significant presence also in manufacturing.

- **Valencia** has a long migration history, but the number of migrants has grown sharply in recent years. Valencia is actually rooted in two very different kinds of migration system: EU retirees living abroad (the region accounts for over a quarter of all EU-15 presence in Spain), and foreign workers. Most of the foreigners live in the province of Alicante, where the foreign population is close to 20%. The third country nationals flow originates in Ecuador, Morocco and Colombia. The economic

sectors where their presence is most visible is construction and services, while their presence in manufacturing is marginal;

- In **Yorkshire and Humber,** large-scale migration dates from the '50s. The legacy of such long history is a strong presence of ethnic minorities, mostly concentrated in the urban areas. In Bradford, the ethnic minority population account for 20% of the residents. A large percentage of them originate from Pakistan, India and China. Females are over-represented. The regions also hosts around a fifth of the asylum seekers in the UK. The insertion of ethnic minorities in the labor market is far than optimal, with many cases of unemployment, under-employment, and unstable employment. In Yorkshire and Humber, public opinion has shown a certain concern for the economic and social integration of ethnic minorities, as well as more recent fears for the cultural integrity of the region.

Although fairly cursory, these brief descriptions of the migratory situations of the areas covered by the ERLAIM report show that both the structural situation and the social priorities are defined quite differently in the various places. Practitioners and policy-makers in those areas have to deal with a variety of specific processes that are different both from the situation in other countries and from the situation in other regions of the same country. If the variance across regions is taken into account, it becomes evident that local governments can not be thought of as merely implementing a standard migration policy from central government. Given the structural differences across sub-national regions, to mandate a standardized migration policy would be, even before then wrong, highly ineffective.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities for the Integration of Migrants

**Work Package 1
National
Legislative
Frameworks**

2. Varieties of National Legislative Frameworks

The differences among the various migratory systems are only one side of the story. The other is the existence of deep differences in the institutional and political frameworks embedded in the various European countries. There are wide differences in the legislative framework and administrative infrastructure of the ERLAIM countries, with regard to migration.

It is also important to stress that local authorities involved in the ERLAIM project have very different levels of autonomy and resources, depending upon the institutional definition of governance bodies in the various countries. Furthermore, European political systems at all levels are deeply contingent upon a variety of different philosophies of integration, often unspoken or taken for granted[1]. This centrality of the national level is only partly mitigated by the growing coordination of this issue through EU institutions. With the exception of external control policies – highly coordinated under the Schengen system framework – most European states maintain quite distinctive policies in dealing with their immigrant populations. Only very recently – since the Tampere summit – has the European level become significant in the field of integration policy, with various directives outlining the initial basis for a shared integration strategy[2].

The main outlines of each country's integration policy are however still designed and developed at the national level, although subnational and supranational actors may exercise a certain degree of influence, and this seems to be growing.

To provide a broad review of integration policy in the various ERLAIM countries, the main challenge is to identify comparable data and information. In this report, we have decided to base our background, country-level, analysis on the data provided by the *Migrant Integration Policy Index report[3]*. Such data has four important advantages:

1. It is up to date as the second report was released in the second half of 2007;

2. It originates from a benchmarking exercise, comparing each country's legislative framework with a common set of standards, provided by the highest European standard (drawn from European conventions and directives);

3. It covers all the countries included in the ERLAIM project.

4. It is produced by a network of well-known and respected immigration research and advocacy bodies, thus providing the most independent and reliable comparative judgements currently available[4];

---

[1]. On the issue, see Adrian Favell, *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain*, London: St. Martin's Press, 1998 and William Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

[2]. For an updated review of the Commission activities in this field, see http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/immigration/fsj_immigration_intro_en.htm

[3]. The main reports are downloadable at: http://www.integrationindex.eu/

[4]. The MPI European partners are: University of Sheffield , Universite Libre de Bruxelles, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Ined, Polish Institute of Public Affairs, Fundaciò

In order to understand the table, it is important to keep in mind that both the ranking and the scores received by each country are assessed in comparison to a normative ideal that is not fully reached by any country. In this sense, all the tables compiled using the *Migrant Integration Policy Index* scores are to be seen as a measuring a distance from a hypothetical 100 that indicates full compliance with the most demanding standards for a migrant integration policy. The tables compiling ranking information indicate instead the position of each country in relation to the others.

Another point that has to be taken into account is that the *Migrant Integration Policy Index* measures the content of the normative framework of the various countries, not their actual implementation in practice. A country ranking high in the *Migrant Integration Policy Index* could turn out to be much less consistent on the field, owing to bureaucratic inertia, lack of funding or attribution of a low administrative priority to the measures introduced. On the contrary, countries with lower scores may actually carry on their policies effectively and systematically, putting to a comparatively better use a less generous set of norms. Having given these cautionary warnings, it is possible to see how the *Migrant Integration Policy Index* remains to provide the best comparative source drawn from independent expertise. It is the material needed to offer a comparative position of the various ERLAIM countries in legislative terms, as local actors have to act within the boundaries of the national norms so defined.

As can be seen in table 3, no country involved in the ERLAIM project has a consistently high profile on integration policy in comparison to the European normative standards. Although some ERLAIM countries are ranked among the best in certain specific policy issues, no ERLAIM country is consistently among the best. Moreover, the same table reveals the existence of stark differences across the legislative frameworks within which the various local actors that participate in the ERLAIM project have to act and interact. Some countries, particularly Spain and Italy, provide relatively favourable integration into the labour market, comparable with those of natives. Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom have also established a legislative framework aimed at stabilizing the settled migrants by granting them a certain number of rights based on length of residence. The United Kingdom appears also to have a more inclusive access to naturalizations, at least for certain segments of its population of third country nationals. As it will be seen in paragraph 3.3, Germany has a legislative framework that allows migrants to participate in the public sphere in more systematic ways than many other European countries.

**Tab. 3 - Ranking of the ERLAIM Countries
in the Benchmarking Exercise of the Migrant Integration Policy Index**

	Labor Market Access	Family Reunion	Long-term Residence	Political Participation	Access to Nationality	Anti-Discrimination
Cyprus	22	28	26	22	20	12
Germany	16	12	19	7	18	17
Greece	22	24	16	24	26	13
Italy	4	3	5	10	22	11
Slovenia	12	5	13	23	14	8
Spain	2	8	4	14	14	17
United Kingdom	12	12	5	15	5	5
EU-15	*9*	*16*	*13*	*7*	*9*	*11*
EU-25	*12*	*17*	*16*	*15*	*12*	*12*

Source: MPI index report, 2007

From the ERLAIM project point of view, however, it is important to stress that all participating countries are far away from the normative standards identified in European conventions and policy goals. In some cases, the difference is significant. This gap may serve to demonstrate the need for various goals to be pursued through strengthened action at the local level. But it is also a debilitating factor, that may in various ways impede or weaken the action on local administrations in dealing with some pressing issues on their territories.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

Work Package 1
Integration
Policy at the
Local Level

3. Integration policy at the local level: an overview of strategies, organization and best practices

The following paragraph will review the areas of local policy making previously identified by the ERLAIM project as particularly fertile for cross-collaboration among local authorities[1]:

- participation and political rights (par. 3.3);

- Intercultural communication (par. 3.4);

- policies for children of immigrants and immigrant children (par. 3.5);

- women (par. 3.6);

- housing and areas of critical difficulties (par. 3.7);

Before analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the various experiences in these fields, it is important to provide an analysis of the policy context concerning immigration in the various ERLAIM areas, to highlight the existence of important strategic stances both in the policy process (par 3.1) and in the implementation strategy (par. 3.2).

3.1 General strategies and incremental actions

Across Europe, local authorities have to manage a difficult task in dealing with migration. On the one hand, contemporary migratory flows require new answers, even from administrations that have already quite a long experience with the management of the consequences of human mobility. On the other, they have also to mould their policy action in a way that fits the established general administrative and policy-frameworks. As a consequence, different local authorities may deal with migratory themes through the development of special plans and infrastructure, while others may try to include migration within less target-specific and more generalized planning tools.

The first strategy usually focuses on immigrants as a specific segment of the population while the second considers migrants as one of a variety of social positions with high risk of social exclusion. The first strategies allow for a systematic – sometimes called holistic – approach, the second reduces the risks of creating a separated, and usually weaker, framework for the foreign population. A way of trying to get the best of both worlds is to adopt special plans for the immigrant population, however, to build bridges towards the universalistic inclusion of migrants in the general system of local life and services.

This is, as an example, the choice made with the *II Plan Integral para la Inmigraciòn en Andalucía*, which develops special services for migrants in particular circumstances, promoting however 'normalizaciòn', the inclusion of immigrants in the general system of services on the same basis as provided for natives. The Regione Emilia-Romagna has

---

[1]. The rationale for the ERLAIM project is described in a separate document prepared by the project's coordinators.

developed a systematic master plan on immigration oriented by three main goals: fostering positive relationships between immigrants and natives, fighting discrimination and strengthening the legal protection of migrants. These goals translate in a set of policy priorities which are pursued through the launch of specific programs for the Emilia-Romagna municipality as well as for private partners. A slightly different perspective has been developed in Valencia: here the local authorities have established a specific body – a council for the integration of migrants – having consultancy and advisory functions for the local authorities. Such councils give both information and advice for the setting of local integration plans, as well as acting as advocacy bodies for the implementation of equal rights.

Andalucía and Emilia-Romagna have developed a systematic plan geared towards providing a guiding framework for the action of the administration. Valencia gives more emphasis to master plans at the city level.

Other ERLAIM partners – such as Berlin - have chosen a different tool, choosing to develop a more flexible planning document rather than a legislative act. *Das Berliner Integrationkonzept* is a platform that provides a detailed interpretation of the strategic visions of the policy-makers as well as providing systematic information on the phenomenon and ongoing projects. Although more flexible, the *Integrationkonzept* is not imprecise, in fact it is one of the few planning documents providing precisely defined, measurable objectives to be achieved within a specified timeframe. The creation of a systematic planning strategy is not however the only option available to policy-makers.

In other cases, regions and local authorities choose to develop an incremental strategy, based on the development of a set of independent projects. In this case, the various agencies and departments independently design their own actions, in a more loosely coordinated way. As an example, in the municipality of Ljubljana both the Department of Health and Social Protection and the Youth Office provide funds for projects presented by NGOs in their respective fields. The main advantages of this approach are that it is more flexible, being able to relate more easily to funding opportunities at the national and EU levels, and it is possible gradually develop a strategy in a situation where both knowledge about the phenomenon is imperfect and policy priorities are not fully determined. It may also be added that such an approach, the assessment of projects on a case by case basis, is commonly most active where organizations in the field of integration are private bodies such as charities and NGOs. A similar approach can be found in the Nicosia municipality.

It is also the case that integration policy is more a priority for central government, which is then implemented by regional branches of central government. In this situation, the role of local actors is mostly implementation and advocacy. This is the case in Hlia and Slovenia.

As has been seen, the planning process among the ERLAIM partners varies widely. It is however important to stress that this analysis has found significant similarities amongst partners' integration policies. All ERLAIM partners endorse cultural heterogeneity, taking

an intercultural approach rather than supporting assimilation or multiculturalism. Policy-makers appear to share the objective of fostering an environment where natives and foreigners appreciate the meaning of each other cultural specificities and share a common identification with human and democratic values. This stance is described in remarkably similar terms in the policy documents produced by ERLAIM partners independently from each other, and provides a fertile ground for joint experimentation.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

**Work Package 1
Implementing
local policies:
the challenge
of public-
private
partnerships**

Although ERLAIM actors operate in different contexts, their policies appear to encounter some common problems in their implementation. No matter how different, all ERLAIM actors have to face a scarcity of funding, personnel and organizational resources when dealing with migration issues. It is also worth stressing that many areas covered by the ERLAIM project have become immigration areas at a time of serious budgetary restraint. Within this context, immigration calls for innovation not only in terms of strategic thinking but also in methods of implementing the policy objectives. Among the most important areas of innovation is the development of public-private partnerships, a path taken by many ERLAIM policy-making bodies.

In general, the development of public-private partnerships may be seen as way to overcome three major constraints in the integration of immigrants, namely a lack of financial resources, knowledge and trust.

As far as financial resources are concerned, it seems logical to tap resources from sources other than the public sector. Here public agencies may seek to establish connections with philanthropic institutions, such as private foundations, charities, family memorial trusts and donors. Such philanthropic institutions may provide direct funding for public projects. More often, they may provide services in certain areas, using their own personnel, funding and facilities. They may provide services for segments of the population that could not be treated in public social services, such as irregular migrants. They may also provide more rapid, flexible and cost-effective ways of delivering certain services. In all these cases, the main rationale of the partnership is to coordinate supply, reduce redundancy and overlapping of service provision. The problem, however, is that the European philanthropic supply is limited, particularly but not exclusively in the Mediterranean countries. In the ERLAIM areas, there are only a small fraction of the projects carried out having a noticeable fraction of their costs covered by philanthropic money. A larger share of these projects, however, relies on volunteer work, which often turns out to be a crucial resource. More often than not, public bodies have to finance public-private partnerships, may be through EU or governmental funding – rather than being financed by them.

The budgetary problem, however, is only one of the problems triggering the development of public-private partnerships. Equally important are the knowledge constraints. These constraints are particularly present in Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain, where the migratory systems are often in a state of flux and where a sizable number of the foreign population is irregular or has had a spell of irregularity in the recent past. The problem does also exist in even in countries with a long migration history, as the dynamic nature of migratory flows makes hard to monitor them through the established channels.

Another important knowledge constraint comes as a result of the fact that foreigners are often absent from the usual channels of political consultation and representation (see par. 3.3). Such absence is a problem for the quality of policy-making, as policy-makers cannot "test" in advance their decisions on (assumed) representatives of the impacted category. It is apparent from neo-corporatist literature that such pre-tests are not only a way to reduce conflicts but also to decentralize controls and to develop a shared vision

of the "problem". Both such by-products are often lacking in the case of integration policy. Such difficulties trigger a strong appetite for intelligence which can contribute to the policy-making process, and which often cannot be provided through official channels. This explains why in many of the ERLAIM regions, public authorities often have a more or less stable partnership with research institutions such as universities, research centers and professional researchers. This kind of partnership is very common in Greece, but all ERLAIM partners report an important role played by research bodies not only in the production of knowledge but also in consultancy, policy advice and advocacy. Similar partnerships may be found in other ERLAIM areas as well, as documented by the establishment of a specialized observatory in Andalucía.

A third reason for public administrations to establish partnerships is the need to reach out to individuals that may ignore or be suspicious of the public authorities. Many immigrants in Europe are isolated, know relatively few natives, and distrust the intentions of state agencies. In the case of many programs, the action can be carried out only after a baseline of personal trust between practitioner and victim has been established. In many other cases, there is the need for personalized action, again based on a certain degree of personal knowledge and linguistic and cultural affinity. This is a strong reason for acting indirectly, through the funding of immigrant or pro-immigrant associations, neighborhood committees, or charities of various kinds in exchange for the provision of certain services with certain standard of quality. In other cases, partnerships may involve the management of certain critical phases within a specific program. In the health sector for example, there are cases where various associated bodies have been involved in diffusing information on access to health services. In other cases, such as in Barcelona, trade unions may become partners of local authorities in setting up centres to help with work-related issues for the immigrant population. This links to another practical reason for establishing public-private partnerships. In many ways, integrative actions are often difficult to manage within the usual structure of public administration. Time and place for example are often constrained by established procedures of various offices. To establish a public-private partnership is often in these cases a way to allow more room for flexibility. An example of this has been found in Germany, where the Senate of Berlin has launched a program that operates through the action of semi-independent neighborhood-defined teams, able to collaborate with a variety of organizations according to the problem at hand[1].

Budgetary, knowledge and trust problems share the commonality of being "negative" reasons for establishing public-private partnerships, grounded in what public administration and local authorities "lacks" or "cannot control". Important as they are, it is important to stress that many actors in the ERLAIM projects feel the existence also of strong "positive" reasons to act through the establishment of public-private partnerships. These ventures are seen also – and sometimes mostly – as a way to empower both migrants and local communities, building bridges and connections that are valuable by themselves. These partnerships are also perceived as an efficient way to

---

[1]. http://www.quartiersmanagement-berlin.de/english/the-socially-integrative-city-program/integration-and-equality-of-opportunity/

manage immigration, creating integration not only as a goal-state by also as an ongoing process and to involve the citizens in a phenomenon that shapes strongly the local community. As example, the Diputació de Barcelona defines the building of public-private partnership as an intentioned policy triggered by the persuasion that the involvement of a large variety of local actors at all stages of integration policy may provide for a better and more inclusive policy process. The goal of creating networks of stable partnerships between various actors is a crucial step also in the *II Plan Integral para la Inmigraciòn en Andalucía*, where action in different areas has been pursued through the establishment of cooperation agreement between public and private bodies. The involvement in the plans of social organization of various kinds is considered a strategic principle, worthy of being listed among the main features of the plan (*Socializaciòn*). As practical examples, health and social actions has been carried out through the signing of cooperation agreements between public agencies and NGOs and specific cooperation agreements have been signed by an umbrella organization of pro-immigrant associations, entrusted with the task of diffusing intercultural education both in the schools and in the neighbourhood.

A way to foster public-private partnership is through the launch of programs providing funding for projects developed by local authorities in collaboration with non-profit organizations. Through the launch of these programs, the funding agency provides an incentive for the effective cooperation of public and private bodies without being too intrusive on the content of such collaboration. The Regione Emilia-Romagna has a yearly program for funding integration projects submitted by local authorities in collaboration with NGOs. The Nicosia municipality, through its multifunctional foundation, has introduced a program that stimulates local authorities' cooperation with a wide range of actors, in order to develop projects for the labour inclusion of women with dependent children. A final way in which public-private partnerships are established is through the setting up of specific private organizations under the influence and support of public agencies.

These experiences are promising as they may help to ensure an efficient allocation of scarce resources. Public private partnerships may reduce both the overlaps existing in some areas and the shortages recorded in others. Not to mention that through public-private partnership it is possible to secure the involvement of a larger and more diverse set of actors in the process of community building. The development of public-private partnerships, however, is no panacea. There is always the risk that association become dependent on public money for their existence, up to the point of becoming *de-facto* subcontractors of a public administration. Public administration, in turn, is often at risk of defining its policy priority not in terms of the priorities in its social environments, but in terms of the kinds of actions and perspectives embedded in the networks of partnership already in place. Another significant risk is that the development of the partnerships makes certain associations or bodies act as if they were representative of the immigrant population.

A main problem with public-private partnership is related to the long-term provision of certain services. The problem here is two-fold. In nearly all cases, public-private

partnerships are rooted in projects, often supported by EU programs, designed to last only a few years. However, this is not necessarily a weakness, for example when actions have a temporary or experimental nature. Funding through projects is actually a very important resource for most innovative actions of the European public administration. At the same time however, such a method of financing may turn out to be a liability when the services provided by the partnership are meant to answer a long-term need. To guarantee the stability and reliability of a social service requires in fact a wholly different strategy in terms of personnel, organization and funding. When the project ends, the partnership is often at risk of terminating too. The second long-term risk is organizational. Once a set of service provisions stabilizes, there is a need to re-think the partnership accordingly. Many services based on volunteer work for example, are extraordinarily precious when dealing with the structuring phase of a migratory system, but they cannot provide the stable provision of a package of standardized services needed by a maturing migratory system.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities for the Integration of Migrants

Within the European context, there is a strong concern for the participation of settled foreigners in the political life of their countries of settlement. It is widely agreed that settled foreigners should be able to make their voices heard in the public debate and in the decisions concerning common affairs. At the same time, there has been – and there are – heavy concerns that such political participation may cause problems for both the country's foreign policy and its internal affairs. Since the nineteenth century, expatriates have often played an important role in the political transformation of their home countries: the political activities of diasporas are consequently often a factor of tension with many sending countries[1]. Internally, political rights are often associated in European political culture with the most cherished privileges of citizens, thus raising many questions when they apply to non-citizens. As far as we are concerned, this debate reached a peak in 1992, when the Council of Europe established a well-known convention urging its member states to give proper consideration to this aspect of migrant integration[2].

Political participation refers to a complex set of overlapping layers of participation in a country's public affairs. The most basic layer is the freedom of speech and association, granting the basic condition for receiving information, forming an opinion and exercising influence on other members of the polity. The second layer concerns the various forms of representation, with the existence of formalized procedures of a consultative kind. The third layer is made of proper electoral rights, on the same basis of the other members of the polity. Freedom of speech and association may take various forms and imply various limits. Consultations may take place in arenas very differently defined in terms of composition and scope. Electoral rights may be wholly associated with naturalization or differentiated according to various kinds of political bodies at the local, regional and national. Given these complexities, we have chosen to use again the MIP index to summarize the main differences among the countries covered by this study, as well as benchmarking the current situation in the countries studied against the optimal (but not yet achieved by anyone) European best practice. As the reader will remember from table 3, the countries participating in the ERLAIM projects are not among the most liberal in terms of access to nationality for settled foreigners. According to the calculations of the MPI experts, they are – with the partial exception of the United Kingdom[3] –more restrictive on this issue than most others European countries. As a consequence, in these countries there is a large presence of long term foreign residents that are not entitled to vote either as naturalized citizens or as resident foreigners. To this, it must be added that there are settled foreigners that are not interested in naturalization, either for a subjective feeling of loyalty toward their

---

[1]. For a broad overview of the political dimension of diaspora, see Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, London: Routledge, 1997 e Nana Poku, David T. Graham, *Redefining Security: Population Movements and National Security*, Praeger. Greenwood, 1998.

[2]. Council of Europe, Convention on the participation of foreigners in public life at the local level, Strasbourg 1992.

[3]. The liberal score received by the United Kingdom is largely part of the existence of special rules for some categories of Commonwealth citizens.

mother country or, more often, for the existence of serious penalties in their country of origin for those who renounce their original citizenship. This situation makes the differentiation of local political rights even more important in many contexts. Table 4 shows, however, that also in this area the ERLAIM countries lag behind the normative standard set, on the basis of EU conventions and documents, as the benchmark by the MPI experts. The area where there is the largest convergence is political liberties, where most ERLAIM countries grant full liberty to migrants to associate and participate in public discussions. Only Slovenia sets special limits to their associational activities and restricts their possibility to become regular members of political parties.

Tab. 4 - Access to Nationality and Political Participation in the ERLAIM countries

	Access to Nationality	Electoral Rights	Political Liberties	Consultative Bodies	Implementation Policy
Cyprus	36	0	100	0	0
Germany	38	0	100	69	90
Greece	25	0	100	0	0
Italy	33	0	100	44	80
Slovenia	41	25	25	0	20
Spain	41	33	100	50	40
United Kingdom	62	50	100	0	60

Source: MPI index report, 2007

Slovenia, however, allows settled third country nationals to vote (but not stand) in local elections. This channel of political participation is recognized only here and in Spain (on the basis of reciprocity, basically applying for the moment only to Norwegians) and in the United Kingdom (for Commonwealth citizens)[4]. In all the taking part in the ERLAIM project, electoral rights for third country nationals are scarcely recognized. A practice experimented in some ERLAIM countries has been the setting up of special consultative bodies for settled immigrants, allowing them the chance of having their voice heard on a variety of local and national issues. Only some countries, however, have tried seriously to pursue such strategy, with mixed results. Some German Lander have set up advisory panels of migrants, in some cases directly elected by immigrants, and in other cases through a political nomination, even up to the national level. In Italy, there have been various experiments with elected bodies, in the form of additional members of local councils (usually with only a consultative authority) and of specially designed councils. There are some bodies also at the national level, where members have been appointed by a political decision. In Spain, there are some consultative bodies, whose members are selected and appointed by the state and regional authorities, among the civil society organizations believed to be more representative.

---

[4]. The German Federal Advisory board has suggested in 2005 to allow third country nationals to vote in local elections.

A critical variable as far as the political participation of migrants is concerned involved the extent to which a significant effort is made to reach migrants within the political process and whether a systematic approach is taken. Even the best rules on paper may be ineffective without a sustained effort to include and empower migrants. Again, as it may be seen in table 4, the situation in the ERLAIM countries varies quite a lot. Some countries are reported as very active, with Germany and Italy founding immigrant associations and trying to provide them the infrastructure needed for an effective action. The United Kingdom and Spain have held quite important campaigns, often even in foreign languages, to inform immigrants about their rights and trying to strengthen their participation. Other ERLAIM countries have not developed any special measures with regard to this. However, some experiences that may be of particular interest:

- **Andalucía** has established a *Foro Andaluz de la Inmigraciòn*, with branches at the provincial level, with consultative and advocacy functions. The organizations belonging to this forum are both immigrant organizations associations and pro-immigrant associations, appointed by the regional authorities according to their activities and associational strength[5]. In Andalucía, there is also an active political campaign by a variety of social and political movements that try to attain electoral rights for all foreigners living in Spain.

- **Berlin** has established an advisory board for migration and integration, made of representative of the Berlin Senate, non-governmental organizations and migrant associations.

- **Emilia-Romagna** has developed a legal regional framework for ensuring the political participation of migrants. The region has set up an advisory regional consultative body made of 18 representatives of foreign citizens and 16 nominees from social partners' organizations, local authorities and NGOs. The regional framework also provides support to various forms of immigrant representation at the local level. This kind of representation can take various forms. There are elected bodies, in the form of immigrant councils or additional members of city councils with advisory powers, and councils of organizations appointed by the local authorities.

- **Valencia** has established municipal councils for the integration of migrants, with consultative, advisory and advocacy functions.

- **Yorkshire and Humber** has a Black and Minority Ethnic Panel active mostly in advocacy matters. It may be considered the voice for a variety of local grassroots organizations and activities.

---

[5].http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/gobernacion/opencms/portal/PoliticasMigratorias/ContenidosEspecificos/ForoAndaluzInmigracion?entrada=tematica&tematica=63

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

It has already been noted that all ERLAIM partners share a strategic choice for an intercultural approach in the integration of immigrants. The tendency towards a return to assimilation as the optimum approach to the integration of migrants that has appeared in various European countries, is not currently popular in the ERLAIM areas[1]. At the same time, no ERLAIM partners have implemented or advocated multicultural policies, based on the acknowledgement of separate collective rights. The intercultural approach has its main focus on fostering a positive environment for the interaction between immigrants and natives, empowering the former to support their inclusion in the local context with a positive appreciation of their cultural legacy.

The main consequence of an intercultural approach is the interest of policy-makers in addressing upfront the possible existence of prejudice in the native population. Here policy-makers try to develop communication campaigns aimed at spreading a fair and balanced view of immigration, as well as building a communicative infrastructure that may ameliorate the media reporting of immigration-related events in the area. At the same time, communicative efforts are developed to reach the immigrant population and inform them both of their rights and of the opportunities existing for meaningful, active participation.

- **Andalucía**, as an example, actively sponsors radio and TV programs diffusing news and debates about immigration in the region, in addition to campaigns on more specific issues at the local level.

- **Barcelona** has established a specific branch of local government to deal with cultural diversity. Barcelona sponsors a TV program that is particularly targeted at immigrants arriving from Latin America, covering information for and about migrants.

- **Emilia-Romagna** has developed intercultural activities on two fronts. It has established a network of more than 17 local intercultural centres, promoting cultural activities and exchange events among natives and foreigners, as well as among different groups of foreigners. On the other, it has sponsored some media outlets directly produced by immigrant groups and pro-immigrant associations.

- **Valencia** has a remarkable record in the development of professional profiles linked to intercultural mediation in various fields.

- **Yorkshire and Humber** has developed activities in two areas. First, there are activities aimed at improving the access of immigrants to local social and public services, as well as diffusing information about their rights and entitlements. Secondly, there are some activities aimed at promoting contact across community boundaries. This has taken place through programs which put different schools in

---

[1]. See Rogers Brubaker, 2001, *The return of assimilation? Changing perspectives on immigration and its sequels in France, Germany, and the United States*, "Ethnic and Racial Studies", Volume 24, Issue 4 July 2001 , pages 531 – 548 and C. Joppke, 2007, *Beyond national models: Civic integration policies for immigrants in Western Europe*, "West European Politics", Volume 30, Issue 1 January 2007 , pages 1 - 22

the same city in touch, through the establishment of a series of leadership seminars for youths of different religious and cultural backgrounds. Another interesting experience is the establishment of a regular award for the contribution of individuals, groups and organizations to bringing together people from different communities.

An important issue in the field of intercultural communication is the emergence in several ERLAIM areas of a drive towards making intercultural mediation a more official role. With the insertion of migrants in the local contexts, a variety of occupational roles have to deal with issues related to cultural differences (including actual and presumed differences). Many professions in many sectors, from education to health, to job placement to sport, need take account of the intercultural dimension in carrying out their daily routines. This widening of professional competencies is however accompanied in many places by the emergence of a separate professional role, acting to ease the interaction between immigrants and natives in many local contexts, as well as favouring the inclusion of migrants in the local system of public services. This role is evolving as a result of the most pressing tasks such as specialized teaching support and linguistic translation, along with other competencies such as advocacy and case work. The sector where professional intercultural mediation is more common is currently education, but there is an important growth in the health services and neighbourhood action areas.

- In **Andalucía**, it is estimated there are around a thousand cultural mediators, employed by regional and local administration as well as by private groups and enterprises. Intercultural mediation was officially recognized in 2005, and there are currently training courses held in 16 training schools, three of them private.

- In **Barcelona**, **Province**, specific services of citizenship mediation are provided both in municipalities' services and by partnership with private bodies such as associations (usually through funding from Diputació de Barcelona).

- In **Emilia-Romagna**, there are currently around 250 professional intercultural mediators working in schools, social services, information centres and health organizations. As a professional profile, intercultural mediation has been defined in 2005 and there are various training courses active in the region.

- **Valencia** has a growing presence of intercultural mediators, active in two significant professional associations. These professionals are particularly well entrenched in the educational sectors, where they have developed and tested specific materials and techniques. There has been a diffusion of such professional figure in the social services and, more recently, in the health domain.

The development of a professional intercultural mediator is not however the only way in which the need positive interaction between immigrants and natives can be achieved. In other ERLAIM areas, such a function is mostly supported either by being embedded in a package of more generalized projects (as in Berlin) or through the involvement of structured organizations and civil society actors, as in Yorkshire and Humber.

In Yorkshire and Humber, intercultural mediation is strongly linked with the task of easing the conflict resolution at the local level, avoiding the creation of unnecessary conflicts. The experience of Community Accord is particularly important as a systematic way through which local authorities may help the construction of a positive and safe environment for interaction[2].

In other ERLAIM areas, activities of intercultural communication are carried out mostly by civil society actors that may or may not receive public funding or recognition for such activities. This is the case of Slovenia, Nicosia and of the prefecture of Hlia.

---

[2].http://www.bradford.gov.uk/environment/environmental_protection/community_accord/community_accord_helping_to_resolve_community_conflict.htm

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

Work Package 1
Policies
towards the
children of
immigrants:
Strength and
Weaknesses

The situation of foreign minors, as well as of minors of foreign ancestry, is a pressing concern at both the EU and national level. In many ways, children of immigrants are the most important legacy of the migratory process, and their integration is a critical part of the long-term considerations on the migratory future of the Union. This point is clearly made in the EU's *Common Basic Principles on Integration,* where it is specified that:

> "As comprehensive integration policies include education and training as fundamental elements of the integration process, the specific challenges faced by immigrant children and youth should be further addressed". (CBP 5)[1]

Moreover, research has shown that many critical events in the lives of foreign minors are affected by the specificities of the local background. It is a field where local action has considerable leverage. These considerations explain why the issue of the children of immigrants receives a considerable amount of attention in this report.

First of all, a consideration of terminology is in order. In everyday policy language, it is common to refer to children of immigrants as "the second generation" or as "immigrant children". The two things, however, are quite different for a variety of reasons. In many countries of the Union, there is today a large segment of the foreign population made of individuals born and raised in the country. Contingent upon the citizenship laws, these individuals, the "second generation" proper, may be still counted as foreigners or, on the contrary, their existence may disappear from the official statistics although remain socially and culturally significant. In terms of their life story however, they are not immigrants at all. On the other hand, given the current significance of family reunification flows, across the EU there is a very large number of immigrant children that have experienced directly international migration in their lives. In the following pages, we will use "children of immigrants" as a general label, using "second generation" only for individuals raised in the host country (be they foreigners or of foreign ancestry) and "immigrant children" for individuals raised at least partially in a country different from the one they live in. Children of immigrants share certain commonalities, but they are not a homogenous group. In fact, having a different migratory history implies a very different set of conditions for the integration process. Second generation children, usually, speak fluently the language of the host countries, while linguistic challenges are probably the most difficult for newly arrived children to have to deal with. On the contrary, it has been argued, particularly in North America, that the conditions for the socialization of second-generation children are often more difficult than for children arriving in the host country at a later age, when a basic sense of personal identity has been already strengthened enough[2]. This also been found to be true also for many groups of second-generation youths in Europe.

---

[1]. Council Document 14615/04

[2]. Portes, Alejandro, Ruben Rumbaut, 2001, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation,* Berkeley, University of California Press.

There is currently no consistent comparative research covering the situation of children of immigrants in all the member states. Systematic statistical data is particularly scarce for some of the new countries of immigration participating in the ERLAIM project. Even the most basic evidence on this aspect of the current European migratory situation is often difficult to compare across countries, given the variety of legislation as well as the different migratory histories. We know that in certain countries, particularly the traditional Western European labour-importing countries, a large and sometimes dominant segment of the children of immigrants is made of second-generation children. In the Mediterranean countries, that are currently the largest receivers of new foreign labor inflows, minors can be up to 20% of the foreign population, a large share of them being immigrant children. It is consequently likely that the main policy focus will be on family-reunited children, as many recently arrived workers have only recently called for their families or are planning to do so in the near future[3]. As a consequence, in some member states the children of immigrants are targeted within general social inclusion and social cohesion policies, while in others the issue is still largely within the specialized field of immigration policy. There are also countries, as in some new member states, where migratory transition is still going on, making the issue not yet as crucial as in the others, although them quickly up is clearly foreseeable in the near future[4].

It is worth stressing however, that there has been quite a deal of empirical research carried out on the children of immigrants, producing scientifically sound results that raise quite important policy concerns. The first is that there are few doubts on the fact that across the Union children of immigrants are at strong risk of performing less well than natives in schools, thus making less than optimal participation in the labor market more likely, as well as higher chances of unemployment and widespread intergenerational reproduction of inequality between the children of the natives and the children of immigrants. The research carried out, both using international comparable databases – such as the OECD PISA[5] – and within national contexts, is apparently convergent on the following conclusions:

– Children of foreign ancestry experience a differential return on human capital investment in nearly all Western European countries (actually in all developed countries). Such disadvantage is clearly identifiable even allowing for other factors, such as class of origin. As a matter of fact, most groups of non-European

---

[3]. As family-reunification is acknowledged as a right of the migrant worker in all member states, it is to be expected that such kind of flows will be still significant for a number of years Consiglio dell'Unione Europea, 2003, *Direttiva 2003/86/CE del Consiglio, del 22 settembre 2003, relativa al diritto al ricongiungimento familiare*, *Gazzetta ufficiale n. L 251 del 03/10/2003 pag. 0012 – 0018.*

[4]. It should not be forgotten, however, that many countries have also a long record of policies dealing with autochthonous minority children as well as of "returned" children. While the targets (and rights) are obviously quite different, there are also quite common cross-over themes to be dealt with.

[5]. The The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) surveys of 15-year-olds in the principal industrialised countries. Every three years, it assesses how far students near the end of compulsory education have acquired some of the knowledge and skills essential for full participation in society.

ancestry continue to experience substantial labor-market related ethnic penalties in the second (and later) generations. In many Western European countries, the disadvantage of nearly all groups of non-European ancestry is larger and more significant both in respect to unemployment and to access to the higher labor market strata[6];

- Children of foreign ancestry are over-represented in vocational training, experience a higher chance of dropping out of school, and have a lower overall level of educational attainment. For many areas of educational achievement, research shows a marked distance between children of natives and children of immigrants. The same data shows there is no consistent pattern across Western European countries as far as ethnic background is concerned, although in nearly all countries there are widely different levels of achievement for pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Ethnic differentials, moreover, vary heavily by gender[7].

Overall, these researches show how crucial and urgent it is for European societies to develop a concerted effort to contrast – or at least reduce the severity of - the structural and systemic tendency to a reproduction of intergenerational inequality along ethnic lines. The causes of such processes are however difficult to identify, particularly because immigrant families are not distributed evenly across the Western European social structure. Immigrant families are, as a matter of fact, heavily over-represented among working class families, and it is known that the social class of origins plays quite a large role in the education achievement of students[8]. As a consequence, it has been argued that, once controls for social class background are introduced, the recorded size of ethnic differences in educational achievements reduces sharply or even disappears. While there is a general agreement on the significance of the social class background, however, many other studies document the possible existence of additional disadvantages for (at least) some subgroups of children of immigrants both in the educational system and in the labor market. As a consequence, policies for social inclusion should take into account that most of the recorded inequality is actually derived from class rather than ethnic position, but this should be done without forgetting that a migratory history does indeed produce, at least for certain disadvantaged groups, additional difficulties.

There are two other important findings of the available social research on children of immigrants that have key policy implications.

---

[6]. See, as example, Heath Anthony, *Sin Yi Cheung*, 2007, *Unequal Chances: Ethnic Minorities in Western Labour Markets,* London: British Academy.

[7] The most accurate and up-to-date review of the available literature on this issue has been produced, within the context of the European Equalsoc network of excellence, by Catherine Rothon, *The Educational Achievements of the Second Generation in Europe: A Review of the Literature,* Equalsoc-Soccult, *State of the Art Report 2006,* mimeo.

[8]. Y. Shavit and H.-P. Blossfeld (eds.), 1993, *Persistent Barriers. A comparative study of educational inequality in thirteen countries* Boulder (CO), Westview Press.

The first is that there is no clear link between length of stay in a country and educational and socio-economic insertion. As documented earlier for the U.S., there are many cases where recently arrived children actually perform better than second-generation children of the same socio-economic background. In other words, contrary to expectations, the degree of socio-cultural and linguistic assimilation does not provide automatically better chances of educational and professional success. Consequently, there is a need for specialized social and educational policy actions for second-generation children and for children of immigrants.

The second consideration refers to the structuring of the institutions dealing with youth in most Western European countries, particularly with schools. In the last few decades, there have been quite a number of ethnographic researches documenting processes of ethnic discrimination by both teachers and other education practitioners. At the same time, however, it has been difficult to collect solid hard evidence of ingrained patterns of discrimination based on prejudice in Western European schools[9]. What has emerged in the more systematic research is rather the existence of several ways in which unintentional differential trajectories are established for at least certain groups of children of foreign ancestry by the institutional procedures of many educational systems. The first and most important of such mechanisms are apparently made possible by omissions rather than action. For example, educational systems that rely on a significant amount of untutored homework end up discriminating against many immigrant families, where parents often lack the linguistic competencies required to help their children or are more often absent from home during the homework hours. In the same way, teaching practices that favor "classical" front lecturing over more flexible laboratory work may produce discriminatory results for children less fluent in the classroom language. Last but not least, many education systems in Europe do not provide an adequate special support for newly arrived children, thus forcing some of them to a long period of stressful catching up. To produce a more inclusive system requires often dealing more with these indirect mechanisms rather than with ethnic prejudice as such.

Although remarkably similar in certain aspects, educational systems across Europe tend to be quite peculiar and distinctive. Although some limited signs of coordination may be detected in higher education – as with, for example, the Bologna process – there is not strong evidence of converging trends in the overall educational systems across European countries[10].

It is consequently unsurprising that the comparison of inclusive actions across different educational systems is difficult. This consideration is particularly true when the peculiarities of the various educational systems combine with the large differences across countries in the migratory situation and in the integration philosophy. Across

---

[9]. For a review of the evidence, see P. Foster, R. Gomm, M. Hammersley, 1996, *Constructing Education Inequality: An Assessment of Research on School Processes*, London, Falmer.
[10]. For a general context, see Steven Brint, 2006, *School and Societies*, Stanford, Stanford Social Sciences. An important source of comparative data on European education system is the OECD, particularly its *Education at glance* series.

Europe, one can see different strategies to support and include the children of immigrants (as well as the children of autochthonous or involuntary minorities).

There are, of course, some shared roots as well as some common tendencies. The first, and most important, of such tendencies is the dismissal of the idea of specialized schooling for the children of immigrants, an approach that used to dominate the educational perspective during the age of guest-workers programs. As a matter of fact, nearly anywhere across Europe the "immigrant schools" - with a curricula oriented to the country of origin and lessons taught (to a significant degree) in the mother-tongue - have basically disappeared[11]. These types of schools have been dismantled in the traditional labor-importing countries and they have never been adopted, with few exceptions, by the new Mediterranean countries of immigration[12]. Teaching in the language of the country of origin is sometimes provided, but only in addition to the normal teaching schedule or intended as a remedial action for transitional periods. Specialized teachers, bi-lingual classroom assistants and educational mediators are still involved today in a plurality of school activities, but they act within the expectation of a rapid insertion of the foreign child in the "normal" classroom rather than of his/her return to the country of origin. Recent years have seen a considerable intensification of concern for the goal of a common education in a shared curricula taught in the national language. This change in the overall stance has been so radical that today even the mere proposal of the introduction of special schools for immigrant children specialized in the transmission of the "culture" of the country of origin would trigger quite a deal of conflict and heated debates. In less than four decades, all European education systems have accepted and put to practice the idea of integrating the children of immigrants in the same educational establishments used by the children of natives, in common classrooms and with an identical curricula for a heterogeneous student force.

An increasingly heterogeneous student body may however place a fair amount of additional stress on educational systems already under strain. For these reasons, most European member states have programs providing special support, including funding, to facilitate the integration of the children of immigrants as well as fighting discrimination against foreign children. Such support may arrive through special programs or through

---

[11]. A partial exception is Greece, where there are 26 special intercultural schools, operating throughout the country. The state provide these schools with teachers specialized in language support. Some have argued that the existence of such schools has the dark side of leaving basically unaltered the mono-cultural format of all the remaining schools. Since the '70s, Italy has had a school in Mazzara del Vallo, managed through an agreement with Tunisian authorities, that follows a curricula adapted to the requirements of both states.

[12]. As we know, the last controversies on the issue of different educational tracks for the children of immigrants have involved the State of Bavaria in 1989-1990. Today, the few schools across Europe that do use languages different from the national one are usually schools for the offspring of the elite or for professionals on long term contracts in another member state.

standard mechanisms that take into account the number of foreign children in the allocation of resources among various schools[13].

The expectation to participate in the "normal" schools, moreover, accelerates the need for newly arrived foreign minors as well as second-generation children to learn the national language quickly. An important commonality in this regard is that all European states currently assume some responsibility for the linguistic fluency of foreign students in their national language. All Western European states provide funding, materials and teachers training to schools, although the strength of such efforts may vary. A main problem is that teaching a language adequately in a short time is a fairly expensive task, and the language proficiency required to follow the curricula effectively is fairly high. In the United Kingdom, special funding and immigrant-specific instructional materials are to be provided to schools boards within a decade-long strategy for upgrading the quality of the teaching and reduce the potential human capital waste[14]. In Spain, more than half of the state budget for reception, integration and education is spent in programs at the school level. Slovenia has introduced since 2004 a catalogue of counseling services for schools able to provide a limited amount of consultancy to school boards interested in improving their intercultural education climate. In Greece, there is the intention to strengthen reception and tutorial classes for children of immigrants[15]. In Italy, the central ministry for education established, in December 2006, a national observatory for the integration of foreign students, entrusted with the task of developing strategies viable at the school level[16]. A different strategy is based on the fact that learning a language is much easier at an early age: the State of Berlin has consequently chosen to introduce educational programs at the Kindergarten level, which all children of ethnic minorities are supposed to attend for at least two years[17]. Another problem is that some countries lack a system of standardized tests to measure in detail the linguistic proficiency of foreign minors. This may make it more difficult to establish adequate remedial actions.

Taking into consideration the above similarities, there are also some differences across countries worth stressing:

- Some countries have a more school-centric strategy than others. While acting *through* school is (unsurprisingly) widely practiced, there are still some differences in the scope of such involvement. In some countries, policies towards

---

[13]. For example, the current policy in Cyprus defines some *educational priority zones*, according to a set of criteria that includes the number of pupils not having Greek as their mother tongue. The schools in these zones receive special attention and funding.

[14]. It is the "Aiming High" strategy. See http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/2/6/cyp_tenyearstrategy_260707.pdf

[15]. See Commission of the European Communities, 2007, *Third Annual Report on Migration and Integration*, Brussels, 11.9.2007 COM (2007) 512 Final.

[16]. See the materials available at http://www.pubblica.istruzione.it/dgstudente/intercultura/intercultura.shtml

[17]. This is an alternative that may be followed only by children of immigrants born in the country or being re-united at a very early age.

children of immigrants are basically policies toward foreign students. In other countries, however, there are also concerns towards the social life of children of immigrants in the family and neighborhood. The latter invest more heavily in programs targeted to produce events that may increase social contact among peers and communication efforts targeted to create a more pluralistic environment;

- Countries vary quite a lot according to the role entrusted to civil society and NGOs in this regards – as well as to churches and other religious bodies. In some countries, most of the policies are acted mostly through public – often state – agencies. In others, most programs allocate a significant percentage of funding among (more or less competitive) projects presented by non-profit agencies or by public-private partnerships;

- In some countries, there is currently a strong concern over cultural differences, with a lot of attention paid to striking the right balance between the respect for the ethnic identity of foreign students and the desired goal of transmitting them whatever is defined as the core of national culture. In other countries, the main concern is with the level of competencies and skills acquired by the foreign students. These two approaches may co-exist peacefully, but in some cases the two things may conflict, producing mixed outcomes;

- In some countries, the school authorities are mandated to accept even children whose parents have an irregular status in the country, and to provide them with the required education. In others, although the right of the child is always taken into consideration, school authorities are supposed to enroll the student but, at the same time, report the case to the authorities.

All the ERLAIM partners have stressed the importance of more adequate actions for the inclusion of children of the immigrants in the local society. All regions surveyed are concerned with the level of educational attainment of children of immigrants. They all implement (albeit with different intensity) targeted measures to provide financial and technical support to schools in order to facilitate and speed up the inclusion of foreign children. In some areas – particularly in Italy, Spain and Greece – the main focus of action is on young children in primary and lower secondary school. Unsurprisingly, given the demographic situation, most of the actions taken have been concerned with the compulsory education level. In other countries – as in the Germany and Britain – the attention concerns all educational layers. The latter countries have a more complex set of goals: they have to increase the educational attainment of the children of migrants as well as lowering their drop-out rate from voluntary-education[18].

An important area for action within the educational system is in providing help to foreign students in need of special support. The integration of children in universal-service schools needs to be accompanied by the provision of resources that may help disadvantage students – be they foreign or not – to overcome the difficulties and raise

---

[18]. According to its *integration through education* program, the State of Berlin have adopted as main goals both the increase in the participation of foreign students up to the same rate of natives of comparable age and a 50% reduction in the drop-out rate of children of immigrants.

their confidence. This may require temporary adaptation classes targeted at an intensive learning of the national language or the use of bilingual or specialized classroom assistants. There are however also cases where what is needed is individualized diffuse support of the kind provided by tutors or mentors. Given the delicate aspects of *some* of these activities, there is ample room for the action of NGOs and volunteers. Their action may be coordinated by special programs, providing adequate materials and guidance to those willing to help[19] or public authorities may entrust such action to specialized philanthropic NGOs[20].

An important issue is the kind of support children of immigrants may receive both before entering and after leaving the school. As far as the selection of a suitable educational track, in some regions there have been projects based on early contact with immigrant families for an individualized assessment of the child's aspiration and achievement and provision of counseling about their post-compulsory education[21]. There has been also action designed to produce incentives to children of immigrants to go on studying beyond the compulsory level[22]. In some areas, acknowledging that children of immigrants find difficulties in entering the labor market, even with the appropriate educational credentials, have triggered the introduction of programs designed to ease the transition from school to work[23].

Actions designed to support the participation of children of immigrants in universal establishments sometimes have to take into account the existence of ingrained patterns of separation and prejudice. In some cases, policy-makers have felt the need to establish lines of actions explicitly targeted to strengthen intergroup contact, both through anti-racism campaigns and through incentives for bridging cultural initiatives and associations. In other cases, the issue has been left mainly to informal co-operation at the school level, with formal action taking place only when conflicts disrupt didactic activity. A diffuse incremental strategy is to establish specialized centers providing free and comprehensive training as well as materials to schools that need to act on this regard[24]. The base of such strategy is to provide specialized resources that few schools

---

[19]. See as example the mentoring projects developed within Community Partnership and Volunteering service of the Leeds Metropolitan university, http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/cpv/index_66BB0FD50F43451FA7D736F0EBF9669D.htm.

[20]. This is the case of *Slovene Philanthropy* and *Mozaik* in Slovenia, of the *Federaciòn Andalucia Acoge* in Andalucia, of the *Barnardo's* and *The Children's Society* in Yorkshire & Humber.

[21]. See the project "Aspiration Raising for Refugee Children" promoted by the Leeds Metropolitan University.

[22]. The *Plan Andaluz de Education de Immigrantes* sets as its first goal to increase the acceptance of foreign students to both complementary services and places in the *residencias escolares* in order to encourage them to go beyond the compulsory level.

[23]. A good example is the *Berufsqualifizierungsprojekt* sponsored by the Commissioner of the Berlin Senate for Integration and Migration.

[24]. For a Yorkshire example, see the presentation of EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service), at http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/Learning_in_Doncaster/Teacher_and_School/school_support/Multicultural_Education_Centre.asp

would be able to provide internally. It is often the case that such kind of centers may collaborate, as in Yorkshire and Catalonia, with local universities and research centers.

A complex issue on these educational actions is the balance between commonalities and differences in the teaching. There are for example marked differences in the integration strategies of various regional educational bodies. In some areas, such as Andalucía, there is an explicit goal to help foreign children to retain their mother tongue, as a way to avoid the loss of their original culture. In other areas, there is a more "neutral" kind of approach, where such linguistic and cultural retention is neither promoted nor discouraged by public authorities (but rather left to families and ethnic communities). In others, such as in Greece, such retention is considered as a possible source of tension. A good example is provided by the frequent conflicts recorded in Greece on the following question: should foreign children carry the national flag during school parades?

Eventually, there are also priorities that are still waiting to receive an adequate attention. In Greece and in Italy, there is a concern with the deviance of young immigrants (and foreigners with immigrant ancestry). Such concern branches out in three areas. The first, and sometimes more heated, is the search for policies able to prevent deviant acts of foreign youths. The second is with the consequences of the social process of labeling and stigmatization that may contribute to shape a social environment where the integration of foreigners would be made more difficult. Eventually, there is the problem of managing a recovery process for minors who have been sentenced for criminal acts. In Slovenia, Andalucía and Emilia-Romagna, the issue of unaccompanied minors is also high among the priorities, as some municipalities are called to host a significant number of them in a situation that is both legally intricate and difficult to manage by the existing social services.

It has been stressed many times that there are many peculiarities in the educational systems that make the transfer of best practices across borders particularly difficult. Still, some actions carried out in the regions involved in the ERLAIM project may provide at least some stimulating ideas for practitioners operating in other areas.

The first suggestion concerns the need for better information. The fact is that the field of education and youth services is highly decentralized and porous, with a wide number of bodies and professionals providing services of various kinds and often receiving funding from different institutions. In this context, mutual knowledge and monitoring should not be taken for granted. Even in regions territorially contained, different projects and activities may take place side by side without significant interactions. To make regular efforts for the redaction of a practical catalogue, such as the one carried out recently by the Commissioner of the Berlin Senate for Integration and Migration, is a simple and relatively inexpensive idea for strengthening the information flows among various actors within a territory, as well as a help for policy-makers to identify the missing or weak areas. The use of the available information and communication technologies could help turn such catalogues into dynamic entities constantly updated.

There are few doubts about the existence of a pressing need in linguistic learning. An inadequate knowledge of the language does indeed place the children of immigrants at

serious disadvantage. A main problem here is that many contexts lacks a reliable system of educational indicators to monitor the situation and to intervene in case of trouble. Of the ERLAIM partners, the State of Berlin is the first to have developed a set of precise and binding goals, to be measured by a standardized linguistic proficiency test, for all foreign students bound to enter compulsory school in Berlin. The adoption of precisely defined targets as well as of formalized tests is surely something that may be helpful in many other regions and states.

The stress on language proficiency should not, however, make practitioners forget that a successful school attendance does require more than language. Children of immigrants, particularly if arrived under traumatic circumstances, may have experienced quite a different learning environment from those established – and often taken for granted – in the receiving institutions. A package of learning skills may be also acquired[25]. Another possible source of strain is given by the frequent conflict between some aspects of the social identity of foreign students and the cultural images established in the local culture. There is here a difficult process to manage in growing up as both a child of foreign immigrants *and* rightful participant in the local culture. Such processes may not be solved through pedagogical means. However, they can be acknowledged and somewhat eased by the establishment of social programs where these issues are dealt with systematically within a consistent educational vision.

Programs centered only on the school environment may run into difficulties as so many variables impacting school achievements are in fact located outside of the schools' world. Consequently, there have been attempts to find a more comprehensive strategy, able to locate the pupil not in isolation but as a member of an immigrant family, with its own stakes on the school experience of the offspring. Among the partners of the ERLAIM project, there are also attempts to integrate scholastic support to children of immigrants with a broader focus on their families. In Kiklees, a project has been developed aiming to provide comprehensive multicultural family support for both the students and their families[26]. In Bologna, a project supported by a private foundation in partnership with several schools has been providing an integrated package of school grants, teaching support and family counseling to a number of immigrant families willing to subscribe to an "educational pact" with the project[27]. In Andalucía, the adopted policy aims to integrate the educational action for the children of immigrants with the development of adequate adult education plans for their parents[28]. In Berlin, the current program stresses the need to strengthen the relationship between school institutions and

---

[25]. The programs developed within the Leeds Metropolitan University in this regard may be inspiring for other practitioners dealing with the same issue in different kinds and branches of their educational systems.

[26]. See the presentation of the project at: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/khandaanidhekbhal.htm

[27]. See the presentation of the project at: http://www.fondazionedelmonte.it/Progetti/Progetto-SeiPi%c3%b9.aspx

[28]. See the sixth goal at:
http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/averroes/lasvinas/colegio/interculturalidad/plan_edinmigrantes.htm

immigrant parents, through a variety of means, such as extended consultation hours, parent-teachers meetings and even the offer of language classes to parents.

On the issue of unaccompanied minors, it is well known that such segments of immigrant youths have specific and pressing integration problems. The association Sevilla Acoge has developed in the last years an innovative accommodation center for unaccompanied minors, Assalama, where the provision of shelter is intertwined with a specialized pedagogical project targeted to valorize the ethnic background of the minors in their integration process in Andalucía[29]. An alternative to institutionalized housing is of course the recourse to families willing to host the minor in need. Unaccompanied minors, however, face quite significant difficulties in being accepted in host-families. Besides being foreigners, their age is usually fairly high, making many potential host-families unwilling or uncertain in hosting them. An attempt is currently being made, by a project of the council of the city of Parma, of involving immigrant families from the same country of origins in their reception and hosting. It has many difficulties but it may greatly ease a smooth insertion in the local fabric.

---

[29]. See the documentation available at:
http://www.sevillaacoge.org/components/com_docman/dl2.php?archive=0&file=TUVNT1JJQV9TRVZ JTExBX0FDT0dFXzIwMDUucGRm.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities for the Integration of Migrants

Work Package 1 Policies towards Immigrant Women

A common policy area across the ERLAIM partners is triggered by the peculiarities of female migration and the challenge such peculiarities raise for integration policy. A significant segment of the immigrant women population in the ERLAIM areas is made of family reunited wives. Their arrival requires a restructuring of the insertion strategy of the whole family, a deep change in the family budget and very often a large integration into territorial services. A main concern with reunited wives is the fact that – at least for certain groups – their employment rate is fairly low. This may put a severe strain on the family budget, thus making necessary a higher recourse to welfare provisions. But it also implies that many work-related channels of social integration do not work for these immigrants that very often have smaller social networks and more limited linguistic proficiency in the receiving country language.

A second segment of women is made up of daughters of male immigrants, be they arriving from the home-country or born in the receiving country. The main area of tension here is the potential for conflicts and strains embedded in the existence of two generations within the same family, particularly when growing up in the receiving country places the girl under double crosscutting pressures in terms of attitudes, desires and lifestyle.

These two segments of immigrant women have always been present in migratory systems, although with different diffusion and centrality. Recent decades, however, have seen the significant development of female-led migratory flows, directed to provide a labour supply to the increasing demand, in many Western European countries, for domestic and care workers. These kinds of flows are particularly important in the Mediterranean countries, where a sizable segment of the care work labour market is provided by this kind of migratory systems[1]. The existence of migratory systems where a large majority of the flows is made by female domestic workers often creates situations in the receiving areas, which are difficult to manage through the established channels of local migration management. For example, many of these women live – at least in the initial phase of their settlement – in the same household as their employers, making them often isolated and difficult to reach. As reported by the Hlia ERLAIM partner, another source of difficulties is that many immigrant women employed in care work often live where there is a large supply of elderly natives. In Greece, this is particularly common in rural areas, particularly in comparatively isolated places. Another source of difficulty for the implementation of measures in this field is given by the fact that a proportion of women involved in these migratory systems practices various forms of circular migrations, with repeated spells of return in the country of origins or in a third country.

If policies toward immigrant women are difficult to implement, it is often the case that they are also difficult to design. Many policy-makers feel that the design of policies toward immigrant women is too often triggered by ethnic prejudices that policies then

---

[1]. Francesca Bettio, Annamaria Simonazzi, Paola Villa, 2006, *Change in care regimes and female migration: the 'care drain' in the Mediterranean*, "Journal of European Social Policy", Vol. 16, No. 3, 271-285.

end up reproducing rather than contrasting. There is the risk that policies for immigrant women, for example, take for granted their social weakness – thus ending up with a patronizing attitude – or define as "integration problems" what for many of these women are actually cherished values. On the contrary, ignoring the peculiarities of female migration, designing only generalized policies, may produce ineffective policies and very low participation among the women themselves. Many ERLAIM partners have stressed that any policy for immigrant women is in particular need of an adequate intercultural understanding. They should also be centred in empowering the women themselves rather than solely protecting them.

Difficult as this may be, nearly all ERLAIM partners have designed policies targeted explicitly to immigrant women. The contents of some of these are quite specific; in some areas there the emphasis is placed more on labour market participation, in others more on linguistics and social integration. However some policy targets are quite common: protection of foreign women from domestic violence of various kinds, empowerment, fighting trafficking and protecting its victims, creation of conditions conducive to a personal safety and autonomy in their interaction with the receiving context. In many cases, there is also the intention to facilitate the professional career of domestic workers that have in several cases fairly high educational credentials and precious work skills. The activities carried out by the ERLAIM partners are oriented towards integrating women into local conditions in ways that are often linked with programs for foreign children or with more general activities of intercultural mediation.

– **Andalucía** has sponsored both TV programs and specific forms of intercultural mediation, in order to reach immigrant women in an effective way. It has introduced programs protecting immigrant women both from gender-related violence and trafficking. There is the ambition to bring the policies toward immigrant women within the overall framework of gender policy, thus recognizing the fundamental similarities of many processes encountered by foreign and native women alike.

– **Barcelona** has a universalistic policy that tries as much as possible to produce diversified services and policies for different segments of its population. Consequently, there is a consistent attempt to bring the activities toward immigrant women within the general policies of the administration. Recognizing the existence of significant peculiarities, however, the administration has produced specific information materials and information session, as well as sponsoring events targeted both at immigrant women and at a better knowledge among natives of female migration issues.

– In **Berlin,** a major policy concern is to improve for immigrant women to the labour market. A second – and related - policy concern is the improvement of the German linguistic proficiency of immigrant women. There are also a variety of projects, run by NGOs supported by public funding, acting in the prevention of domestic violence and in empowerment of immigrant women, both within their community and in the society at large.

– **Emilia-Romagna** supports local initiatives targeted towards immigrant women in various fields. Funding is provided for linguistic courses taking place with modalities compatible with family and work life, job-training and placement, and the maintenance of socialization centres for care workers. The region also supports the centre for the protection of victimized women, both foreigners and natives, as well as activities in the health area. There are interesting experiences in the support of intercultural associations involving immigrant women of various backgrounds together with native women.

– **Slovenia** records various activities related to gender issues, most of the time carried out by NGOs and charities with support from public funding. There are also activities meant to protect foreign women from the risk of being trafficked for sexual exploitation. A specific field of activity is the protection from gender-related risks of asylum-seekers and refugees.

– **Valencia** focuses most activities in the field of training and social and labour market insertion. A main focus of activity is on the conciliation of family and work activities, with the aim of helping raise the immigrant women employment rate. Many of these activities are carried out in coordination with immigrant women associations, often thanks to EU funding.

– **Yorkshire and Humber** have a certain number of programs targeted to Black and Asian women, mostly in the area of prevention and repression of domestic abuse. These programs offer information, counselling and, when needed, protection through the management of safe accommodation. In various cities there are comprehensive resource centres for ethnic minority and immigrant women, providing both counselling, protection but also training and advocacy. There is also an initiative explicitly targeted to female asylum seekers, targeted to ease their entrance in the labour force. An aspect of the gender condition in this area not yet adequately address is the situation of women arriving in the country through arranged marriages as well as ethnic minority women forced into arranged marriages.

Immigration: Challenges and Opportunities in the ERLAIM Areas

erlaim

European Regional and Local Authorities
for the Integration of Migrants

Work Package 1
What is
missing:
Housing and
other Areas of
Insufficient
Action

The previous paragraphs have shown a wealth of policy initiatives and social services activities in the countries covered by the ERLAIM project. Many ERLAIM areas are trying to manage their migratory situation both with the strengthening of established policies and with various kinds of innovation. All ERLAIM partners have stressed that they acknowledge there is still much to do before it may be considered that an adequate immigration policy has been developed. In the last section of the report, it is worth stressing the areas where the ERLAIM partners encounter the highest difficulties, both for the nature of the phenomenon and for the constraints within which the ERLAIM partners operate.

To start with, all ERLAIM partners have faced difficulties concerning an adequate access for immigrants to decent housing. Immigration has a heavy impact on the housing stock as it is a process that by definition increases the demand of affordable housing in any given area. Moreover, immigration increases much quicker than construction, leading to market mismatches. Even if the housing market were perfectly elastic, however, it would remain that a disproportionate amount of immigrants have medium to low incomes, thus insisting on a segment of the housing market that is nearly anywhere in critical conditions. In recent years, moreover, the sharp growth in housing prices has made even more difficult for many households – native and foreigners alike – to get access to decent housing. The consequences are that in all the ERLAIM areas, the housing situation for immigrants is critical. A recent study carried out in the municipality of Nicosia has show how many foreigners live in overcrowded flats, lacking some important quality features. At the same time, the same study documents how foreigners have to pay quite a high rent for their flats. Other ERLAIM areas have described the existence on their territories of problems such as the birth of rudimentary shantytowns, rudimentary camps and families living in very dilapidated housing. The housing problem seems to be particularly widespread among the most recent arrivals. At the same time, all the ERLAIM partners have recognized housing is a key variable in the process of integration of migrants: their housing conditions are one of the main factors to determine their presence in the local society and their successive migratory career. Across the ERLAIM partners, there are a number of activities in the field of housing policy.

Andalucía has introduced a policy framework that stresses the right of the immigrant population to get an adequate housing on the same basis of natives. Measures have been introduced to increase the supply of flats for rent, as well as experimenting with accommodation suitable for seasonal and temporary workers. Emilia-Romagna has introduced a norm that allows foreigners to get access to subsidized housing on the same ground as natives. There are also specific measure introduce in order to avoid the overconcentration of immigrants in certain villages. The problem, however, is that the supply of subsidized housing is scarce for foreigners and natives alike. Recently, there have been certain attempts to increase the availability of housing for migrants through the support "auto-costruzione" initiatives, a process through which the public administration sponsors building projects where the prospective owners participate actively in the construction process. As the United Kingdom has a long tradition of

activities in the housing policy, it is not surprising that in this country the debate on how to guarantee an adequate housing to immigrant and ethnic minorities is highly developed[1]. Yorkshire and Humber provide an interesting example in this field, where a public-private partnership, the *Leeds Housing Partnership*, includes representatives of private landlords, voluntary housing organisations and members of the local authorities. The *Leeds Housing Partnership* has developed the organizational infrastructure to contribute to general urban policy including the development of a *Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy and Action Plan*, that will guide the action in this field from 2005 to 2010[2]. The action plan defines a number of measures that partners agree to attain during the life of the plan.

Even taking into account the above mentioned examples, housing policy is a field where it is difficult to be satisfied with the result. The most basic reason for this outcome is that any significant intervention in the housing field needs to mobilize a significant amount of financial resources. Moreover, any significant intervention in this area has to deal with the highly rigid network of organized interests typical of urban policy.

Besides housing, there are other concerns for integration policy at the local level that the ERLAIM partners still consider inadequately addressed. A brief review of these areas may provide a fruitful conclusion of this report, as it outlines the emerging priorities for the future.

A pressing concern in nearly all the ERLAIM areas concerns irregular migration, and the difficulties in developing an adequate integration policy at the local level when a significant segment of the foreign population lacks the legal pre-requisites for a stable participation in the local context. There are fears that the supply of irregular workers may strengthen the informal economy or reduce security. An effective management of the issue by national governments is in many crucial ways a pre-requisite for adequate integration policies at the regional and local levels.

A second pressing concern is with the increased religious heterogeneity of the local areas, where followers of minority religions, especially Islam, often find quite an outright opposition, or at least deep seated suspicions, from the majority native population. The construction of religious building is highly controversial in many ERLAIM regions and it triggers quite heavy debates.

In many areas, for example, there is a fear among policy-makers that the growth of the immigrant population may cause, pending the current budgetary constraints, a lowering of the quality of public services, as an increased demand is not matched by a comparable increase in the supply. Behind this fear, there is often the fact that the institutional context of many ERLAIM actors does attribute a disproportionate share of the migration-related costs to local authorities, while the large parte of migration-related benefits accrue either in national government budget or in the budget of employers.

---

[1]. A good review is available in Bob Blackaby and Kusminder Chahal, 2000, *Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategies: A Good Practice Guide*, London: The Chartered Institute of Housing.
[2] . See http://www.leedshousingpartnership.co.uk/

There are other concerns that seem to be limited to only a few ERLAIM areas, contingent upon their migratory history and economic structure. As shown in paragraph 3.5, many ERLAIM areas, particularly in the Mediterranean, are starting to face the issue of a successful integration of the offspring of immigrants, a phenomenon that require a complex restructuring of local policies in many fields. In other areas, the low rate of employment of immigrants and their over-representation in financially-assisted households is likely to be the most pressing issue of further concerns.