

MIGRATION, A JOURNEY INTO POVERTY ?

*A Caritas Europa study on poverty
and exclusion of immigrants in Europe*



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3RD REPORT ON POVERTY IN EUROPE
Brussels, June 2006

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FOREWORD

In today's Europe, immigrants are still generally regarded and approached as "strangers". Do we truly welcome these strangers ? Do we embrace them like good Samaritans ? Do we actively help them along the road to a better life, do we simply not care or worse still, do we cynically exploit their vulnerability to suit our own needs ?

"The just ordering of society and the State is a central responsibility of politics [...]"¹⁾

But in order for politics to take up that central responsibility, much more research is needed to better understand the specific challenges – and their root causes – faced by migrants in our societies with regard to discrimination, exclusion and poverty.

When we speak about social exclusion and poverty in today's Europe, are we sufficiently aware of the varying dimensions and perceptions of these phenomena, depending on ethnic, national or cultural origin ? Do we sufficiently take into account the root causes of migratory movements that brought immigrants in our midst ? This current report of Caritas Europa – a first attempt at such research – can offer some answers to these questions.

Our study into the links between immigration and poverty in Europe reveals a bleak picture of the living conditions of the 56.1 million migrants living in Europe²⁾, particularly for those 5 million who have irregular status.³⁾

In this report we provide evidence in 5 different areas that influence the social situation of migrants and their communities : **employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life.**

For each of these areas, the overwhelming conclusion is that migrants generally find themselves in a worse situation than the nationals. Moreover, within each of these 5 areas multiple "poverty traps" exist into which migrants risk to fall. Once they are caught in such a poverty trap, a domino effect snares them equally into a similar poverty trap in one of the other areas. This "poverty domino-effect" not only operates 'horizontally', but it also perpetuates itself 'vertically', i.e. into next generations of migrants living in Europe.

The social exclusion and poverty situations faced by migrants are complex and there are no easy solutions.

However, the knowledge that – simply because of their 'different' origin – whole generations of our European population often live shadowy underground lives that offer limited opportunities and that frequently lead to discrimination, exploitation and abuse, **must** motivate and inspire Christians, political decision makers and actors in civil society alike, to work and dialogue together in order to jointly find new ways of providing a 'level playing field' and equal opportunities for 'past' and 'present' immigrants into our societies.

1) Encyclical Letter DEUS CARITAS EST of the supreme pontiff BENEDICT XVI to the bishops, priests and deacons, men and women, religious and all the lay faithful on Christian love. Rome, 25 December, 2005, paragraph 28.

2) Including the European part of the USSR, source: Global Commission on International Migration, October 2005.

3) This is an estimate, in reality the figure may be much higher, but as these migrants are not registered, there are no reliable statistics.

In this respect, the words of Pope Benedict XVI are particularly inspiring for Caritas Europa and its members, as organisations of the lay faithful :

"[...] The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, on the other hand, is proper to the lay faithful. As citizens of the State, they are called to take part in public life in a personal capacity. So they cannot relinquish their participation "in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good". The mission of the lay faithful is therefore to configure social life correctly, respecting its legitimate autonomy and cooperating with other citizens according to their respective competences and fulfilling their own responsibility. Even if the specific expressions of ecclesial charity can never be confused with the activity of the State, it still remains true that charity must animate the entire lives of the lay faithful and therefore also their political activity, lived as "social charity"" 4)

These words constitute a clear call to action. Inspired by these words, Caritas Europa believes that in our approach to the links between poverty and migration, and in our dialogue on these themes with political decision makers, we need to be guided by principles of global solidarity in caring for and defending the human dignity of the "strangers" and in promoting the development of their full potential in their legitimate struggle for a dignified and meaningful life for themselves and their families.

Bringing migrants, especially those that are "undocumented" out of the shadows, and ensuring their access to the same rights as those enjoyed by their fellow European citizens with regard to employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life, will enhance legality, will help stabilise the European labour market, will improve living standards and will contribute to a "European Social Model" that we are fighting so hard to sustain.

Brussels, June 2006

Iosefina-Cristina Loghin
PRESIDENT OF CARITAS EUROPA



4) Encyclical Letter DEUS CARITAS EST of the supreme pontiff BENEDICT XVI, op. cit., paragraph 29.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is the third consecutive report on poverty in Europe published by Caritas Europa.

The first report, entitled "Report on Poverty in Europe" was published in 2001 and it gave an extensive overview of statistics with regard to poverty in all countries in Europe combined with the perspectives and experiences of Caritas organisations in all European countries.

The second report, entitled "Poverty has faces in Europe" was published in 2004 and it focused on families. Amongst others, it contained a detailed examination and analysis of the positive or negative effects of the presence or absence of specifically family-related policies on the situations of poverty and exclusion suffered particularly within families in all countries in Europe.

This current third report, entitled "Migration, a journey to poverty ?" is therefore a logical next step in the series. It focuses on the specific situations and risks of poverty and social exclusion of people who have migrated within or into our European continent.

Like its predecessors, this third Caritas Europa poverty report is based on research and on the real life, practical experiences and expertise of the 48 national Caritas member organisations in Europe and those of their diocesan, regional, local and parish structures that are engaging on a daily basis and at the local 'grass roots' level in responding to the needs of those living in situations of poverty or social exclusion. In bringing together and analysing these grass roots experiences and the supporting research, Caritas Europa took a multi-dimensional approach, in order to get a comprehensive overview of the social situation that migrants in Europe find themselves in.

Like its predecessors, the purpose of this report is twofold : On the one hand it aims to be an 'internal' reference and source document for the network of Caritas organisations in Europe and their partners in their daily work to respond to the needs of the poor and the excluded. On the other hand it aims to be an 'external', public document, bearing witness to the Caritas vision and to our practical experience on the subject matter.

Therefore the report also contains some key recommendations for policies to be adopted at European and national levels, which policies in the view of Caritas will contribute to a reduction of the double-headed phenomena of social exclusion and poverty.

This report is the fruit of a collaborative team effort by many in the European Caritas network. Caritas Europa wishes to acknowledge its gratitude for the contributions made by so many different "stakeholders" within this network in creating this report.

First and foremost, Caritas Europa is grateful for the expertise made available by the people who are at the very heart of Caritas action with and for the poor within our member organisations, at parish level, at diocesan level and at national level. Their experiences and their profound practical insights in the daily plight of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion throughout Europe have nourished our research and add a particular and fundamental value to this report.

Much appreciation is also due to the member organisations who have generously contributed financial means to enable and support Caritas Europa to carry out this project.

A special task force was charged with the hard work of conceptualising the work to be done, of collecting, compiling and analysing data, of writing the different chapters, of formulating conclusions and recommendations and of doing all this in a readable, logical and understandable format. Caritas Europa expresses its gratitude for this hard work to the members of this task force : **Andrij Waskowycz** (Caritas Ukraine, President of the Caritas Europa Social Policy Commission), **Martina Liebsch** (Caritas Germany, President of the Caritas Europa Migration Commission), **Zoltan Elekes** (Caritas Romania), **Oliviero Forti** (Caritas Italiana), **Jacqueline Tordoir** (Social Policy Officer of Caritas Europa), **Peter Verhaeghe** (Migration Officer of Caritas Europa) and **Bruno Kapfer** (consultant).

A special word of gratitude is owed to **Natallya Kaval kova** (Social Policy Assistant of Caritas Europa) who has provided valuable administrative and logistical support to the work of the above task force, and to **Chui Hsia Yong**, who was charged with the final text editing of the report, and with turning individual elements and contributions into 'a whole'.

Finally, we acknowledge with gratitude the creative work of **Annalisa Mazzella**, Caritas Europa Advocacy & Communication Officer, and her team, in presenting the end result in an attractive and professional lay-out.

Brussels, June 2006

Marius Wanders
SECRETARY GENERAL OF CARITAS EUROPA



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Caritas Europa Poverty Report describes and analyses immigrants' socio-economic conditions and needs, and identifies the key factors that can lead them into difficulties, possibly even poverty, in recipient countries.

Caritas Europa is particularly concerned about the conditions of irregular migrants – migrants without legally-required residency documents – and asylum-seekers. These groups seem to easily fall prey to social and economic deprivation.

Migrants are at risk of exclusion from **employment, housing, health and education. Participation in public life** is also a crucial issue, as it gives migrants the opportunity to influence policies affecting their needs and interests. The chapters of this report cover these five areas.

MIGRATION IN EUROPE

In the EU, around 20 million people are migrants (defined as third-country nationals with legal residence, thus excluding EU citizens). Some are here in search of a better life, escaping their countries' economic, social and political problems.

Generally speaking, a **migrant** is a person who has left his or her country of origin or residence and moved to another country to take up temporary or permanent residence. The term migrant refers to immigrants, refugees, persons under subsidiary forms of protection, asylum-seekers, persons seeking other forms of protection, migrants in an irregular situation and repatriates.

However, to do justice to migrants and their sometimes painful, even life-threatening experiences, it is important to distinguish between **forced migration** and **voluntary migration**.

Forced migration refers to migration with an element of coercion or threats to life and livelihood.

Examples of forced migration are movements of refugees and internally displaced persons, people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine or land development projects.

In forced migration, push factors include international economic turbulence, poverty, environmental decline, lack of peace and safety, human rights violations and lack of democratic and judicial systems.

Voluntary migration is usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate is made freely by the individual.

FACTORS LEADING TO THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF MIGRANTS

In many European countries, a distinction is made between the right to reside in the country and the right to seek employment. As a result, some immigrants, although legally living in the country, are not allowed to work.

The higher incidence of atypical employment among immigrants – temporary jobs, part-time jobs and so on – makes these people vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. Immigrants working in the informal sector are more likely to be excluded from secure forms of employment and to experience discontinuity of services, irregularity in types of contracts and general insecurity in their work and daily lives.

Informally employed people, particularly if also irregular in terms of residence status, have a much weaker position vis-à-vis their employers. They are much more likely to earn below-average wages, be deprived of social rights and benefits such as holiday and sick leave, and to work longer hours.





Also, considerable practical barriers prevent immigrants from accessing housing markets. Throughout Europe, there is a shortage of council or social housing as a result of a more market-driven mentality and increased privatisation of publicly-owned dwellings. In some countries, housing agencies cannot meet the demand caused by the rise of poverty.

Landlords in the private rental market are unwilling to rent to immigrants, particularly if the property is valuable and in good condition. In some areas, property owners take advantage of the desperate situation of immigrants and offer poor quality dwellings to them at unreasonable prices.

Many immigrants live concentrated in unpopular districts. Appalling living conditions reveal an extreme exploitation of vulnerable households. There are huge differences in housing quality compared with non-immigrant households.

For many Caritas beneficiaries, poor housing and costs such as exorbitant rent, gas, electricity and water charges place a huge burden on their household budgets.

Often, the precarious living conditions of immigrants (inadequate housing, poor nutrition, dangerous and low-paid jobs) lead to illness, which leads to poverty. A migrant who is sick may not have access to treatment and is therefore unable to work. In countries where the right to stay is linked to a work permit, migrants who lose their jobs also lose their legal status.

Immigrants do not always receive the same level of healthcare as the average population in terms of consultation, treatment and preventive services. Most countries provide only essential care or emergency treatment to non-citizens. Legal systems distinguish between regular and irregular migrants and between refugees and asylum-seekers.

Caritas Europa is particularly concerned about asylum-seekers and irregular migrants. In several

countries, these people have limited or no access to healthcare. A substantial number of seasonal migrant farm workers, for instance, are never registered as employees and therefore do not receive sickness benefits or sick leave if they fall ill.

Other factors such as poor access to education and training, as well as limited opportunity to participate in democratic processes also contribute to the impoverishment of many migrant groups. They are left without the means to develop the necessary resources that would allow them to escape from poverty.

CONCLUSIONS

Caritas experience and a broad variety of research show that large numbers of immigrants in Europe live in poverty. Many others are in a precarious state, at grave risk of impoverishment.

In employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life, there are many barriers to immigrants; by law, by administrative practice or simply from practical obstacles. Some immigrants are legally excluded from health services. In all countries, at least some jobs are reserved for nationals only.

These disadvantages are aggravated by discrimination. And the result of these factors combined is exclusion and even exploitation of immigrants.

Nowadays, employment, housing or health problems are not only acute in the initial stage after arrival but they continue for many years. Evidence suggests that employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life are intertwined. People experiencing difficulties in one of these areas are likely to be having trouble in the other areas as well.

Disadvantaged groups resort to employment or housing in the informal market. Shadow economies appear to be growing, increasing the risk of a drift into marginalisation for those caught up in them.

These pressures can affect mental health, especially when combined with other risk factors such as past traumas. Refugees and asylum-seekers are particularly vulnerable.

Throughout Europe, the **groups most at risk of poverty are irregular migrants and asylum-seekers**. It is clear that government policies aim to deter these two groups from settling in by making conditions for them as difficult as possible.

From available research it appears that other high risk migrant groups are sub-Saharan Africans, Turks, Moroccans, migrant women, children of migrants and elderly migrants.

Poverty can be passed on from generation to generation. Having an immigrant background can cast a shadow over the lives of children of migrants. They are often under-qualified, have few prospects in the labour market and live with others in the same situation. These communities feel that they are of little use to society.

And migrants have little or no chance of changing their situation through participation in the political process. If even being a citizen does not help against discrimination, exclusion and poverty, European immigration policies could be considered a failure.

Finally, it has to be noted that there are still too few studies, on a handful of countries, which look into poverty and the risks faced by immigrants. More research is needed, and on a Europe-wide basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure ratification and application of international and national laws and legal instruments that strengthen the rights of immigrants.
2. Open channels for legal labour immigration.
3. Implement policies for social inclusion of immigrants, including targeted measures where necessary.
4. Strengthen education policies as a powerful tool for poverty reduction.
5. Remove barriers to the full development of the potential of immigrants.
6. Increase EU Structural Funds to improve the situation of immigrants in the financial period 2007-2013.
7. Encourage and support the participation of immigrants in public life.
8. Counter the demonisation of immigration by promoting the advantages of an open immigration policy.
9. Promote Europe-wide research on discrimination against immigrants in employment, housing, healthcare, education and participation in public life.





INTRODUCTION : THE LINK BETWEEN POVERTY AND MIGRATION

Today, it is easier than it has ever been for people to move around. This and the influence of the media and differences in living conditions have contributed to a growing trend in migration in search of safety or a better life.

Migration and poverty are not always connected. Yet, Caritas Europa knows from years of caring for migrants in Europe that the individual's migration project can quickly turn into an experience of deprivation, often leading to poverty.

Pope John Paul II observed : "In our own time, there are so many needs which demand a compassionate response from Christians. Our world is entering the new millennium burdened by the contradictions of an economic, cultural and technological progress which offers immense possibilities to a fortunate few, while leaving millions of others not only on the margins of progress but in living conditions far below the minimum demanded by human dignity. How can it be that even today there are still people dying of hunger ? Condemned to illiteracy ? Lacking the most basic medical care ? Without a roof over their heads ?" ⁵⁾

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country"⁶⁾. Nevertheless, migrants face a number of challenges that make their lives precarious. The social and economic systems in the receiving countries are so different from those of their native countries. The situations they face are different even in comparison with those experienced by others in society.

Caritas Europa is particularly concerned about the conditions of irregular migrants – migrants without legally-required residency documents – and asylum-seekers. These groups seem to easily fall prey to social and economic deprivation.

In Caritas Europa's 2001 'Report on Poverty in Europe'⁷⁾, poverty was described as a *multi-dimensional* and *multi-factorial phenomenon*, deeply affecting human beings' identity and capabilities. Poverty strikes societies on every level; affecting sick people, children, the elderly, families⁸⁾ and migrants, who are especially at risk of exclusion.

Within the EU, immigrants are mostly seen as people at risk of falling into poverty. A report from 2004 states that "While member states identify immigrants among those particularly at risk of poverty and social exclusion, many countries still fail to provide in-depth analysis of the factors leading to this situation. Little attention is given to promoting access to resources, rights, goods and services, in particular to appropriate healthcare⁹⁾".

This Caritas Europa report describes and analyses immigrants' socio-economic conditions and needs, and identifies the key factors that can lead them into difficulties, possibly even poverty, in the receiving countries.

In the experience of Caritas Europa, migrants are at risk of exclusion from **employment, housing, health and education. Participation in public life** is also a crucial issue, as it gives migrants the opportunity to influence policies affecting their needs and interests. The chapters of this report cover these five areas.

5) Apostolic letter NOVO MILLENNIO INEUNTE of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the bishops, clergy and lay faithful at the close of the great jubilee of the year 2000, Vatican, 6 January, 2001.

6) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly of the United Nations, resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948, article 13 (2).

7) Caritas Europa: Report on Poverty in Europe, Brussels, 2001.

8) Caritas Europa: Poverty has faces in Europe, 2nd report on poverty in Europe, Brussels, 2004.

9) European Commission: First Annual Report on Migration and Integration, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, 16.07.2004, p. 20.



There are many contributions from Caritas Europa member organisations in this report. Member organisations are in close contact with the migrant populations through the wide range of services they provide. The European network of 48 Caritas organisations is in the unique position of being able to provide information and insight into the phenomena of migration and poverty, especially since many services for migrants are aimed at people living in poverty or at risk of poverty.

Migration has an impact not only on the receiving countries, but also on the countries of origin. However, the relationship between poverty and emigration is not examined in depth here. Instead, focus is placed on the situation of immigrants in their new country.

The terms poverty and migration, defined from a Caritas point of view, are explained below. Other terms used in this report are explained in the glossary.

■ Poverty : a multidimensional phenomenon

"Some scholars have measured poverty using total household expenditure as the key indicator. [...] Other scholars have drawn a distinction between intermittent poverty, overall poverty and extreme poverty"¹⁰.

The academic approach to poverty is economic, through indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP). GDP measures the financial value a country produces, through its own activities. However, this indicator does not take into consideration the informal labour market or economic activity where money is not exchanged, such as barter or the work of housewives.

GNP is the value of all goods and services produced in a year by the nationals of a country, including profits from outside the country.

These indicators are not always the best tools with which to arrive at a definition of poverty. The UN Human Development Index (HDI) overcomes the problem of addressing the complexities of poverty by including not only financial values, but also indicators for health, education, the environment and mortality.

Nevertheless, attempting to fit ideas of wealth and poverty into a quantitative framework results in too many shades of the unquantifiable. For this reason, Caritas Europa developed a definition of poverty as a "multi-dimensional and multi-factorial phenomenon [...] based not solely on income [...] but including basic needs, basic human rights and such intangibles as vulnerability, risk, inequality, marginalisation, discrimination, exclusion, a feeling of powerlessness, and the circumscribing of options and choices"¹¹.

Caritas Europa believes that reducing poverty is a process which goes far beyond material and financial assistance. It includes setting up mechanisms to diminish vulnerability and discrimination, and to promote social inclusion.

Poverty and exclusion are interlinked. Being unable to earn a living not only limits financial possibilities, but also excludes people from access to social networks. People who are out of work need friends and access to associations so that they can find a job and feel part of the community. Having the right to vote also gives people the opportunity to make sure that their needs and interests are taken into account.

Poverty is not defined only by economic and social indicators or by the point of view of the

10) Caritas Europa: Poverty has faces in Europe, 2nd report on poverty in Europe, op. cit., p. 17.

11) Caritas Europa: Report on Poverty in Europe, op. cit., p. 11.

receiving society, but is influenced also by the points of view of the individual migrants. Although at the root of every migration is the dream of well-being, each migrant perceives his or her situation differently. To someone coming from a developing country, the idea of a home with running water and heating can be such an improvement that it does not matter that the rooms are too small.

Discomfort is relative, and conditions that are lower than the average for the receiving country might be more than satisfactory for someone used to greater discomfort. By the same token, migrants who did not come from a context of deprivation are usually more sensitive to poorer conditions.

This does not mean that people who are used to living among poverty do not feel deprivation, but rather that they tend to meet it with more resilience.

These considerations in no way justify unequal or bad treatment of immigrants. Rather, they suggest that analysis of the relationship between poverty and immigration must consider not only the conditions and opportunities in the receiving country but also those of the country of origin. In this way the gap, sometimes quite wide, between objective indicators and the individual perceptions about such things as economic hardship might be better understood.

■ Opportunities and challenges of human mobility

"When we use the term 'migration', it is not immediately clear what is meant. Traditionally, it has been associated with some notion of permanent settlement, or at least long-term sojourn. In reality, it is a sub-category of a more general concept of movement, embracing a wide variety of types and forms of human mobility"¹²⁾.

Many people are forced to leave their countries following crises such as famine, wars, political persecutions and environmental disasters such as floods, hurricanes, drought and desertification. Others leave simply because better transport facilities make it possible to do so. But many also leave driven by a perceived lack of realistic opportunities at home for a meaningful and dignified life.

Around 175 million people – about 3% of the world's population – live in a country other than where they were born. Migration has more than doubled since 1970. According to the UN, 60% of the world's migrants reside in more developed regions and 40% in less developed regions. Most of the world's migrants, defined as "people born abroad" live in Europe (56 million), Asia (50 million) and Northern America (41 million)¹³⁾.

In the EU, around 20 million people are migrants (defined as third-country nationals with legal residence, thus excluding EU citizens). Some are here in search of a better life, escaping their countries' economic, social and political problems.

Generally speaking, a **migrant** is a person who has left his or her country of origin or residence and moved to another country to take up temporary or permanent residence. The term migrant refers to immigrants, refugees, persons under subsidiary forms of protection, asylum-seekers, persons seeking other forms of protection, migrants in an irregular situation and repatriates.

However, to do justice to migrants and their sometimes painful, even life-threatening experiences, it is important to distinguish between **forced migration** and **voluntary migration**.

Forced migration refers to migration with an element of coercion or threats to life and livelihood. Examples of forced migration are movements of



12) Salt, J., *Current Trends in International Migration in Europe*, Council of Europe, November 2001, p. 3.

13) United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: *International Migration Report 2002*, United Nations, New York, 2002, p. 2.

refugees and internally displaced persons, people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine or land development projects¹⁴⁾.

In forced migration, 'push factors' include international economic turbulence, poverty, environmental decline, lack of peace and safety, human rights violations and lack of democratic and judicial systems. 'Pull factors' include the lure or reputation of the intended host societies as places that are perceived to offer an abundance of wealth and opportunities coupled with adequate (social) protection systems.

Voluntary migration is usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate is made freely by the individual.

The labour shortage in several destination countries represents another strong pull factor for migrants. Often, migrants represent a fundamental resource for entire sectors in countries whose economies require more workers.

"Today, in an increasingly globalized economy, migration often provides employment opportunities, giving rise to an unprecedented flow of migrants [...]. At the same time, there are growing numbers of refugees and people internally displaced by natural disasters, armed conflict, social unrest, or economic and political crises. International migratory movements have big economic, socio-cultural and demographic impacts on sending, transit and receiving areas"¹⁵⁾.

Caritas Georgia observes that people are forced to leave the country to earn money abroad.

When even one family member can work abroad she or he can earn money for the family. According to Caritas Georgia, migration has a negative effect because it brings about a brain drain of highly qualified specialists and it splits families. In many cases, only one family member or only the parents go abroad and the children stay with their grandparents or other relatives.

The presence of big multinational companies in developing countries, international trade and tourism, and the growth of mass media controlled by Western countries favour "anticipated socialisation" towards values and behaviour patterns of the Western world.

The transfer of real-time information about earning opportunities, housing, immigration regulations, tolerance of dubious documentation and petty crime, reception and assistance measures, and acts of regularisation or amnesties also facilitate international migration flows.

Inhibitory factors include restrictive measures on immigration and significant cultural differences, which might discourage prospective migrants.

Caritas Italy reports that in 2002, the Italian government adopted the *Bossi-Fini* law. Also known as the Legislative Decree No. 189, it contains restrictive provisions such as a ban on sponsoring of migrants, a tightening of work supply-and-demand mechanisms, a ban on staying in Italy for more than six months while unemployed and an extension of period of residence from five to six years to obtain the long residence permit (*carta di soggiorno*).

14) Migration itself can be dangerous. Since 1995, more than 3,600 bodies have been found in the desert on the US-Mexico border. However, it is estimated that the real number of victims is two to three times higher. According to Carim, the Euro-Mediterranean consortium for applied research on international migration, between 1989 and 2002, 8,000 to 10,000 immigrants died or disappeared as they tried to enter Spain from Morocco. PICUM: Newsletter, December 2005.
Available at: <http://www.picum.org/Homepage/NewsletterDec2005/NEWS%20ENGL%2012-05.doc> (last accessed 09.03.2006)

15) United Nations Population Fund: *State of World Population 2004, The Cairo Consensus at Ten: Population, Reproductive Health and the Global Effort to End Poverty*, UNFPA, 2004, p. 25.
Available at <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/detail.cfm?ID=197&filterListType=> (last accessed 08.03.2006)

MIGRATION AND WEALTH

The core of Caritas Europa's mission is to deal with the poor, the marginalised and the excluded. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that immigrants make a significant contribution to the wealth of their country of origin, for example by transferring remittances which are twice as high as official development aid¹⁶⁾, as well as contributing to economic prosperity in their receiving country. Contrary to commonly-held prejudices, the value of the monetary contribution made by immigrants to the social system in their receiving countries exceeds the costs of social benefits granted to immigrants¹⁷⁾.

Also, it is widely recognised that immigrants contribute to the diversity and level of innovation of the receiving societies through their entrepreneurship and the culture, skills and services that they bring with them from their countries of origin¹⁸⁾.



16) International Organization for Migration: World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits of International Migration, IOM, Geneva, July, 2005. Available at: <http://www.iom.int/iomwebsite/Publication/ServletSearchPublication?event=detail&tid=4171> (last accessed 09.03.2006)

17) International Organization for Migration: "Too Many Myths And Not Enough Reality On Migration Issues, Says IOM's World Migration Report 2005", Press release, No. 882 - 22 June 2005. Available at: http://www.iom.int/en/news/pr882_en.shtml (last accessed 30.03.2006)

18) International Organization for Migration: World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits of International Migration, op. cit., p. 188.



CHAPTER 1.

EMPLOYMENT : BRINGING MIGRANTS' POTENTIAL TO LIGHT

"Immigration can be a resource for development rather than an obstacle to it [...] These people come from less privileged areas of the earth and their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labour need which would otherwise remain unfilled in sectors and territories where the local workforce is insufficient or unwilling to engage in the work in question"¹⁹⁾.

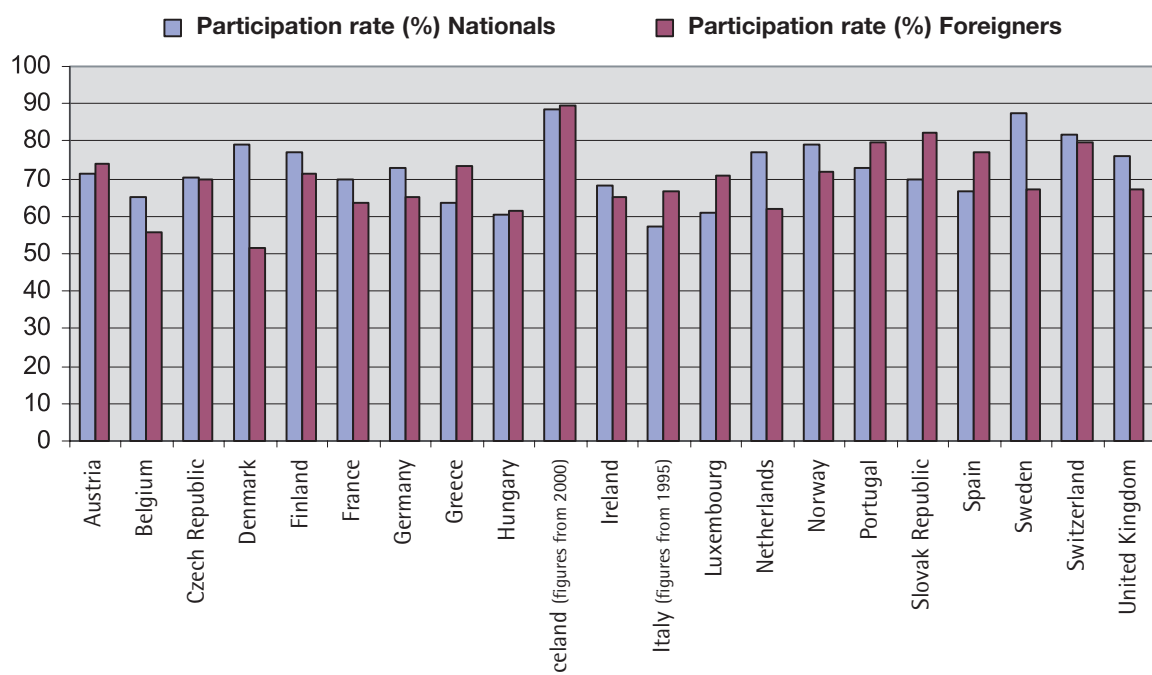
"Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of temptation to exploit foreign labourers, denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination"²⁰⁾.

■ Participation in the labour force

National economic data and indicators vary in their quality, coverage, method of production and even their underlying definitions. Given the variations, a direct comparison of the data on inequalities in European labour markets is not possible. However, the available information²¹⁾ does provide an overview of the employment situation of migrants in Europe.

LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFP RATE)

The labour force participation rate (LFP rate) gives a measure of the proportion of an economy's working-age population that is economically active.



19) Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, Vatican City, 2005, paragraph 297.

20) Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, *ibid.*, paragraph 298.

21) OECD (Organisation for economic co-operation and development) *"Trends in international migration: SOPEMI 2004 edition"*, 2005; pp. 59, 87.

Among 21 OECD countries, the LFP rate of nationals ranges from around 60% in Italy, Hungary and Luxembourg to over 80% in Switzerland, Sweden and Iceland.

In 12 OECD countries, the LFP rate for immigrants is lower than that of nationals. And in five of those countries the difference is substantial : in Denmark the difference is 27.6%, in Sweden 20.1%, in the Netherlands 14.9%, in Belgium 9.5% and in the UK 8.8%.

By contrast, the LFP rate of immigrants is more than 10% higher than that of nationals in the Slovak Republic, Italy, Spain, Greece and Luxembourg.

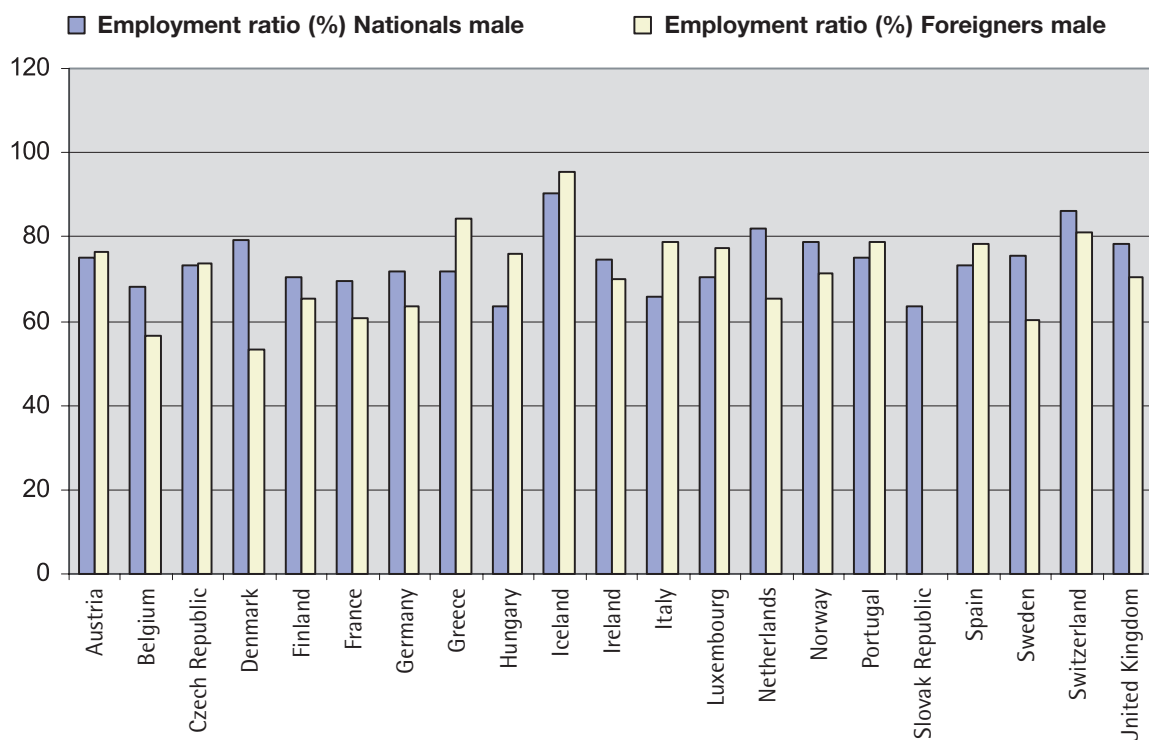
The differing LFP rates demonstrate that the extent to which migrants are involved in the labour market varies widely from one country to the next. See Annex 1 for a table summarising the available data.

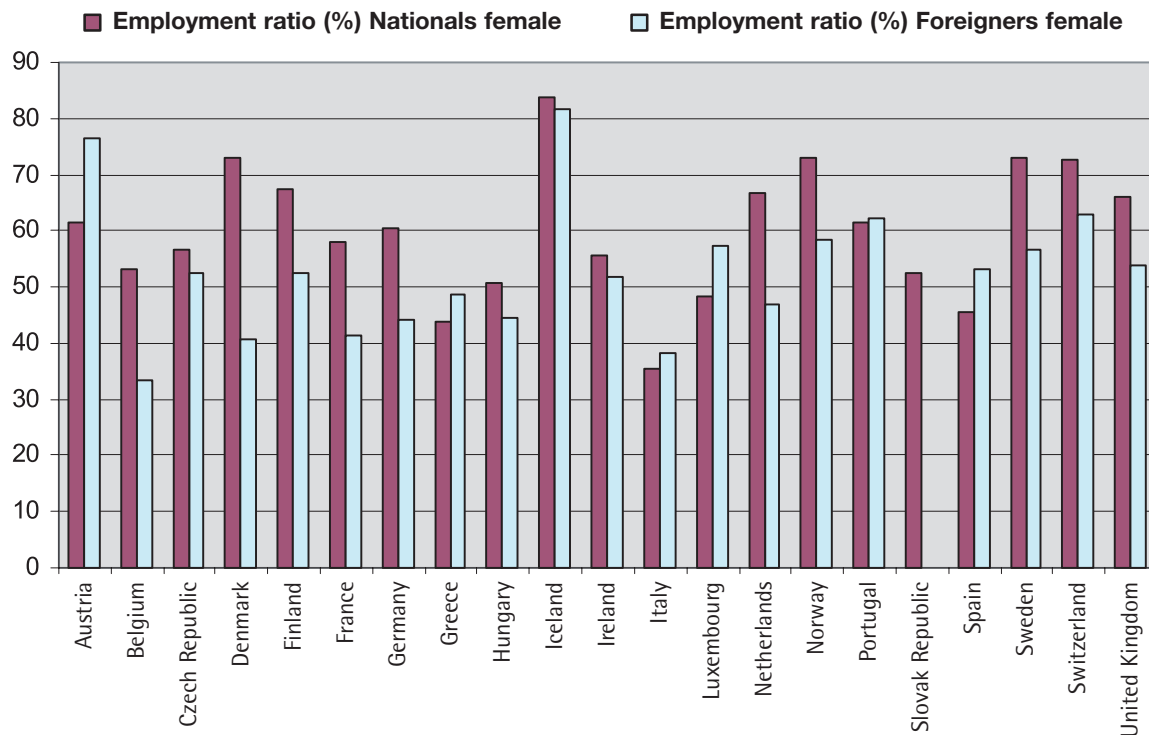
EMPLOYMENT RATE

Employment rates of nationals also vary : it is less than 60% in Italy, Hungary and Greece and over 70% in Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland (see Annex 2).

And for immigrants, the rate of employment ranges from less than 50% in Belgium, Denmark and France to over 70% in Portugal and Switzerland and even 88.5% in Iceland.

In 13 out of the 21 selected OECD countries the employment rate of immigrants is lower than that of nationals. In Greece, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain, however, the employment rate of immigrants is markedly higher.





In a 2003 study, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) observed that there are considerable differences in the employment rate if it is broken down by the migrant's country or region of origin :

"People from Western and Southern Europe living in another EU country and immigrants from other industrialised countries have similar or even higher employment rates (EU : 67%; North America, Australia : 76% compared to 66% for the EU average) and lower unemployment rates than the EU average.

Employment rates for workers from Central and Eastern Europe are also close to the EU average although somewhat lower. Immigrants from other parts of the world have substantially lower employment and higher unemployment rates. Employment rates for workers born in North Africa are around 50% or just above"²²⁾.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

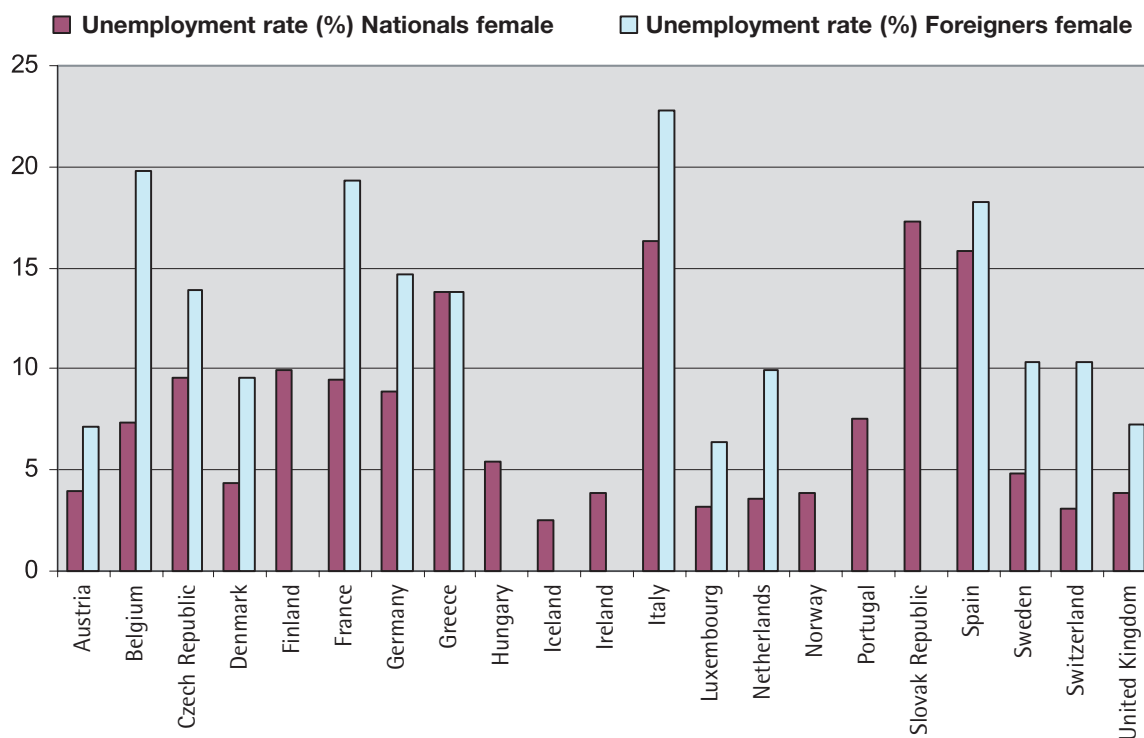
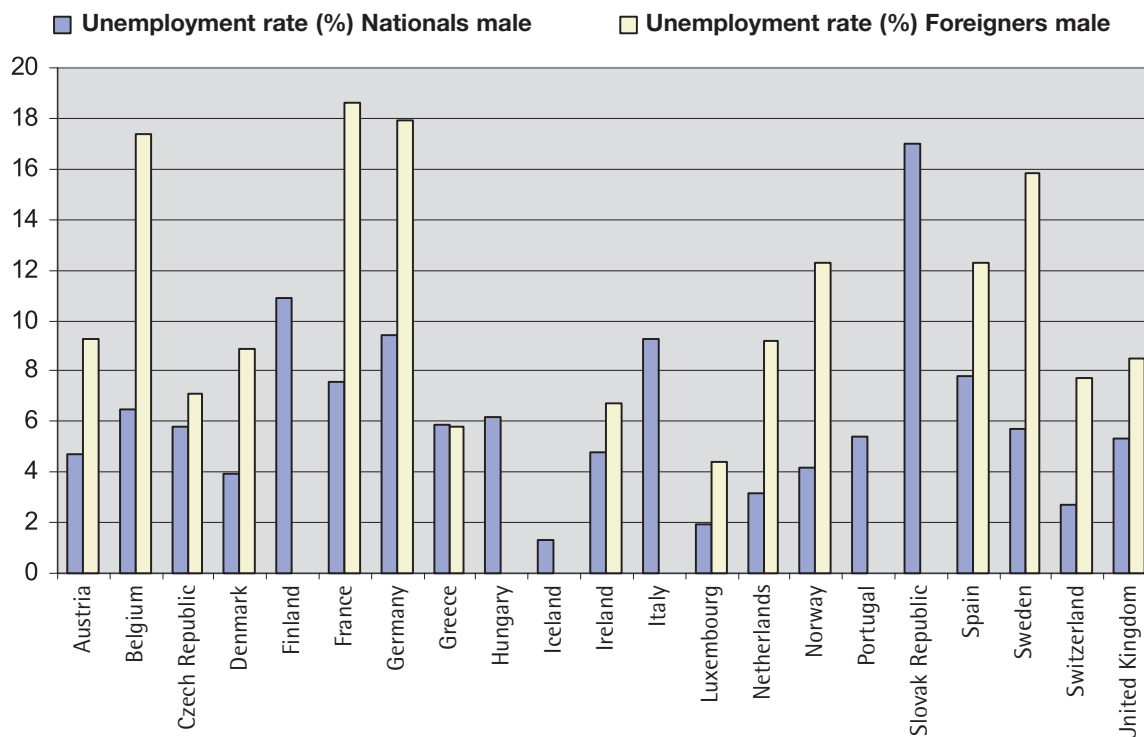
The unemployment rate shows the numbers of people who are available on the labour market but who do not have a job.

Among OECD countries there are big differences in the unemployment rate of nationals, ranging from less than 3% in Iceland, Luxembourg and Switzerland to over 10% in Spain, Italy and the Slovak Republic (see Annex 2).

The unemployment rate of immigrants ranges from 5% to 10% in Luxembourg, Ireland and the UK to over 18% in Belgium, Finland and France.

In all countries except Greece, the unemployment rate of immigrants is higher than that of nationals. The difference is especially big in Belgium, France, Finland and Sweden.

22) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, Equality and Diversity for an inclusive Europe, EUMC Comparative Studies, Vienna, October 2003, pp. 29-30.



The EUMC states that "unemployment rates of EU migrants in Spain and Portugal are even lower than the unemployment rates of nationals. In Germany, Turkish nationals face significantly higher

unemployment rates than EU nationals (as well as higher rates than former Yugoslavs), which is also true in other countries such as Austria, Finland and France"²³⁾.

23) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: *Migrants, minorities and employment: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union*, ibid., p. 32.

In Sweden, a working paper of the Trade Union Institute for Economic Research found that "immigrants from non-European countries run a risk of unemployment that is twice the corresponding risk for native workers. The conclusion is that discriminatory behaviour and stereotype beliefs must be involved. The results indicate that the existing income-gap between immigrants and natives in Sweden is almost entirely due to unequal employment opportunities"²⁴.

Caritas France reports that the unemployment rate of immigrants from other EU member states is similar to that of the French population, whereas for third-country nationals, it can be much higher : about 30% among Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians, Turks and immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Caritas Belgium states that the vast majority of workers of North African and Turkish origin are to be found in low salary sectors. In comparison, immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa are less disadvantaged, followed by immigrants from Italy and from southern European countries. Belgian-born people and immigrants from neighbouring countries (the Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, Germany and the UK), on the other hand, tend to have white collar worker status, work in the services sectors and enjoy a higher salary.

Caritas Norway reports that unemployment among refugees is much higher than among the general population.

There are a number of interrelated reasons why refugees have greater problems in the labour market than the rest of the population : short periods of residence in the country, lack of language skills, lack of (or unwanted) job skills or education and lack of knowledge about working life. Moreover, many refugees encounter discrimination in the labour market.

■ Unequal opportunities

LEGAL BARRIERS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

A huge number of immigrants face restricted access to the labour market. Irregular migrants are among those most affected, along with other categories of migrants.

Preventing asylum-seekers from entering the labour market

In several European countries, asylum-seekers are not allowed to take up work or can do so only after a waiting period²⁵. There are various approaches. In some countries, for example Germany in 1997, a general exclusion from employment was introduced for asylum-seekers in the 1990s. In Slovenia, asylum-seekers can only work up to 30 hours a month. In Austria, asylum-seekers rarely receive permission to work. They are only allowed to take seasonal jobs of one to four months.

The denial of access for asylum-seekers to the regular labour market is often used as an instrument to prevent them from settling in. Caritas Europa member organisations throughout Europe report enormous difficulties for asylum-seekers because of exclusion from the labour market²⁶. It is the group worst affected by unemployment.

Caritas Austria reports that since January 2006 the spouse of an Austrian citizen, who holds a residence permit, is allowed to work. However, it is difficult for asylum-seekers who marry an Austrian citizen to obtain a residence permit during the asylum procedure without first returning to their country of origin. This effectively excludes asylum-seekers from the labour market.

24) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia : Migrants, minorities and employment: Exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, *ibid.*, annex, table A7, pp. 14-17.

25) Liebaut, F., Legal and social conditions for asylum-seekers and refugees in Western European countries, Danish Refugee Council, 2000, (respective updates for 2003-2004 available at: <http://www.ecre.org/conditions/index.shtml>, last accessed 24.03.2006), as well as Liebaut, F., Legal and social conditions for asylum-seekers and refugees in Central and Eastern European countries, Danish Refugee Council, 1999.

26) For example Caritas Austria, Caritas Belgium, Caritas Denmark, Caritas Germany, Caritas Italy, Caritas Lithuania, Caritas Norway, Caritas Poland, Caritas Slovenia and Caritas organisations in the UK.



Caritas in action : CARITAS SWITZERLAND

Promotion of professional, social and personal skills for asylum seekers and refugees

Caritas Switzerland offers many courses to asylum seekers and refugees, in order to provide them with better integration into the labour market as well as promoting their personal skills in case of eventual return. As a prerequisite for participating in these courses, participation in a basic German language course is required. In this language course, Caritas aims at three levels of learning results : increased vocabulary knowledge, better understanding of spoken and written language and basic grammatical knowledge, which three levels all contribute to the social and personal skills. Following this language course, Caritas offers professional training courses in areas such as woodwork (maintenance and care of tools, small machinery, building materials/sorts of wood), cooking (basic food preparation, hygienic principles, correct presentation and serving), typing on PC keyboards and introduction courses to information technology. As a next step on the way towards qualification for employment, the graduates of these courses are offered the opportunity to put into practice what they learned and to gain a first work experience in mobile teams in various sectors, such as painting and cleaning work, furniture removals, environment work, maintenance work etc. Additionally, Caritas offers specific courses for women in areas such as healthcare, nutrition, baby and child care and care for sick people.



Caritas Bulgaria reports that asylum-seekers may work during the refugee status determination procedure that takes one to six months. However, the length of processing time and the limited financial and practical support from the state mean that many seek to resettle in other countries. This limits their willingness to learn Bulgarian and to adapt to Bulgarian society, according to Caritas Bulgaria.

The work permit system as a legal barrier

In many European countries, a distinction is made between the right to reside in the country and the right to seek employment. As a result, some immigrants, although legally living in the country, are not allowed to work.

Many Caritas organisations say that a system that requires a separate work permit creates difficulties in finding paid employment, at least for some groups of immigrants. For example, in some countries, spouses of migrants who arrive under family reunification provisions are excluded from the labour market.

In some European countries, refugees face barriers to the labour market. While in most cases these are obstacles such as lack of language proficiency, difficulties in recognition of qualifications and so on, several countries put up legal barriers.

Caritas Turkey reports that if people with refugee status want to work, they have to apply to the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Work and Social Security for a work permit. However, the right to work remains very much a 'theoretical' possibility. And there are very few jobs that a refugee could do without this permit, such as working in private houses as a cleaner.

Tolerated but not allowed into society

Caritas Belgium sees other categories of immigrants who cannot legally work. For example, people who have received an order to leave the country but who cannot do so for reasons beyond their control are 'tolerated' on Belgian territory but they have neither the right to work nor to any kind of social assistance, except if they are granted assistance after appealing to the Labour Court.

Some people who are rejected in the asylum procedure but who are covered by the '*non-refoulement*'²⁷⁾ clause receive extensions of their 'order to leave the country'. These people do not have the right to work but are eligible for social assistance.

For years, Caritas Belgium has been fighting a case-by-case struggle to achieve solutions for individuals and a more humane approach by the legal system.

NON-RECOGNITION OF DIPLOMAS

Throughout Europe, the non-recognition of formal qualifications is reported by many Caritas organisations as a barrier to employment.

Caritas Belgium, for instance, sees that the non-recognition of diplomas and the duration of procedures for having papers recognised frequently cause unemployment. Often, people have to appeal to higher levels of public administration or to redo some part of their studies. Asylum-seekers, recognised refugees, people whose residence have been regularised and people arriving in Belgium under the family reunification scheme are the groups most affected by this problem.

Caritas Belgium also reports that the unemployment rate among Turkish, North African and sub-Saharan African people is much higher than that of Belgian-born people and EU citizens. This is true even if they have qualifications equal to those of Belgians.

As a consequence, people facing these problems often accept employment far below their competences. **Caritas France** observes that people so affected tend to work in dangerous and poorly-paid occupations.

Caritas Armenia, Caritas Austria and Caritas Poland report that at best, highly-qualified refugees can only find jobs requiring low qualifications, with low salaries.

Caritas organisations in the UK state that skills of highly-trained refugees are often ignored. Many refugees with skills in engineering, science and medicine – areas where Britain desperately needs more key workers – are unemployed or underemployed, working in low-level jobs. According to findings of the British Refugee Council and the Commission for Racial Equality, these people could be retrained and prepared for more suitable employment.

DISCRIMINATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Exclusion from specific jobs

Even if granted the right to work in Europe, immigrants are excluded from certain jobs, particularly in the public sector²⁸⁾. In Belgium, posts from which third-country nationals are automatically excluded account for some 20% of all jobs.

Caritas Bulgaria observes that immigrants are excluded from certain kinds of jobs because unemployment in Bulgaria is relatively high. Also, jobs deemed unattractive for Bulgarians are mostly done by the gypsy population.

In France immigrants are ineligible for, or have restricted access to, 7 million jobs (30% of all the jobs in France, including in the private sector). Restrictions are not limited to positions in core government services, but include medical personnel and teachers²⁹⁾. In Austria and Greece, third-country

27) The '*non-refoulement*' principle prohibits the expulsion of persons whose life or freedom would be threatened. (Geneva refugee Convention, article 33).

28) European Commission: Freedom of movement of workers – achieving the full benefits and potential, Communication from the commission, Brussels, 11.12.2002, p. 18f.

29) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., p. 54.



nationals are generally excluded from employment in the civil service. **Caritas Belarus** reports that immigrants cannot work in schools, national enterprises or other state institutions.

Discrimination in hiring procedures

There is a lot of research to show that attitudes in recruitment procedures vary depending on whether the vacancy announcement is aimed at national candidates or candidates of foreign origin. This could include misleading vacancy announcements, adulteration of recruitment procedures, and different information about the position and working conditions depending on the target group.

A 1997 study in Belgium conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), followed job seekers for three months³⁰⁾. They found that :

- 50% of the job seekers faced at least one instance of discriminatory behaviour in the course of an application;

- Of the 115 recruitment procedures, 27% involved a discriminatory reaction; in 45% of the cases it was possible to verify the discriminatory behaviour through comparing two candidates (one Belgian, the other not) presenting, one after the other, for the same job;
- Women are more frequently targets of discrimination than men; highly-qualified immigrants are more often affected than those with lower qualifications.

In a study in Germany, a substantial proportion of the foreign-born respondents reported being rejected for an apprenticeship or a job, as well as verbal abuse and unfair treatment at work³¹⁾. In another representative study in 2001, 10.1% of the Turkish people questioned felt disadvantaged when looking for work.

Table 1 : Studies on discrimination in six European countries ³²⁾

Austria	In a study involving African migrants in 2000, written job applications were sent to employers, one from an Austrian and one from an Austro-African, for each vacancy. Of 36 native Austrians, 24 were invited for an interview whereas only 13 of Africans out of 36 were. African women were more often invited than African men. A 2000 survey on the willingness of Viennese employers to employ Africans and immigrants from six other countries in highly skilled occupations showed that employers preferred any other immigrant group over Africans.
Belgium	An ILO study on migrants of Moroccan descent found that after a three-stage application process (initial contact by telephone, telephone interview, job offer in interview), the net discrimination rate (NDR, cases in which the national was accepted minus those in which migrants were preferred) was 33%. After stage 1, the NDR was 19%, after stage 2 the NDR was 31%. Discrimination rates were highest in the hotel and catering industry (50%), and retail and other services (both 31%).

30) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: *Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union*, op. cit., annex, table A7, pp. 14-17.

31) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: *Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union*, ibid.

32) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: *Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union*, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

Germany	An ILO study done with migrants of Turkish origin used similar methodology to the Belgian study, but with the first two stages only. After stage 1, the NDR was 13% and after stage 2, the NDR was 19%. Cumulative NDR (Stage 1 and 2) was highest in the services sector (23%), followed by the industrial sector (13%) and construction (7%).
The Netherlands	An ILO study on migrants of Moroccan origin using the same methodology as the Belgian study found that NDR was 23% after stage 1 and 32% after stage 2. The overall NDR was 37%. The NDR was highest in retail (53%) and hotel and catering (40%). Additional research with Surinamese men found that NDR differed little between ethnic groups, but enormously among different occupational levels.
Spain	An ILO study on migrants of Moroccan origin using the same methodology as the Belgian study found that the NDR was 25% after stage 1, 33% after stage 2, and 36% after stage 3. The NDR was highest in the hotel and catering sector (50%), followed by the industrial sector (43%) and the services sector (39%).
UK	In 1996, a Commission on Racial Equality study examined applications made for 219 vacancies; mainly clerical, administrative and sales positions. The candidates identified themselves for the study as White, Asian, Black or Chinese. The study found that Whites' chances of getting an interview were nearly three times greater than those of Asians, and almost five times greater than those of Blacks. (In 79% of cases, none of the candidates was successful).

In all six countries above, immigrants faced discrimination when applying for a job. The NDR was around 30%, except for Turks in Germany (lower) and members of the Black community in the UK (higher).

Caritas Belgium reports that the 1994 annual report of the '*Centre pour l'égalité des chances*' (Equal Opportunity Centre) states that complaints of work-related discrimination make up the largest category of complaints filed. More recently, the 2003 annual report of the '*Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme*' (Centre for equal opportunity and the fight against racism) suggests that this is a persistent trend : 19% of the centre's activities are focused on the labour market.

At the same time, judicial procedures throughout Europe cannot deliver on the promises of anti-discrimination legislation because in most cases it is not possible to provide sufficient proof of discrimination.

Discrimination and the resulting lack of self-confidence may explain the low participation rate of some categories of immigrants in the labour market. Discrimination also means non-utilisation of available human resources. Ultimately, the social, medical and financial costs are borne by society as a whole.

The working poor

The 'working poor' is the category of employed or self-employed people whose household disposable income is below 60% of the national median income.

Belonging to the working poor is not the same as being a low income earner. Only one in five low wage earners can be described as working poor. The main determining factors for working poverty are household circumstances such as the presence of other earners in the household and of dependent children³³.

33) European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions: *Working poor in the European Union*, Seminar Report, Brussels, July 2004. Available at: <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0467.htm> (last accessed 09.03.2006)



There is very little European comparative research on the subject of the working poor. Furthermore, poverty is generally measured at the household level, while employment relates to individuals.

According to **Caritas Switzerland**, in 2004, 5.2% of all Swiss nationals and 10.9% of foreign residents were considered working poor. Having three or more children or being a single parent was the most significant factor.

Data on EU member states suggests that the proportion of self-employed people among the working poor is higher than that of the unemployed³⁴⁾. In many countries, for example Denmark, people are more likely to be self-employed and poor than unemployed and poor.

Over the last few decades an increasing number of immigrants, especially non-EU immigrants, have become self-employed.

Self-employment may not always be a preference but rather the last resort for people without other employment opportunities. In Italy, for example, some immigrants prefer to have a self-employment permit because it is the only way for them to renew their residence permits and to legally remain in the country.

Caritas Finland notes that the unemployment rate is much higher among immigrants and refugees than among the original population. Prejudice and racism makes it difficult for them to find work. According to **Caritas Finland**, even those who have a good level of Finnish and Swedish can only get jobs in places where many Finns will not work because these jobs are poorly paid or valued.

Many immigrants have lot of ideas for starting their own businesses. We have many ethnic restaurants and imports firms all over the country.

This creates jobs and companies that we would not have without the immigrants.

Self-employment is often concentrated in sectors with low profit levels. In many countries, a high proportion of agricultural workers are in self-employment. In France, for example, half of the self-employed working poor are in the agricultural sector.

The figures are alarming : the poverty rate for self-employed immigrants in Denmark is six times the national average (30% compared with 5%). For many immigrants self-employment offers only limited possibilities for transition to higher income-earning activities or more secure employment.

Young people and second generation immigrants

In most European countries, 16- to 29-year-olds with a migrant background are over-represented in unemployment statistics, even in comparison with nationals of the same age, who already have a very high unemployment rate.

According to **Caritas France**, unemployment is around 16% among the young French-born and more than 26% among immigrants. Unemployment is also very high among 15- to 29-year-old foreign-born people who have acquired citizenship : their unemployment rate of 25% is much closer to that of immigrants than to that of French-born people. Caritas France concludes that the fact of becoming French hardly influences integration in the labour market at all³⁵⁾.

Many other Caritas organisations in other European countries come to the same conclusion. **Caritas Germany** reports that unemployment among immigrants is about twice as high as among Germans. The same is true for second-generation migrants.

34) European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions: *Working poor in the European Union*, ibid.

35) This is also true for adults: when doing a survey among naturalised immigrants in France, the same differences were found among the different nationalities and the immigrants.

Even being well qualified does not necessarily improve young immigrants' prospects. According to **Caritas France**, only 53% of young immigrants with a diploma in economics can find work, compared to 73% among other young people. Poor language skills or qualifications, often considered the main barriers to employment, are not factors for these young people as they all have equivalent diplomas. Caritas France concludes from this that the career prospects of young immigrants are not equal to those of other young Europeans. This is also the case in several other European countries.

Gender

The participation rate of women in the labour market is markedly lower than that of men. This is true for nationals as well as for immigrants. The average difference between male and female nationals is around 15%, while the average difference between male and female immigrants is around 20%.

On average the employment rate of women is also much lower than that of men. Again, this is valid for nationals as well as for immigrants. The employment rate difference between male and female nationals ranges from less than 5% in Sweden, Finland and Norway up to nearly 30% in Spain, Greece and Italy. The difference between male and female immigrants is lowest in Sweden, Denmark and Norway. It is over 30% in Hungary, Greece and Italy.

In most countries there is no relevant difference in the unemployment rate of men and women. The unemployment rate of female nationals is lower than that of men in only eight out of 21 selected OECD countries. The same is true for immigrants as well, according to available data.

Immigrants in Turkey seem to be facing a particularly difficult situation, according to **Caritas Turkey**. Research by MAZLUMDER (Organisation of human rights and solidarity with oppressed people) showed that among 500 asylum-seekers, immigrants in an irregular situation and refugee women, 86.5% of the women were unemployed³⁶. Caritas Turkey also reports that women are limited to working as house cleaners and that they are paid very poorly, sometimes not at all.

Caritas France considers that immigrant women of African nationality or origin (whether first or second generation) are most affected by unemployment. Among these women, the unemployment rate is around 43%, while for French-born women it is 14%. The rate is 20% among naturalized immigrants generally. More than half of the Turkish women in the active workforce were unemployed.

Caritas France points out that these figures clearly demonstrate the huge difficulties encountered by immigrant women in finding their place in the labour market. It also raises the issue of double discrimination : by gender and country of origin. However, other research fails to find proof of double discrimination or the double-negative effect.



36) The 500 women were from Afghanistan (5.70%), Chechnya (20.21%), Iraq (16.58%), Iran (44.56%), Uzbekistan (2.59%) and other countries (6.22%): Serbia, Tunisia, Bosnia, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Lebanon.

Caritas in action : CARITAS BULGARIA

Recently, six refugees from Somalia employed by a building company expressed difficulties with the terms of their employment contract with a Bulgarian employer. In order to help in such cases, the Council of Refugee Women and Caritas Bulgaria jointly set up activities for improving refugees' social, psychological and practical resources.

Caritas Bulgaria explains how administrative and political systems in Bulgaria work. We also help refugees in their dealings with the authorities and provide information on Bulgarian culture and traditions, the local area and services.

Caritas Bulgaria's aim is to make the refugees' new surroundings seem less strange and more welcoming.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Wages

In a 2003 study on migrants, minorities and employment, the EUMC observed marked income differences between nationals/non-migrants and immigrants in all EU member states³⁷⁾ :

"Differences are on the whole more pronounced for third country nationals (except for high income third countries), while the difference is less or nil in the case of most migrants from within the EU.

In Austria, data for 2000 show that aliens earned on average 17% less than natives, with the difference being highest for Hungarian migrants.

A Belgian study found that incomes of male immigrants from neighbouring countries were between 92 and 115% of native males' incomes, while Turks, the lowest earning group, had incomes ranging between 74% and 95% of native male incomes.

In France, male immigrants' incomes were 89.9% of the total average of male incomes with a similar difference observable for female immigrants. Accordingly, the share of immigrants in lower income groups was higher than in high income groups : Among the 20 percentile with the lowest incomes immigrants had a share of 10%, while their share at the upper end of the income pyramid was only 4.7%. [...]

In Sweden, the gap between immigrant incomes and incomes of native Swedes has widened between the 1970s and 1990s, from 3% in 1974 to 8% in 1981 and to 14% in 1991. [...]

In general, lower wage levels can largely be explained by lower occupational status, concentration in certain industries, length of residence, vulnerability to unemployment, educational attainment and geographical location.

On the whole, data suggest that immigrants receive appropriate wages and salaries in the sense that they receive equal pay for equal jobs.

37) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., pp. 44-46.

However, studies that try to correct observed wage differences for the influence of such factors, suggest that income differentials cannot be fully explained by these factors and that wage discrimination does play a role.

In the Netherlands, a recent study found a corrected wage difference of 4% between (non-western) immigrants and natives. A similar study for the UK found a corrected wage difference of 5% (favouring whites) in remuneration for a given job. [...]

Finally, incomes obtained in the informal sector are – for obvious reasons – significantly below formal sector incomes. For example, a Greek study found that wages of informally employed immigrants were at best two thirds, and in many cases only half the minimum wage for unskilled workers".

In Denmark, a Centre for Economic Policy Research discussion paper investigated whether there is a double-negative effect on the wages of immigrant women in Denmark due to their gender and foreign origins. Based on Danish registration data, the authors found that all women are affected by substantial gender discrimination in wages, but only Pakistani women were subject to the double-negative effect³⁸⁾.



Caritas in action : CARITAS BULGARIA

The participation rate of refugee women in the labour market is lower than that of men. Women also face more difficulties finding suitable jobs because of their domestic duties and children. Most of the available jobs are for porters and are not suitable for women.

To help refugee women contribute financially to their family incomes, we offer practical training for making souvenirs from natural materials : ceramics and textiles. The training takes place at one of the Caritas centres for single mothers. After the training the women can use the centre's distribution network to sell their products. They can also sign a contract for distribution of the items in shops. The possibility of working from home is especially appreciated by Asian refugee women.

38) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., annex, table A7, pp. 14-17.

Job quality

The EUMC observed that in terms of job quality there is a clear distinction between other EU nationals in a country's labour market and people from third countries, especially those employed in the informal sector. The Centre concludes that the latter, "through their lack of legal status, are an especially vulnerable group to exploitation in the employment sector³⁹⁾" :

"In almost all countries immigrant workers more often have jobs that are insecure, sensitive to labour market fluctuations, lower-paid, based on the short-term contracts, without social prestige, dirty and with long working hours. (...)

Again, immigrants from third countries and especially those working in the informal sector are more likely to experience exclusion from the guaranteed areas of employment, discontinuity of the services, irregularity of the contractual positions in relation to the different employment forms, and insecurity in terms of working and living conditions. (...) evidence from Portugal shows that immigrants from PALOP (African countries having Portuguese as their official language) and Eastern European countries are over-represented in the so-called "3D jobs" - dirty, dangerous and demanding occupations. (...)

According to the Swedish national report the foreign-born in Sweden more often have physically strenuous jobs, which lead to higher absence due to illness. Work accidents and work related illnesses have been more common among men and women of foreign background.

The foreign-born also have, to a larger extent, been granted an early retirement. A study from 1988 revealed that sickness figures (days of sickness benefits paid) of foreign citizens were up to 70% higher than for Swedish citizens.

The Austrian National Focal Point [*of the RAXEN network*] reports that foreigners experienced 14.7% of all work accidents in 2001, while their share in the workforce was only 10.5%."

The Athens refugee programme of Caritas Greece observes that in theory, all jobs come with the same legal obligations and social security, regardless of the origin of workers. In practice, however, an employer will often pay minimum wage and minimum social security contributions, withholding some benefits.

For example, according to **Caritas Greece**, a family man might be paid a basic wage and social security but not marital and child benefits. He might not know his entitlements or perhaps he knows that if he becomes "too expensive" for his boss, somebody else with fewer demands will be hired instead. Also, if a female domestic worker has a husband with a legal job and social security, she may agree to work informally to help support her household, foregoing her own social security and other benefits.

Caritas Germany points out that after many years of hard physical work, many immigrants fall ill and cannot carry out the required tasks⁴⁰⁾. If they receive a disability pension, it is usually small, due to the below-average salary and the many interruptions in employment history. Often, the pension is not sufficient for their needs.

39) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., pp. 46-48.

40) Herceg, S., "Migranten, Migrantinnen und Armut" ("Migrants and Poverty") in In Angst und Not: Bedrohungen menschlicher Sicherheit (In fear and misery: threats to human security), Social Watch Deutschland, Report 2004, no. 4, p. 18. Available at: http://www.woek.de/social-watch/pdf/swd_report_2004 (last accessed 20.03.2006)

Employment in the informal sector

The informal sector covers a wide range of labour market activities. There are two types of activity :

1. Coping strategies (survival activities) : casual, temporary or unpaid jobs, subsistence agriculture, holding multiple jobs;
2. Unofficial earning strategies (illegality in business) : tax evasion, avoidance of labour and other state regulations, unregistered companies; and underground activities such as crime and corruption.

According to the World Bank :

"The informal sector plays an important and controversial role. It provides jobs [helps alleviate poverty] and reduces unemployment and underemployment, but in many cases the jobs are low-paid and the job security is poor. It bolsters entrepreneurial activity, but at the detriment of state regulations compliance, particularly regarding tax and labour regulations. [...] Experience shows that during economic downturns and during periods of economic adjustment and transition, its size and role in the economy increases"⁴¹⁾.

A more recent in-depth study of undeclared work in the EU estimates that it accounts for between 1.5% (Austria, 1995) and over 20% (Greece, 1998) of national economies⁴²⁾.

The very nature of informal activities means that information about this sector is limited. There is a risk of confounding several notions of illegality with the informal sector in general. For example,

immigrants engaged in informal activities may not necessarily be undocumented immigrants in terms of residence status. At least until the early 1990s, the lack of a valid residence permit did not prevent immigrants from having official jobs for which they paid social security contributions.

While some forms of illegal employment may also be criminal activities (for example, drug trafficking or people trafficking for sexual exploitation), the majority of informal work is not illegal.

Throughout Europe, illegal employment is particularly widespread in certain sectors : agriculture, domestic services and construction⁴³⁾. In Italy, immigrant women employed as domestic workers in the informal economy contribute considerably to what is known as the invisible welfare system.

Illegal employment may be particularly prevalent in countries where immigrants' access to employment and/or right of residence is strictly regulated.

Caritas Romania reports that many Romanian workers enter Italy or Spain as tourists. Legally, they can stay for three months. They find a job in the informal labour market and after three months another member of the family or a friend comes and replaces the worker. Later, the initial worker comes back and stays for another three months. In this way there are no breaks in the job, only the people change.

Informally employed people, particularly if also irregular in terms of residence status, have a much weaker position vis-à-vis their employers. They are much more likely to earn below-average wages, be

41) World Bank - ECA, *Informal Sector in Transition Economies*, 1997.

42) Renooy, P., Ivarsson, S., Van der Wusten-Gristai, O. & Meijer, R., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union. An analysis of undeclared work: an in-depth study of specific items*, Final report, European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, manuscript completed in May 2004. Rates in other countries are 2% in the Netherlands (1995) and the UK (2000); 3% in Sweden (1997); 14% in Poland (2003); 16% to 17% in Italy (2001), 17% in Slovenia (2003); 18% in Hungary (1998) and Latvia (2000); 15% to 19% in Lithuania (2003).

43) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: *Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union*, op. cit., pp. 48-49.



deprived of social rights and benefits such as holiday and sick leave, and to work longer hours.

In gang labour, abuses frequently occur but the problem is more severe for immigrants. Workers are generally paid less than the national minimum wage. Wage deductions are common practice. For example, workers have to pay for their transport, equipment or housing, whether they use these facilities or not. Often an arbitrary administration fee is charged. Hardly any of the workers receive pay slips. Those who are employed 'off-the-books' usually receive lower wages but their pay is not docked. Health and safety regulations are frequently neglected, and employers never pay the right amount of tax.

All of this happens when immigrants are deceived by recruiters or advertisements in their country of origin. Many of them come without valid documents. Unions have had only limited success in organising people employed by gang masters, especially if the workers are not from the EU⁴⁴⁾.



Caritas Greece reports : "We see that immigrants without recognised documents are forced to work in poor conditions. They have no access to health services and find it difficult to open a bank account or rent a flat. They have to take jobs that Greeks refuse to do, with very low wages and bad working conditions. They can easily be exploited because they are afraid and will not report their working conditions to the Greek police. Authorities appear to help local employers by turning a blind eye to undocumented workers until the work – such as seasonal harvesting – is done. In 2004, during the construction of the Olympic Games facilities in and around Athens, most workers found themselves unemployed and often without social benefits once the work was finished. It is known, but never officially reported, that employers sometimes inform the police of the location of their migrant employees, so that the workers will be arrested and sometimes deported without having received their wages".

Caritas in action : COATNET (CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING NETWORK)

In order to support the national "grass roots" counter-trafficking activities of Caritas Organisations and their Christian partners, and to promote an international response to the human trafficking phenomenon, Caritas Europa has integrated the COATNET network into its structures since January 2004. Presently, the COATNET network comprises over 40 Catholic, Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox organisations from Europe, North America, Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Australia.

In their work, COATNET and its user organisations are guided by the Commitment on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, adopted by Caritas Internationalis in November 2005, and they implement anti-trafficking strategies that hinge on four parallel strands : **prevention** through awareness raising; **assistance** to trafficked persons; **advocacy** for the rights and protection of trafficked persons and for effective anti-trafficking legislation; **networking** with authorities, Churches and relevant actors in international civil society to jointly elaborate effective partnerships in order to challenge the human trafficking phenomenon.

Supervised by Caritas Europa, the daily coordination of this international ecumenical network have been entrusted to coordination staff hosted by Caritas Ukraine.

44) International Labour Office: Forced labour, migration and trafficking in Europe, ILO's Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/declarationweb.download_blob?Var_DocumentID=3241 (last accessed 08.03.2006)

Caritas Belgium observes that the work performed by undocumented immigrants is often poorly paid. In some cases, the workers do not receive any remuneration; in other cases only part of the agreed amount is paid. A workplace accident or serious illness may drive them to take large loans. Hygiene and safety precautions are often ignored.

In the shadow economy, flexibility is essential. Some people work abnormally long hours and employment agreements can be abruptly terminated, without notice. Those affected are at risk to fall into the hands of criminal networks or of traffickers of human beings.

The higher incidence of atypical employment among immigrants – temporary jobs, part-time jobs and so on – makes these people vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. Immigrants working in the informal sector are more likely to be excluded from secure forms of employment and to experience discontinuity of services, irregularity in types of contracts and general insecurity in their work and daily lives.

Each country has its own model of atypical employment but southern European countries are noteworthy. In Greece, many immigrants work on temporary assignment (jobs of a few days' duration). This leads to ample opportunity for exploitation by employers. A study of immigrant workers in Athens found that most immigrants worked at least eight hours a day and 15% worked more than 10 hours a day⁴⁵⁾.

Similarly, in Italy, immigrants who do seasonal work are often employed on a day-to-day basis. In general, immigrant workers tend to be more mobile

than Italian workers because they are usually hired on a short-term basis : 17.1% for two months and 41.5% for six months⁴⁶⁾.

A good example of immigrant workers who are often illegally employed in jobs that are unpopular among nationals is the Chinese. It is reported that they work in slave-like conditions with exceedingly long working hours and live in very poor accommodation⁴⁷⁾.

Income support

According to **Caritas Germany**, at the end of 2002, 8.6% of migrant workers were receiving income support, compared with 2.9% of Germans⁴⁸⁾. However, asylum-seekers and people with temporary protection status receive 14% to 28% less social assistance than other people in Germany who receive a comparable kind of assistance. The assistance is provided in-kind, which in some places includes a voucher system. Only a small amount is paid in cash, to cover personal needs. These people cannot provide for themselves as they are not allowed to work⁴⁹⁾. Asylum-seekers and refugees are the group most affected by long-term unemployment. Often, they do not earn anything at all.

Since July 2002 people who have not yet been in Denmark for seven out of the last eight years can only receive a low social benefit called the introduction benefit. **Caritas Denmark** notes that the amount of money is so low that it is almost impossible for people to pay the rent, buy food and clothing. It is even less possible for these people to take part in social activities such as sport or cultural activities. This creates a new group of very poor people in Denmark – an underclass – primarily of refugees.

45) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., p. 47.

46) Caritas Italiana & Migrantes: Dossier Statistico Immigrazione (Statistical Dossier on Migration), Rome, 2005.

47) International Organization for Migration: Chinese Migrants and forced labour in Europe, IOM, Geneva, 2004.

48) Herceg, S., "Migranten, Migrantinnen und Armut", op. cit.

49) Caritas Germany: Stellungnahme des Deutschen Caritasverbandes zum Entwurf des 2. Armuts- und Reichtumsberichts der Bundesregierung "Lebenslagen in Deutschland", Position Paper of Caritas Germany on the draft of the second poverty and wealth report of the federal government "circumstances of living in Germany", January, 2005, p. 32.



Worse still, persons who arrived under the family reunification system are not allowed to receive any social benefits.

Self esteem

Since such scenarios can last several months or even years, they bring about impoverishment or forms of poverty and exclusion that stem from a state of dependency and non-occupation. For asylum-seekers and sometimes also for refugees, even the preparation of meals is taken from their hands in reception centres. Dejected, disorientated, with a sense of uselessness and of being unable to govern their own lives, the responsibility for themselves and for their families runs through their fingers like sand.



■ The EU's social inclusion process

There is awareness and there are many good initiatives at EU level aimed at addressing poverty, unemployment and the working poor in relation to migrants.

In its 'Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006', the European Commission states that the European Council called on the Union and its member states "to give priority, under the social inclusion strategy, to improving the situation of the most vulnerable young people and to initiatives to prevent educational failure. Integrating migrants in the education systems is essential if we want to lift them out of poverty, unemployment and the low-skilled jobs sector"⁵⁰⁾.

Caritas Europa is encouraged by the following statement in the report :

"Regarding inclusion policy, the exclusion of people and groups, such as immigrants and ethnic minorities, from participation in work and society represents a waste of resources, to be addressed for economic as well as for social justice reasons. Member States need to develop integrated and co-ordinated responses to multiple disadvantages and the needs of [these] groups at particular risk [...]. The multiple exclusion faced by young people from ethnic minorities in poor neighbourhoods also needs increased attention. In this context, the fundamental role of education and training to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty should be highlighted. There needs to be both improved access to mainstream provision and, where necessary, targeted measures"⁵¹⁾.

The revised Lisbon strategy is supposed to address the issues of increased economic growth and job creation. New guidelines on employment policies address the problem of integration of those furthest from the labour market by encouraging EU countries to "introduce work incentives in support of preventive and active labour market measures, guidance and training as part of personalised action plans, to provide the social services needed to support the labour market inclusion of disadvantaged people and to contribute to social and territorial cohesion and the eradication of poverty"⁵²⁾. This includes measures such as early identification of needs and job search assistance.

Feeding into the Lisbon strategy is the European Commission's open method of coordination (OMC) process for reducing poverty.

50) European Commission: *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006*, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions, Brussels, 13.2.2006. Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/jrep_en.htm (last accessed 03.03.2006)

51) European Commission: *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006*, *ibid.*

52) See "Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (2005-2008)", OJ L 205 of 6.8.2005, p. 21.

Despite the best efforts of the Commission, however, there is little evidence that EU member states are linking the OMC for social inclusion with national reform programmes (NRPs). This is unfortunate for people at high risk of poverty, including migrants and ethnic minorities.

The 'Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion' states that :

"A number of Member States outline in their NRP's the important role which immigration is expected to play in sustaining their labour markets in the future. However, acknowledgement of the challenge of integrating immigrants, a big issue in recent National Action Plans (NAP's) for inclusion is not evident in the NRP's"⁵³⁾.

It is evident that the real power to change the situation of migrants lies at national level, supported by the resources and the programmes that are available through the European Commission.

The challenge for the Commission to link social inclusion and employment has become bigger with the separation of the OMC on social inclusion and the Lisbon strategy. At the same time, EU member states should make better use of the EU resources at their disposal, such as peer reviews and exchanges of best practice under the OMC, and think of more ways to turn migration into an opportunity.

For its part, Caritas organisations at local, regional, national, EU and wider European levels are working on raising more awareness of the issues at stake for migrants living in poverty, and integrating these concerns in the formulation of the new wave of NAP's and NRP's.



53) European Commission: Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006, op. cit.



■ Summary of chapter 1 on employment

- Whereas overall, immigrants have only a slightly lower employment rate than nationals, discrimination against third-country nationals seeking employment in the EU is evident from labour market statistics.
- The immigrant unemployment rate of third-country nationals is higher and immigrants are more likely to be in low-skilled jobs, compared with nationals and migrants from the EU.
- In some countries, immigrant women are especially disadvantaged in the job market and also for reasons of health.
- In most countries, young migrants (aged between 16 and 29) have a higher unemployment rate than older migrants.
- In many countries, denying asylum-seekers access to the regular labour market is a way of preventing their integration into society. Inadequate and often long-term income support often replaces a salary, which causes impoverishment and other forms of poverty and exclusion that are rooted in dependency.
- In many countries, foreign-born people are excluded from public service jobs.
- In many countries, immigrants face discrimination when applying for a job. There is also evidence of wage discrimination, especially for women and third-country immigrants.
- Immigrants are more highly represented amongst the working poor. The main determining factors for working poverty are household circumstances such as the number of income earners in the household and the number of dependent children.
- "In almost all countries immigrant workers more often have jobs that are insecure, sensitive to labour market fluctuations, lower-paid, based on the short-term contracts, without social prestige, dirty and with long working hours"⁵⁴⁾.
- Migrants are disproportionately represented in Europe's informal labour markets. Shadow labour markets form a considerable part of national economies and contribute to the countries' wealth.
- The size of the informal labour market varies from an estimated 4% in high-income countries to over 50% in low-income countries. Illegal employment is common in agriculture, domestic services and in the construction industry.



54) European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and employment: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit., pp. 46-48.

CHAPTER 2.

HOUSING : SEGREGATION AND LOW QUALITY AT HIGH PRICES

"The principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern [...] [The preferential option for the poor] applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods. Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future"⁵⁵⁾.

In this chapter, we look at housing issues for immigrants. For many immigrants, lack of adequate housing forms a huge obstacle to integration into the host society. Also depending on their legal status, gender, civic status and nationality, immigrants face manifold barriers to acquiring decent housing. For many, housing is scarce, rents are extortionate, conditions are poor and neighbourhoods deprived. Vulnerable groups amongst the immigrants such as newcomers, undocumented migrants and in some cases asylum seekers and refugees end up being homeless. The conditions for suffering poor health and social exclusion are clearly present through the failure of our societies to provide a primary human need for people : a decent roof over the head.

■ Privatisation of the Housing Market : Decrease in Supply and Quality of affordable housing, an increase in Extortion and Poverty

While the growth of high-salaried occupations has increased demand for expensive, high-quality dwellings, on the other end of the scale hundreds of thousands of cheap dwellings affordable by medium-to-low income groups have disappeared⁵⁶⁾. Particularly in and around cities, there is a shortage of affordable housing for low income households⁵⁷⁾.

Caritas Bulgaria observes that there is a long waiting list and a shortage of affordable social housing in Sofia. Asylum-seekers and refugees are concentrated in the city because of the opportunities for work for migrating further west into Europe. Also, the State Agency for Refugees, the authority that provides support for new arrivals is in Sofia.

Caritas Belgium reports that almost 25,000 households are on the waiting list for the 38,000 social housing dwellings in the Brussels region. The 2003-2005 national action plan on social inclusion states that the number of households on waiting lists in the French and the Flemish regions corresponds to approximately 40% of the total social housing stock.

In many European countries, the housing market has undergone considerable changes over recent decades. Access to housing has become more market-driven.

55) *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, op cit., paragraph 182.

56) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., *Immigration and homelessness in Europe*, FEANTSA European Observatory on Homelessness, Brussels, October 2004, p. 59.

57) See, for example, *Stellungnahme des Deutschen Caritasverbandes zum Entwurf des 2. Armuts- und Reichtumsberichts der Bundesregierung "Lebenslagen in Deutschland"*, op .cit., p. 34.

Recently, 31% of the housing assets in south-eastern Europe were privatised in the course of four years. Privatisation, and the lack of strong legal frameworks for building maintenance, has left city authorities with fewer assets and reduced possibilities for the restoration of buildings or the elimination of sub-standard housing stock⁵⁸⁾.

In this climate of privatisation, social housing agencies have adopted a more market-oriented approach too, even in countries with relatively high levels of council, or social, housing⁵⁹⁾. Throughout Europe this has led to an erosion of housing subsidies and to privatisation of publicly-owned dwellings. In some countries, housing agencies cannot meet the increased needs caused by the rise of poverty. The result has been increased pressure on a diminishing stock⁶⁰⁾. A shortage of affordable social housing is re-emerging⁶¹⁾.

All these (privatisation) trends indicate a supply bottleneck⁶²⁾ and escalating prices. In 2001, the Spanish national ombudsman warned of steep rises in prices on the private rental market that would especially affect young people and the neediest immigrants⁶³⁾.

In Romania, around 10% of the housing stock needs immediate action to ensure that it will be able to provide shelter in 2020. In Bulgaria, some 180,000 dwellings are physically obsolete. Householders who became owners through privatisation have adjusted their consumption of housing maintenance services

to compensate for the increase in utility prices (water, sewage, garbage collection, district heating and energy).

In some areas, property owners take advantage of the desperate situation of immigrants and offer poor quality dwellings to them at unreasonable prices. These flats are often made available to immigrants because they will accept them without complaining⁶⁴⁾.

Since many people without legal status live in constant fear of being discovered, they are exposed to abusive practices such as excessive rents and other arbitrary measures and are without legal protection⁶⁵⁾. "Seeking work and accommodation while avoiding the authorities, creates a very real vulnerability to exploitation by ruthless employers and by unscrupulous property owners"⁶⁶⁾.

Caritas Germany reports that the housing situation was considerably worse for immigrant Caritas beneficiaries who had found housing in the private market than for German Caritas beneficiaries, who were already living in clearly below-average standards⁶⁷⁾.

The following data from 4 different European countries illustrates the extortion faced by many immigrants :

In Germany, various studies into the housing markets have shown that immigrants pay considerably higher rents than German nationals for relatively poorer housing because landlords demand

58) Council of Europe Development Bank & The World Bank: Housing in South Eastern Europe: Solving a puzzle of challenges, Sector note following up the Ministerial Housing Conference for South Eastern Europe within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Paris, March 2004, pp. 12-13.

59) Edgar, B., Policy Measures to ensure access to decent housing for migrants and ethnic minorities, Joint Centre for Scottish Housing Research, University of Dundee & University of St Andrews, December 2004, p. 18.

60) Edgar, W., Doherty, J. & Mina-Coull, A., Services for homeless people: Innovation and change in the European Union, The Policy Press, Bristol, 1999.

61) Ball, M., Harloe, M., Uncertainty in European housing markets in Kleinmann, M., Matznetter, W., Stephens & M., European Integration and Housing Policy, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, New York, 1998.

62) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 118-119.

63) Defensor del Pueblo (The Spanish Ombudsman), Informe del Defensor del Pueblo 2000 (Report of the Spanish Ombudsman 2000), Spanish Parliament, Madrid, 2001. Available at: <http://www.defensordelpueblo.es/index.asp?destino=informes1.asp> , in Spanish, (last accessed 24.03.2006)

64) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 72-73.

65) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 80.

66) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 6.

67) Hauser, R. & Kinstler, H-J., op. cit.

'discrimination supplements'⁶⁸⁾. According to the micro-census of 1998, the rents per square metre charged to immigrant households were on average significantly higher than those paid by German households : German households paid DEM 10.69/m² (EUR 5.47), and non-German households DEM 11.51/m² (EUR 5.88).

A report on integration in Austria found that immigrants were more likely to live in apartments of a low standard while paying disproportionately more for them, compared to Austrians⁶⁹⁾.

In Spain, the substandard private rental sector accounts for 10% of the housing for Portuguese, Algerian and Moroccan people. The proportions rise to 12% for Turks and 16% for people from sub-Saharan Africa⁷⁰⁾.

In Belgium, hundreds of premises that have been declared uninhabitable are nonetheless let out, predominantly to undocumented immigrants living illegally in the country. Rack-renters are asking EUR 400 a month for a 16m² room with cockroaches and mildew⁷¹⁾.

In 2001, the 1980 Aliens Act was amended to include an article making rack-renting (extortionate rent) and multiple lettings of the same premises punishable by imprisonment and/or fines. This amendment shows the extent to which conditions in the informal housing market have deteriorated in recent years⁷²⁾.

In Italy, a large part of the rental market falls within the informal or semi-formal sector. Rent is calculated by the number of beds and 72% of the accommodation suffers from overcrowding (37% overcrowded, 35% extremely overcrowded)⁷³⁾.

■ Access to Housing, Legal barriers and Discrimination

Considerable legal and practical barriers prevent immigrants from accessing housing markets. A rental contract, for instance, often requires references, a deposit and a guaranteed residence for a minimum period. All of these requirements make it difficult for new immigrants to find accommodation. Indeed, there is sometimes a catch-22 situation, whereby to acquire the status of a resident, one must first have adequate housing.

In some European countries, specific groups of migrants are excluded from social housing. In Ireland, for instance, migrants with work visas or in the work permit system are not entitled to social housing. In Greece, state housing services are not available for people from non-EU countries.

Caritas Austria reports that since January 2006 migrants in Vienna have access to council housing : flats in the municipality of Vienna. To be eligible, they must have been living in Austria for more than five years and must have obtained permanent residence. Migrants renting private apartments can receive rental assistance after five years of residence. However, it still means that in the migrants' first five years in Vienna, housing conditions for them are much poorer than those of Austrians and other EU citizens.

Many migrants face discrimination when looking for housing. Many landlords in the private rental market do not want to rent to immigrants, particularly if the property is valuable and in good condition.

Research into housing circumstances of Turks and to a lesser extent Moroccans in Belgium revealed that there is on-going discrimination against these

68) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 86.

69) Biffi, G., Bock-Schappelwein, J., Austrian Migration and Integration report, 2003. Zur Niederlassung von Ausländern in Österreich, Expertise 2004.

70) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 71.

71) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 79.

72) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 109.

73) Sunia Ancab – LegaCoop: Condizioni abitative degli immigrati in Italia (Housing conditions of migrants in Italy), Rome, 2000.



migrant workers and their descendents. The same is true for newly-arrived immigrants, according to a study by Alarm, a Belgian organisation representing refugees, asylum-seekers and people who have regularised their status⁷⁴⁾.

A review of four discrimination studies in Sweden, covering 7,500 immigrants, concluded that there is greater vulnerability in some groups, such as people born in Africa, Iran, Turkey and Latin America than in others, such as people born in central Europe and Vietnam. Evidence of similar variation can also be found in other countries⁷⁵⁾.

According to the director of the Ljubljana Housing Fund in Slovenia, many immigrants have problems because their landlords are reluctant to allow their address to be used when applying for permanent residency⁷⁶⁾.

Compensation for people who are discriminated against is difficult if the landlord justifies tenant selection on the grounds of income or the ability to pay the rent. Where restitution depends on actions taken by the person discriminated against, this may be difficult due to lack of education, money and self-confidence; this has been observed in Belgium and Sweden⁷⁷⁾ and certainly exists elsewhere in Europe, too. In an exceptional case in December 2004, a court in Antwerp, Belgium found a landlord guilty of not letting an apartment to a Congolese couple for reasons motivated by racism.

■ Living in Poor Conditions, leading to Poor Health and Social Exclusion

Daily experience of many Caritas organisations gives a bleak picture for the housing conditions of immigrants : costs such as rent, gas, electricity and water often place too big a burden on the budgets of immigrant households. There are huge differences in their quality of housing compared with non-immigrant households in terms of location, size and furnishing. Consequently, as was already pointed out above, for many Caritas beneficiaries, poor housing and an extremely high rent burden are commonplace. These factors are causes or companions of poverty⁷⁸⁾. Many immigrants are forced to live in poor conditions. This is especially the case for undocumented migrants, asylum seekers waiting for a decision and refugees.

Caritas Denmark reports that 69% of ethnic minorities live in flats, compared to only 22.5% of Danes, while only 27% of ethnic minorities live in a house or a terraced house, compared to 69.1% of Danes.

Caritas Bulgaria reports : "Most of the newly-recognised refugees face big difficulties finding homes. They have to leave the reception centre of the State Agency for Refugees but the settlement options are poor. The refugee communities report to be living in houses without heating or even water. Caritas Bulgaria recently saw a case of a Tanzanian, whose application for asylum was rejected; who was forced to sleep on the streets in winter. The housing problem mainly affects Africans. Caritas Bulgaria knows of an address where more than 15 Somalis are registered".

74) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit, p. 86.

75) Edgar, B., op. cit., p. 39.

76) Edgar, B., op. cit., p. 36.

77) Edgar, B., op. cit., p. 40.

78) See, for example, Hauser, R. & Kinstler, H-J., Zuwanderer unter den Caritas-Klienten, (Immigrants among Caritas clients) in Caritas, Zeitschrift für Caritasarbeit und Caritaswissenschaft, no 1, 1994, pp. 4-20.

Caritas Greece – Athens refugee programme reports : "Migrants, even legal ones, usually have bad housing in deprived areas. In our research, migrants tell us they live in a cheap hotel (20%), in a hostel (4%), outdoors in the street or a park (7%) or a rented flat or a room in a flat (59%). When asked if they have access to electricity and running water, 83% have both, 11% have neither, 4% only water and 1% only electricity".

"Our social worker visits an Iraqi refugee family with two small children living in a garage that has been converted into a basement flat. There is a bathroom, kitchen, running water and electricity, but no central heating. They pay 200 euro a month in rent. One child is seriously ill and has asthma".

"Another Iraqi family lives in a deprived area of Athens near an old railway station. The owner of a derelict house allows them to live there for free. The husband has a serious problem with his hands. As recognised asylum-seekers, they have access to healthcare. The house has electricity and a bathroom but no running water. The oldest child, who is eight years old, walks to a nearby petrol station to get buckets of water for the family".

In Milan, Italy, research distinguishes between three categories of immigrants : resident, non-resident documented or acquiring documents, and undocumented with respect to permit to stay. In 1999, 3.8% of 'resident' immigrants in the city of Milan and 11.3% of 'residents' in the province were in precarious accommodation; among 'non-resident documented' immigrants the corresponding figures were 11.7% and 33.1%; while for 'undocumented'

immigrants the figure was 30% both for the city and the province⁷⁹⁾.

Another Italian study suggests that, at the beginning of the 1990s, one-third of immigrants lived in extreme housing stress and that in the major cities the majority of immigrants lived in extreme housing poverty⁸⁰⁾.

In Greece, a study of undocumented immigrants in the Vathis and Omonia areas of Athens was recently carried out. There, almost half the population of 3,000 Albanians were living in 10 large third-rate hotels. They described their life as "centred around day-to-day survival [...] Up to 20 people were living together in most of the hotel rooms, in self-made wooden constructions, one on top of the other, whilst families usually had to negotiate with others to occupy one bedroom by themselves"⁸¹⁾.

A number of urban areas contain camps of self-designed housing units set up by immigrants. The living conditions are appalling. The case of Bulgarian workers in Nea Manolada, Eleia, who live in a shanty-town without electricity, running water or sewerage, is but one example⁸²⁾.

In Germany, a case study in the eastern city of Leipzig found that only a small number of irregular migrants lived entirely without fixed accommodation; in cars, railcars, parked caravans, containers, on park benches or in tents. Accommodation for these people included houses that were empty or ready for demolition and 'mass accommodations' that were be rented for between EUR 2.50 and EUR 5 a night, with five to 10 people to a room⁸³⁾.

79) Ismu e provincia di Mantova: L'immigrazione straniera nella provincia di Mantova (Foreign immigration in the province of Mantua), 2000, Mantua; Rapporto statistico dell'Osservatorio Fondazione Cariplo (Statistical report of the Osservatorio Fondazione Cariplo), University of Milan, 2000.

80) Censis: Indagine sulla condizione abitativa in Italia. Analisi della domanda marginale (Research on the housing conditions in Italy. Analysis of the marginal question), Rapporto finale per conto del CER (final report on behalf of CER), CER, Rome, 1993.

81) Psimmenos, I., "The making of periphrastic spaces: the case of Albanian undocumented female migrants in the sex industry of Athens" in Gender and migration in Southern Europe, eds Anthias, F. & Lazaridis, G., Oxford, Berg, 2000, p. 92.

82) Sapounakis, A., Immigration and homelessness in Greece, Report for the European Observatory on Homelessness, Brussels, FEANTSA, 2003.

83) Alt, J., Illegal in Deutschland: Forschungsprojekt zur Lebenssituation "illegaler" Migranten in Leipzig (Irregular in Germany: Research project of the life situation of irregular migrants in Leipzig), Karlsruhe, Loeper Literaturverlag, 1999.



Appalling conditions reveal an extreme exploitation of vulnerable households :

In Belgium, a dwelling is sometimes let for a number of hours or per mattress to different families. Three families, for instance, can have the premises for eight hours a day, sleeping in shifts. They often use the same mattresses without bedding⁸⁴⁾. One woman and her two children were found living in a covered interior courtyard and sleeping in a cockroach-infested garden shed⁸⁵⁾.

In Madrid, Spain, beds and sofas are rented out for eight hours, three times a day, to immigrants from south and central America⁸⁶⁾.

In the Netherlands, beds are also rented out in shifts. Sometimes, immigrant workers live in old caravans, in the back of fruit and vegetable greenhouses, in barns and so on⁸⁷⁾.

In rural Spain immigrants commonly live next to farmland in accommodation which does not meet minimum conditions of habitability⁸⁸⁾.

Without contracts, immigrants in these situations cannot assert their rights. Access to the accommodation is mostly arranged through social networks of ethnic communities. Some end up living in squats, when all alternatives offer even worse conditions.

In a 2002 report, the French Senior Committee for the Housing of Disadvantaged Populations referred to a confidential report delivered to the Minister of Housing in which it was noted that nearly 2,000 apartments were occupied illegally, principally in Paris and Seine-Saint-Denis. The occupants of these apartments were essentially immigrants from

sub-Saharan Africa, half of whom were large families who had paid organised traffickers for this accommodation⁸⁹⁾.

A study carried out in three squats in the Ile-de-France region by the "*Groupe d'intérêt public habitat et interventions sociales pour les mal logés et les sans-abri*" (Public interest group for habitat and social action for the homeless) showed that for two-thirds of heads of households who had lived in France for more than 10 years, their arrival in the squat was the result of a laborious housing journey. 46% declared that they had stayed with their parents or friends before their arrival in the squat, and 30% said they had been tenants, generally living in housing that was too small or insalubrious. Only 3% had been public housing tenants. Most often, an increase in the size of the family led them to the squat, for better quality of life⁹⁰⁾.

Finnish research shows that the most overcrowded households, with at least four people per room (not including the kitchen and living room) experience a range of health problems : headaches, disturbed sleep and back pain from sleeping on the floor, a common characteristic of overcrowding⁹¹⁾.

Housing that is overcrowded and unhealthy also has important repercussions for children's education. The poorer the living conditions, the more severe the implications for health.

84) Van Cauwenberghe, C., "Ghent asylum coordinator", De Morgen, 16 November 2001.

85) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 79.

86) Granovetter, M., 'The strength of weak ties', American Journal of Sociology, vol. 78, no 6, 1973, pp. 1360-80.

87) De Feyter, H., Access to housing for vulnerable groups, The Dutch National Report 2000, FEANTSA, Brussels, 2003.

88) Cabrera, P.J. & Malgesini, G., Immigration and homelessness in Spain, Report for the European Observatory on Homelessness, FEANTSA Brussels, 2003.

89) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 128-129.

90) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 128-129.

91) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 80-81.

■ Social consequences of living in deprived areas

Many immigrants end up living in unpopular districts. As described above, whole sections of the housing market are completely closed to immigrants. Dwellings on the normal market are unaffordable for most of them. Sub-standard housing in deprived areas is often their only option.

The lack of access to decent housing for many immigrants leads to concentrations of immigrants in specific areas. In the UK, for example, more than 50% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are in the 10% most deprived wards in England, and one-third of Black Caribbean households compared to only 14% of White households live in these areas.

In France, 58% of all immigrants live in three French regions : 37% in the Paris region, 11% in Rhône-Alpes and 10% in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. The concentration is even greater in some municipalities : in Bobigny, Montreuil and Aubervilliers, 50% of the residents are immigrants. In neighbourhoods on the outskirts of Paris such as Mureaux, Val-Fourré, Trappes or in Minguettes outside Lyon, about three-quarters of the population are of African origin.

These are the areas to which newly-arrived immigrants come. These days they are likely to be African, eastern European or Kurdish refugees. The reputation of these neighbourhoods is such that only the worst-informed families and those with no other choice would accept the apartments available there.

Caritas France finds that the issue of dense immigrant populations deserves attention not only because of the problem of housing quality. It also affects the attitudes of the people and their ability to integrate. A 2003 report by the Conseil économique et social (Economic and Social Council) states that "too often these quarters become a space of urban segregation and social downgrading"⁹².

According to **Caritas France**, these problematic zones create a common subculture, in which a feeling of permanent revolt constitutes the only real social glue, notably among the young people. The 2005 riots of young immigrants and children of immigrants show that there is a feeling of discontent about their place in society⁹³.

Caritas in action : CARITAS GREECE – ATHENS REFUGEE PROGRAMME

Undocumented migrants, usually young Afghan, Kurdish and Iraqi men, who have recently arrived in Greece by sea or over land, gather in the severely deprived areas of Athens. They squat in old abandoned houses while they look for work.

They come to the Caritas refugee centre for a hot meal every day, and free clothing. If they are lucky there will be a sleeping bag available. We inform them of other NGOs providing medical treatment, free showers and other services. They sometimes fight with other desperate people, usually Albanian. The Greek police seldom interfere.

92) Conseil économique et social (Economic and Social Council): *Les défis de l'immigration future*, (The challenges of the future immigration), 2003. Available at: http://www.conseil-economique-et-social.fr/ces_dat2/2-3based/base.htm (last accessed 10.04.2006)

93) Sassen, S., "*Warum brennt Frankreich erst jetzt?*" ("Why is France burning only now?"), *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2005, Nr. 263, p. 15.

According to a *Conseil d'analyse économique* (Council for economic analysis) report on urban segregation and social inclusion, people accept the norms of their overall context. Together, the high unemployment rate, lack of incentive to be active, low quality of housing, poor level of schooling and participation in informal economy build a common sentiment of rejection. This produces individual beliefs that favour discrimination in the labour market, leading to a vicious circle. The report states that "one needs to accept first that the social inequalities are durably inscribed in the space of our cities. Then, we need to understand that the socio-spatial polarisation [...] locks up the population of these disadvantaged zones in a situation where the absence of any positive perspective as regards mobility hinders their social future"⁹⁴.

Even though most of them would rather not be there, many immigrants move to and remain in deprived areas because there is a shortage of housing and because they lack resources and contacts. The Swedish Integration Board "has reason to believe that there are further mechanisms in society that direct certain groups of people to precisely these neighbourhoods, not least discrimination by landlords and also municipal housing companies"⁹⁵. This segregation has positive and negative aspects, but it is a product of the housing system, which must be seen as part of a more general social exclusion.



■ High Risk Groups : From Reception Centres to Poor Housing or No Housing (Homeless)

Caritas organisations throughout Europe consider the following groups of immigrants to be most affected by the lack of adequate and affordable housing :

1. Specific groups among asylum-seekers
2. Specific groups of refugees
3. Undocumented immigrants, including rejected asylum-seekers
4. Other immigrants (for example those with insufficient resources)

We have taken a closer look at the plight of the first three groups across Europe.

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

In all countries, asylum-seekers go through periods of residence in reception centres or in temporary accommodation. This is often communal accommodation, often of relatively poor quality. The period spent in the centres is usually longer than originally envisaged.

Caritas in action : CARITAS BELGIUM

Caritas provides reception and accommodation service to refugees and asylum-seekers in Belgium. Caritas Belgium manages 200 affordable rental properties nationally. Caritas Belgium also provides families with administrative and legal help with their asylum application procedure.

Having developed an expertise in the field over many years, Caritas believes strongly in the model of individual family accommodation rather than group accommodation. Individual housing respects family life and promotes personal responsibility. It also prevents people from experiencing the negative effects of a long stay in a reception centre. Individual housing also promotes contact with the community and contributes to the awareness of asylum-seekers among members of the local population.

Caritas Norway reports that many residents have extended stays in reception centres because of the time it takes to process asylum applications and the difficulties in re-settling asylum-seekers in municipalities. Life in a reception centre can be hard for residents to endure because of the uncertainty of the outcome of the asylum application and the subsequent waiting to learn where they will be living in the future.

Some groups of asylum-seekers do not even have access to these facilities. In Greece, for example, there are no hostels for immigrants or lone men. Women with small children have first priority, followed by families with both parents. Since there are only a few places for asylum-seekers (supplied by the state or non-governmental organisations, NGOs) where they can stay for a short period, and since families are given first preference, not all asylum-seekers can be accommodated. In the whole of Greece there is only accommodation for 750 people.

Caritas Turkey reports that asylum-seekers either live in bad houses or they live together in groups in order to share the rent.

In the UK, a scheme dispersed groups of asylum-seekers to various regions in clusters of country of origin. The asylum-seekers faced severe problems. Local authority participation in the scheme was voluntary and asylum-seekers were generally relocated to areas with a pool of empty social housing. In general, these were also areas of high unemployment and poverty⁹⁴.

In Sweden, a report by the Integration Department of Stockholm of 1999 refers to "many examples

of unsatisfactory housing solutions such as boutique premises, garages, tents and people being forced to sleep in night buses. [W]ith the sharp increase in the number of refugees, homelessness among them has risen markedly"⁹⁷.

In Stockholm, help with obtaining housing is only available to families with children, and refugees with severe physical or mental disabilities. Other refugees are supposed to solve their housing problems themselves. Many people find unsatisfactory housing solutions and move around among friends and acquaintances⁹⁸.

In Germany, it is well known that living conditions of asylum-seekers and repatriated people with German ancestry, known as *Aussiedler*, in temporary centres, cheap hostels and other emergency accommodation are almost unbearable. And this leads to social tension⁹⁹.

As shown above, there is often insufficient accommodation for asylum-seekers in reception centres or in temporary accommodation and priority may be given to families over single people. The reality for many asylum-seekers is, therefore, homelessness¹⁰⁰.

In the UK, of all immigrants coming into the country, asylum-seekers and refugees are the group most vulnerable to poor housing, if not outright homelessness. Furthermore, once a final determination on status is made in the asylum procedure, households have only 14 days to vacate their accommodation, leaving them at high risk of homelessness¹⁰¹.

94) Conseil d'analyse économique (Council of economic analysis): *Ségrégation urbaine et intégration sociale*, (Urban segregation and social integration), Report n° 45.

95) Edgar, B., op. cit., p. 38.

96) Pearl, M. & Zetter, R., "From refuge to exclusion: housing as an instrument of social exclusion for refugees and asylum-seekers" in *Race, housing and social exclusion*, eds Somerville, P. & Steele, A., London, Jessica Kingsley, 2002, p. 234, p. 238.

97) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 108.

98) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 108.

99) Hauser, R. & Kinstler, H-J., op. cit.

100) Pearl, M. and Zetter, R., op. cit., p. 226.

101) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 110.



The UK's 1996 Asylum and Immigration Act, which effectively excluded single asylum-seekers from key welfare benefits, drove thousands of them into destitution and homelessness. It was estimated that the London boroughs supported 51,000 destitute asylum-seekers in the late 1990s. In the 12 months up to September 1999, London had accepted an additional 9,000 homeless asylum-seekers¹⁰²⁾.

A survey in Paris found that nearly half of the people in emergency shelters and bed-and-breakfast hostels in November 2001 were foreign nationals. Of these, 31% were asylum-seekers and 35% were failed asylum-seekers and undocumented immigrants¹⁰³⁾.

In some countries, asylum-seeker accommodation means almost detention-like circumstances. People must quickly apply for places in reception centres and sometimes, wait out long procedures following a negative first decision. In the meantime, they must find ways to survive.

In many countries in central and eastern Europe, refugees are the immigrants most affected by lack of adequate and affordable housing. In western Germany, too, **Caritas Germany** reports that refugees are one immigrant group that lives in extremely poor housing conditions. Other groups are families with many children, asylum-seekers and people without legal status.

UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS AT A HIGH RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS

Several Caritas organisations observed that in general, through having no rights, undocumented immigrants have no choice but to enter the informal housing market : accommodation provided by an employer or family or friends, low-grade hostels, or rough-sleeping. It is also likely that, when they find accommodation, it will be of the worst kind at the bottom end of the property market.

Little research has been done on the housing circumstances of irregular immigrants. Undocumented immigrants have no legal entitlements to housing or social support, so their position in the housing market is by definition more precarious than that of other immigrants. Legislation in all countries excludes undocumented immigrants from social housing¹⁰⁴⁾. In Germany, for example, the legal provisions for social welfare claims by foreign nationals exclude not only undocumented immigrants, but also asylum-seekers from assistance.

Immigrants' right to services for the homeless is influenced by their legal status. In some countries access to such services is denied to non-citizens, and in others, to undocumented immigrants. This depends on the legal entitlements of foreign nationals to social welfare or on the nature of the funding for homelessness services. Homelessness among undocumented immigrants may be hidden because, at least in some countries, they are unable to access services for homeless people.

Caritas Greece reports that for economic and irregular immigrants, there is little help available. Neither the Department of Social Services nor any other organisation has found a solution for these groups. Most of them live in derelict and abandoned houses, even in parks. If they are lucky and have some money, they share houses.

102) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 109.

103) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 107.

104) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 101-103.

All too often, they end up in basement flats without natural light, or in badly-constructed flats or rooms. They are overcharged because they do not have documents and therefore the whole lease is illegal.

In 2002, the Italian Federation of Organisations for the Homeless undertook a survey of all public and voluntary organisations offering at least one of the following services to homeless people : night shelters, secondary reception/accommodation centres, day centres, street/mobile units, health centres and canteens. The survey was carried out in seven cities : Bari, Bergamo, Bolzano, Livorno, Milan, Rome and Turin.

A key finding was that although the proportion of immigrant users varied across the different services, 43% of services reported that more than half of their users were immigrants while 70% of the services questioned said they dealt with undocumented or irregular immigrants (especially night shelters and health centres)¹⁰⁵⁾.

In Finland, the proportion of immigrants in the dormitories for homeless men and women in the Helsinki region has risen considerably in the past few years¹⁰⁶⁾.

In Sweden, a national mapping exercise carried out by the National Board of Health and Social Services in 1999 indicated that 14% of the homeless in general, and 30% of the homeless under 25 years old, were born outside Sweden or Finland. Since these are official statistics, it is likely that there are numbers of newly-arrived immigrants who are not known to social services agencies. Homeless refugees are not included in social service statistics, for example¹⁰⁷⁾.

In Germany, 22% of those using the emergency overnight accommodation facilities of the Berlin Municipal Mission in 2000 were foreign residents. According to the organisation, "People come to us because they know that here they will receive assistance without bureaucratic red tape, without being asked for their passport or about their residence status"¹⁰⁸⁾.

Caritas Luxembourg reports : "We find that a growing number of people from the new EU member states, eastern European countries and African countries come to Luxembourg hoping to find paid employment. As they are not legally resident, they cannot work and do not have access to services for homeless people".

"The "fortunate ones" have friends or relatives who can give them shelter. The rest, who are not entitled to housing services, remain homeless. Unless the necessary steps are taken, the situation will soon become an overwhelming problem".

Evidence suggests that immigrants experience homelessness in all its various forms : lack of shelter, insecure and inadequate housing. These examples also show that relative to the overall population, immigrants are over-represented among the homeless.

These inequalities are clearly linked to ethnic background. In the UK, 14% of households identifying as Black had experienced homelessness at some time, compared to 4.3% of the overall population. While in absolute figures most homeless people are White, the risk of homelessness is three times greater among Black households¹⁰⁹⁾.

105) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 116.

106) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 113.

107) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 108.

108) Kretzschmar, S., "Hilfemöglichkeiten und Hilfsansprüche ausländischer Wohnungsloser" ("Possibilities to help and the right to seek help for foreign homeless people"), in *Wohnungslosenhilfe: Verbindlich verbunden! Kooperationen – Verbundsysteme – Bündnisse* (Assistance to homeless people: mandatorily connected! Cooperations – Bonded systems – Alliances), eds Berthold, M., Reihe Materialien zur Wohnungslosenhilfe, Heft 51, (Series materials for assistance to homeless people, booklet 51), Verlag Soziale Hilfe, Bielefeld, 2002, p. 77.

109) Burrows, R., 'The social distribution of the experience of homelessness' in *Homeless and social policy*, Burrows, R., Pleave, N. & Quilgars D., Routledge, London, 1997, pp. 50-68.



Caritas Turkey reports that lack of housing and homelessness are the two greatest problems that Africans face. Sometimes groups of 25 to 30 people share one room.

Research in the UK also demonstrates that a disproportionate number of migrant households figure in the homelessness registers of local authorities. More recently, the rise in house prices has meant that many people from migrant communities cannot get a foot on the property ladder.

In the Netherlands, a 2001 survey found that single men without residency rights accounted for 40% of the occupation of night shelters¹¹⁰⁾. Approximately 45% of these men came from the countries of the Russian Federation and 25% from Africa.

Caritas and other NGO's and Service Providers find it can be difficult for service providers to help undocumented immigrants. In Austria, Greece, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden, it is illegal to provide shelter or work to undocumented immigrants¹¹¹⁾. In Germany, the Aliens Act determines that those who provide repeated help to immigrants without legal residence status are liable to prosecution and imprisonment of up to five years if found guilty¹¹²⁾.

MORE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS IF YOU ARE A YOUNG, SINGLE OR FEMALE IMMIGRANT

It should be interesting for policy makers and Service Providers dealing with the homeless that within the group of immigrants, particular groups such as young single migrants and women are more

and more represented among the homeless in general. For women, their homelessness is often connected to a history of (domestic) violence or trafficking.

The FEANTSA European Observatory on Homelessness states in its 2004 publication, 'Immigration and homelessness in Europe', that "there is a pattern of dominance of particular groups among the homeless compared with the composition of all immigrants, suggesting an increased vulnerability to homelessness for these groups. Although the origin of these groups varies between (EU) member states, North Africans, sub-Saharan Africans and, more recently, Eastern European groups tend to predominate. There is also evidence of changes in the demographic composition of homeless immigrants characterised mainly by an increase of the group of younger people and a feminisation of the population"¹¹³⁾.

Evidence further suggests that in many countries, young single adults from minority ethnic groups (often these are people with immigrant backgrounds) are more vulnerable to homelessness and an insecure way of living than other groups in society. There is also evidence that recent immigrants are a significant and, in many countries, increasing proportion of the clients of homelessness services¹¹⁴⁾.

Finally, relationship breakdowns are considered a key risk factor in homelessness. This raises the issue of cultural differences in the perception of divorce and family status among particular groups. In the Netherlands, for instance, about 15% of all Dutch marriages end in divorce after 10 years, but the rate is 75% among marriages between Dutch women and Turkish or Moroccan men¹¹⁵⁾.

110) Federatie Opvang, Dilemma's in de Maatschappelijke Opvang. Inventarisatie van illegalen en ex-asielzoekers in de Maatschappelijke Opvang (Dilemmas in social care. Inventory of illegals and former asylum seekers in social care), Utrecht, Federatie Opvang, 2000.

111) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 115.

112) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op.cit., pp. 131-132.

113) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 127.

114) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., pp. 95-96.

115) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert, H., op. cit., p. 104.

Women immigrants are another group at high risk of homelessness. They are vulnerable to homelessness arising from domestic abuse and there is evidence in many countries of an increase in numbers of immigrants in women's refuges¹¹⁶⁾.

An 18-month survey in Denmark gathered information from 2,634 women at crisis centres. Of the respondents, 855 (32%) were of non-Danish origin and 35% were from minority ethnic groups¹¹⁷⁾.

In Germany, statistics from the women's housing coordination authority show that some 50% to 80% of the occupants in women's shelters in large cities such as Berlin, Hamburg and Munich are immigrants¹¹⁸⁾.

In the Netherlands, a 2001 survey identified two groups of undocumented immigrants making use of homeless services :

"[One group] consists of women and children who are escaping from situations of domestic violence [...].

One-third of undocumented immigrants in women's shelters had lost their residence status when they fled the perpetrator since their status depended on that of their husband.

For a fifth of women [the other group], it was unclear what caused the problem with their residence status, while the remainder were either women victims of trafficking or women whose asylum application had failed.

In 2002 the Minister of Welfare declared that (under the UN 1979 Women's Treaty) women who are victims of domestic violence have a right to shelter and assistance regardless of their residence status"¹¹⁹⁾.



116) Federatie Opvang, Dilemma's in de Maatschappelijke Opvang. Inventarisatie van illegalen en ex-asielzoekers in de Maatschappelijke Opvang, op. cit. Hemat Gryffe Annual Report 2001, Edinburgh, 2001. Busch-Geertsema, V., Immigration and homelessness in Germany, Report for the European Observatory on Homelessness, FEANTSA, Brussels, 2003.

117) Research and Information Centre for Social Work: Women from ethnic minorities at crisis centres in Denmark, Esbjerg, RICSW, 2000.

118) Busch-Geertsema, V., Immigration and homelessness in Germany, op. cit.

119) Federatie Opvang, Dilemma's in de Maatschappelijke Opvang. Inventarisatie van illegalen en ex-asielzoekers in de Maatschappelijke Opvang, op. cit.

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

Victims of trafficking in human beings are also reported to be highly vulnerable to homelessness. A similar situation is reported by **Caritas Turkey** : there is a shelter for trafficked women in Istanbul, which was built in 2004, but this is only a very early step by the state. However, this initiative is supported by a considerable NGO involvement.


Caritas in action : CARITAS LATVIA

There are only few housing possibilities in Latvia for trafficked people : the Dominican nunnery, the Dardedze Centre Against Abuse, and an NGO called Skalbes.

There is housing for immigrants in Olaine, near Riga, but living conditions are bad there, so the organisations that work with trafficked people avoid referring victims there.

In 2003, an anti-trafficking programme was launched, but it has not yet started because there is still no funding for it from the state.

Caritas in action : CARITAS UKRAINE



In 2002 Caritas Ukraine opened a shelter in Western Ukraine for women who have survived trafficking. The shelter provides temporary accommodation and professional help from a psychologist and a social worker. Medical and legal assistance are additionally arranged in cooperation with other partner organizations in the region. The shelter employs a doctor, psychologist, and social worker, as well as a cleaner, cook and guards. The shelter's activities are based on the principles of mutual trust, respect and care provided to each of its clients. Moreover, a firm guarantee of the clients' privacy rights is offered. Also their rights to access exhaustive information on the possibilities available to them are fully observed. The women, staying at the shelter, are also offered consultations concerning employment and training opportunities or may undergo some professional courses.

Within the framework of a two-year project (end of 2003 – beginning 2006) a network of counselling and social services centres for trafficked women in four cities in Western Ukraine has been developed. During two years 157 women have been identified and approached. The centres have rendered a total of more than 1,626 social integration services to trafficked women including medical assistance, help to buy hygienic supplies, washing/cleaning items, clothes and footwear; legal/judicial assistance; reimbursement for transport costs; assistance in obtaining registration at local Employment Centre to find jobs in the near future; individual (and group) psychological consultations; and other social referral services. The centres have provided over 6,750 individual consultations on the outlined matters, both by telephone and at personal appointments. Apart from assistance provision, prevention activities have been carried out, in particular education aimed at prevention of trafficking among potential trafficking victims, local stakeholders and media. Over the report period the centres conducted various preventive educational actions, including lectures, seminars and round-table meetings, which involved at least 10,120 public attendees.

■ Summary of chapter 2 on housing

- Migrants, no matter what their residence status, are massively discriminated against in the private housing market and in social housing. However, discrimination in the housing market is hard to prove in court.
- Social housing has drifted away from its original goal : to provide good-quality housing at affordable prices for people with a low income, especially migrants.
- If migrants have access to social housing, they are mainly offered older apartments, or concentrated in 'migrant areas'. This adds to segregation of neighbourhoods with negative effects on the community as a whole.
- People who end up in low-quality housing, especially migrants, have little or no chance of escaping from the situation.
- Immigrants make up a large part of the homeless population in Europe. Young single adults and immigrant women are especially vulnerable to homelessness.
- Asylum-seekers face huge problems when leaving reception centres. These problems could include racist landlords, refusal of municipalities to deliver the residence card (or unreasonable delays in doing so), financial problems, and practical problems such as finding affordable furniture.
- Undocumented migrants working in the informal economy, especially in agriculture, are sometimes provided with accommodation by their employer. Their precarious legal situation means that they are victims of double discrimination : in the labour market as well as in housing.





CHAPTER 3.

HEALTH : FROM HEALTHY TO EXHAUSTED

"How can it be that even today there are still people dying of hunger ? Condemned to illiteracy ? Lacking the most basic medical care ? [...] The scenario of poverty can extend indefinitely, if in addition to its traditional forms we think of its newer patterns. These latter often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalization or social discrimination..."¹²⁰.

■ Health profile of migrants

Every migrant comes with their own health profile and beliefs about health, reflecting the culture and practices of the community of origin. Frequently, these systems are different from those of the destination country.

Immigrants are more vulnerable to certain health risks than nationals. Yet, there are often no specific measures taken to address this problem.

Caritas in action : CARITAS BULGARIA

New arrivals, registered asylum-seekers and refugees have access to specialist and emergency medical and dental care through our migrant service.

Medical care is provided by the John Paul II medical centre of the Society of Evharist Sisters (a community that only exists in the Balkans). It includes primary and emergency medical treatment and dental care.

The free care is available for up to three weeks, to a maximum of five consultations. The biggest groups of patients are pregnant women and women with babies, as well as the chronically ill and the elderly.

The St Joseph medical centre is close to the State Agency for Refugees and to the reception centre for new arrivals and asylum-seekers. There, Caritas Bulgaria provides care to women with gynaecological and breast problems. This service is extremely important and much needed.

Often, the precarious living conditions of immigrants (inadequate housing, poor nutrition, dangerous and low-paid jobs) lead to illness, which leads to poverty. A migrant who is sick may not have access to treatment and is therefore unable to work. In countries where the right to stay is linked to a work permit, migrants who lose their jobs also lose their legal status.

Caritas Europa is particularly concerned about asylum-seekers and migrants in an irregular situation. In several countries, these people have limited or no access to healthcare. Caritas Europa is also deeply concerned about the cultural and linguistic barriers blocking access to healthcare.



¹²⁰) John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, cited in Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church, op cit., paragraph 50.

Caritas Italy observes that migrants' ability to work, on which the success of their migration plans is based, is tied to physical well-being. Self-selection takes place in the country of origin, before emigration. Indeed, in many countries, immigrants are considerably healthier on arrival than the non-migrant population. This is described as the "healthy migrant effect" : an initially better health status in immigrants through selective migration of healthy people¹²¹⁾.

However, in other cases, health in migrants' countries of origin may be poor in comparison to that of the population of destination countries. Also, some migrants have experienced armed conflict, hunger, human rights' violations or other pre-migratory traumatic experiences. The healthy migrant effect is lost when looking not only at arriving immigrants but at the immigrant group as a whole.

Mortality and morbidity rates can be influenced by the change of country of residence, and by the process of migration itself. Research on mortality and morbidity and international migration has compared patterns of migrant groups with patterns of native groups, both in the country of origin and in the local population. These studies cover mortality and morbidity from a range of causes such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, respiratory or digestive diseases, infections and accidents or suicide¹²²⁾. Results suggest that changes in migrants' environment, with the move to the receiving country, have profound effects on health.



Self-perception is another revealing aspect. Findings of a two-year research project on migrants and health professionals in five EU countries (Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy and Spain)¹²³⁾ indicated that 80% of migrants surveyed rated their health as good, but 34% of those who had been in the receiving country for more than five years said their health had deteriorated.

The same study found that 63% of the general migrant population had some form of health coverage. 69% said they were satisfied with the health services, but 40% said they had experienced communication problems and 21% had found staff unfriendly. Only 50% were quite sure what human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) was, and only 40% knew they had the right to a free and anonymous HIV test. 57% were not sure or did not believe that the result of the HIV test would be confidential.

According to the International Centre for Migration and Health "health indicators suggest that migrants in Europe are at considerably higher risk for contracting a number of diseases than non-migrant populations in the same countries"¹²⁴⁾.

A study comparing prevalence of mental, physical and social health problems, rates of hospital admission, and mortality in Swedish and non-Swedish people, found that the migrants reported more chronic health problems. Overall, migrants had a poorer perception of their health in all domains except physical functioning. Eastern Europeans had low scores whilst western Europeans had high scores. Women tended to have worse mental health and general health. The main findings showed that

121) Geraci, S. & Martinelli, B., "The right of immigrants to health: national context and local politics", Nuova Anterem edition, Rome, 2002.

122) McKay L., Macintyre S. & Ellaway A., Migration and Health: a review of the International literature, Medical Research Council, Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, Occasional Paper, no. 12, Glasgow, January 2003, p. 7.

Available at: <http://www.msoc-mrc.gla.ac.uk/Publications/pub/PDFs/Occasional-Papers/OP012.pdf>

123) The results of the research project "Migrant-friendly health services and HIV/STI prevention"

Available at: <http://www.crrps.org/allegati/66/file/EnglishHandbook.pdf> (last accessed 03.03.2006)

124) Carballo, M. & Nerukar, A., Migration, Refugees and Health Risks, International Centre for Migration and Health, Vernier, Switzerland, 2000, p. 1.

elderly people in various migrant groups have low levels of life satisfaction, higher mental distress and worse perceived health, despite the absence of major biological problems such as disability and mortality¹²⁵⁾.

In general, it appears that immigrants face serious health risks, both during their migration process and while settling in.

■ Workplace health and safety

Caritas Europa member organisations in many countries found that immigrants are more affected by certain pathologies than the local population. **Caritas Austria**, for example, reports that generally speaking, health conditions of migrants are worse than those of Austrian citizens. They have a lot of pressures at work : integration, communication, dangerous jobs and so on. Consequently, they develop specific health problems, such as respiratory tract problems, diarrhoea and tuberculosis (TB).

The number of industrial accidents and injuries in France and Germany is higher among migrant workers than among other citizens. This is especially true for those who work in construction and on public works. Over 30% of all accidents resulting in permanent disabilities involve non-nationals¹²⁶⁾.

Caritas Russia reports that regulation of occupational health and safety has dropped sharply with the privatisation of many manufacturers. The number of injuries in manufacturing has increased, both in official enterprises as well as in the informal sector. In illegal, or shadow, enterprises and in industries that employ mainly undocumented immigrants (construction and agriculture), there are 30% more accidents than in legal enterprises.

In Italy, the risk of accidents at work is increasing for immigrants but not for Italians. In 2004, accidents of Italian workers decreased by 1.1% and those of foreign workers increased by 6.6%. Immigrants are clearly at higher risk of accidents at work, with an incidence of 65 accidents reported for every 1,000 insured workers, compared to an average of 42 accidents for workers overall.

Moreover, official data on accidents may be incomplete because it does not include incidents that are not considered serious and because accidents involving foreign workers are often unreported¹²⁷⁾.

Data from Belgium indicates that Moroccan and Turkish workers in heavy industry have a higher incidence of accidents than Belgian nationals and suffer more secondary psychological effects and complications¹²⁸⁾.

In the agricultural sector, exposure to pesticides and other chemical products is a common problem. In Spain, chronic exposure has been linked to depression, neurological disorders and miscarriages among migrant workers. The incidence of other injuries among greenhouse workers is also high; muscular diseases, dehydration and heart complaints linked to the high temperatures are common¹²⁹⁾.

In a controversial case in Norway, two seasonal migrant farm-workers were found to have Salmonella infections. Investigations revealed that although toilets and bathrooms were available on the farm, the only toilet facility available for workers in the fields were pit latrines without running water, soap or towels.

The workers had work permits but had not yet worked for the compulsory two weeks to qualify for sickness benefit. The steps taken by the authorities to



125) Silveira, E. et al., "Health and well-being among 70-year-old migrants living in Sweden", Results from the H 70 erological and geriatric populations in Goteborg", Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol, vol. 37, 2002, pp. 13-22.

126) Carballo, M. & Nerukar A., op.cit., p. 5.

127) Caritas Italiana/Migrantes: Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2005, op. cit.

128) Carballo, M. & Nerukar A., op.cit., p. 5.

129) Carballo, M. & Nerukar A., op.cit., p. 5.

prevent the spread of the disease placed a heavy financial burden on the workers. They may have felt forced to work even though they were ill¹³⁰⁾.

In the Czech Republic, a study on the health and social situation of migrants, mostly Ukrainians, focused on sickness and psychological problems¹³¹⁾. The study found that there was significantly more illness among construction workers who had changed professions as a result of migration, who were not satisfied with their accommodation, and who did weekend work. The main complaints were backache and digestive problems. Also, in comparison to Czech men, this group had more emotional and mental health problems.

The study also found that in Prague hospitals, the sickness rate among auxiliary staff with migrant backgrounds was approximately 17% higher than that of comparable Czech hospital employees.

■ Infectious diseases

The re-emergence of TB in developed parts of the world and the rapid spread of HIV and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) have been linked to population mobility¹³²⁾. Immigrants are much more at risk of being infected with TB than non-migrants.

The incidence of new cases of TB infection fell from 34.8/100,000 people in the nine EU countries in 1974 to 14.3/100,000 in all 15 EU member states in 1995. Over the past five years, however, the incidence of new cases has increased. In Denmark, the proportion of cases in foreign-born persons rose from 18% in 1986 to 60% in 1996. In England and

Wales, approximately 40% of all TB cases are people from the Indian subcontinent. In the Netherlands, where the incidence of TB rose by 45% between 1987 and 1995, over 50% of known cases of infection occurred among immigrants.

The TB profile in Germany and France is similar, and migrants are three times and six times respectively more likely to be diagnosed with the disease than non-migrants. Although immigrants in an irregular situation may be at particularly high risk of TB, they are reluctant to be tested for fear of being deported. In France, where migrants make up only 6% of the population, Aids reportedly affects 14% of migrants¹³³⁾.

Like TB and HIV/Aids, Hepatitis A is another disease of poverty, endemic in most developing countries¹³⁴⁾.

■ Poor nutrition

Caritas Russia observes that poor nutrition equals poor health, and underpaid work leads to poor nutrition. It is a vicious cycle that is difficult to break. When they arrive in a new place, migrants have to change the way they live and their social status. The stress from this can lead to depression, mental illness or drug or alcohol abuse.

Caritas Europa member organisations see health problems linked to poor quality of life and inadequate diet among migrants in most European countries. For example, **Caritas Denmark** reports that refugees receiving 'introduction benefits' from the state have very little money and cannot afford to buy healthy food or to maintain a balanced diet.

130) Guerin, P.J., Vold, L., & Aavitsland, P., "Communicable Disease Control in a Migrant Seasonal Workers Population: A case study in Norway", *Eurosurveillance* vol. 10, issues 1-3, January-March 2005, p. 48ff.

131) Nesvadbová, L., Rutsch, J. & Sojka, S., "Migration and its health and social problems in the Czech Republic. Part II", *Central European Journal of Public Health*, 5, 4, 193-8, 1997.

132) International Organisation for Migration: *Migrant Health for the Benefit of All*, 88th Session of the IOM Council, Geneva, November 2004. Available at: <http://www.iom.int> (last accessed 30.03.2006)

133) Duckett, M., *Migrants' Right to Health*, UNAIDS Best practice collection, UNAIDS, Geneva, March 2001, referring to Chardin, C., "Access to new treatments for migrants living with HIV and AIDS: the policy maker's point of view – the political and juridical situation in France" in *Access to new treatments for migrants living with HIV and AIDS – Second Annual Seminar*, National Focal Points, European Project AIDS & mobility. Clarke, K. & Bröring, G., October 1999, p. 15.

134) Carballo, M. & Nerukar, A., op.cit., p. 3.

Caritas in action : CARITAS BULGARIA

To help address young migrant children's nutritional needs, we provide them with monthly packages of food, drinks and goodies with vitamins.

The support is needed not only by new arrivals, but also by asylum-seekers whose applications are being processed, as well as recognised refugees who have great difficulty surviving on 55 lev (approximately 28 euro) a month.

In 2005, we responded to two formal requests from the State Agency for Refugees to urgently provide food packages to asylum-seeking mothers with two or three children because of delays in the state grant.

Cultural norms can also lead to nutritional problems. Diet patterns of the receiving countries are often different and inadequate compared to those of the countries of origin and this could lead to excessive eating or lack of nutrition.

Immigrants may be at higher risk of obesity-related illness. A study on the effect of moving from a rural to urban community on emigrants' weight investigated the health and nutritional status of Greeks in Spata, a rural Greek town, and that of Greeks in Melbourne, Australia. The Melbourne group had moved towards a diet higher in meat, fat and beer. The Melbourne Greeks had a significantly greater proportion of obesity and higher incidence of cancer and heart problems¹³⁵⁾.

Another study shows that foreign-born people in Sweden have a significantly higher body mass index (BMI) and percentage of body fat compared with Swedes. Foreign-born women are more likely to be overweight (36.6%) and obese (19.2%) than Swedish women (32.7% and 12.9% respectively)¹³⁶⁾.

A German study found that the prevalence of overweight and obese children was higher among migrants (14.7% and 3.1%) than Germans (9.1% and 1.9%). When sorted by parental social status, migrant children were more likely to be overweight than German children in the highest social class (27.6% and 10%)¹³⁷⁾.

A recent UK survey showed that Indian and Pakistani boys had a higher prevalence of overweight compared with boys in the general UK population, while Bangladeshi and Chinese boys had a lower overweight prevalence. Among girls, Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani girls were more frequently overweight while Indian and Chinese girls had a lower overweight prevalence compared to girls from the general population¹³⁸⁾.

In France, the children of North African immigrants were more likely to be obese than French children in cross-sectional surveys conducted in the 1970s and 1990s. The overall prevalence of obesity increased from 8% to 13% over this period¹³⁹⁾.



135) McKay, L., Macintyre, S., & Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 14.

136) Lahmann, P. et al., Differences in body fat and central adiposity between Swedes and European Immigrants: The Malmo Diet and Cancer Study, *Obesity Research*, 8, 9, 2000, pp. 620 – 631.

137) Will, B., Zeeb, H. & Baune, B. T., *Overweight and obesity at school entry among migrant and German children: a cross-sectional study*, BioMed Central Public Health, 2005.

138) Will, B., Zeeb, H. & Baune, B. T., *ibid.*

139) Will, B., Zeeb, H. & Baune, B. T., *ibid.*

Data from health surveys in 1992/1993 and 1993/1994 among children in the Netherlands showed that the average BMI was higher among Turkish and Moroccan children than among Dutch children¹⁴⁰⁾.

A study carried out by an Italian paediatric hospital¹⁴¹⁾, found that a disproportionate number of foreign children and adolescents present with obesity and diabetes.

Analysing the association between migration, socio-economic status and risk factors for cardiovascular disease, a Swedish study found that foreign-born people of low income had the highest proportion of physically inactive individuals and the highest proportion of smokers. Low-income and foreign-born individuals showed high BMIs in comparison to high income respondents and Swedes in general¹⁴²⁾.

■ Mental health and substance abuse

There have been many studies on the 'stress hypothesis', which contends that faced with the hazards and pressures of migration to a new environment, a greater number of immigrants than expected break down¹⁴³⁾.

In a report on health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, the Council of Europe states that stress-related symptoms such as peptic ulcers, frequent severe headaches, anxiety attacks, dermatitis, and sleeping disorders have been frequently reported in European countries, as have hypochon-

dria, paranoia, disability and impairment of work performance. Somatisation of psychosocial problems can be an important source of confusion to healthcare staff that are not familiar with the process and impact of migration on psychological health, according to the report¹⁴⁴⁾.

A Swedish study found that various groups of elderly migrants displayed a worse profile in terms of emotional and cognitive symptoms and life satisfaction. Feelings of low energy and appetite, poor general condition, and declining memory were more common in migrants. The migrants showed lower levels of satisfaction with their social situation, family life, leisure time, physical health, economic status, and living conditions than Swedish natives. Furthermore, the migrants' perception of their own mental health was worse than that of the natives¹⁴⁵⁾.

Psychiatric morbidity among children of immigrants probably reflects a wide range of familial, personal and environmental circumstances, including lack of identity, confused cultural affiliation, parental job insecurity, regrets about leaving home, family disruption and poor future opportunities¹⁴⁶⁾.

The relatively high incidence of depression among immigrants and their children in many EU countries has also been associated with high rates of suicide. In Rotterdam, for example, children of Turkish immigrants were five times as likely as Dutch children to commit suicide and Moroccan children three times as likely. Children, particularly girls, of Surinamese immigrants had a suicide rate 27.6 times higher than that of Dutch children.

140) Will, B., Zeeb, H. & Baune, B. T., *ibid*.

141) Unità operativa di Dietologia Clinica of the hospital Bambin Gesù in Rome.

142) Pudaric, S. et al., "Major risk factors for cardiovascular disease in elderly migrants in Sweden", *Ethnicity & Health*, 5 (2), 2000, pp. 137-150.

143) (a) Jabslensky, A., Sartorius, N. & Ernberg, G. et al., "Schizophrenia: manifestations, incidence and course in different cultures: a WHO ten country study", *Psychological Medicine, Monograph*, Suppl. 20, 1-97, 1992; (b) Losi, N., *Vite altrove: migrazione e disagio psichico* (Lives elsewhere: migration and mental health), Roma, Feltrinelli, 2000; (c) Bhugra, D., "Migration and mental health", *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 109, 243 -258, 2004.

144) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, Report, Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, 9 February 2000.

145) McKay L., Macintyre S. & Ellaway A., *op. cit.*, p. 12.

146) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, *op. cit.*

In the UK, suicide rates for women from the Indian subcontinent are also markedly higher than of men and are highest among girls aged 15 to 24. On the whole, suicide among this immigrant group is twice as high as the national average¹⁴⁷⁾.

Social support from informal ethnic networks at time of arrival seems to benefit immigrants and have long-lasting effects on their mental health. Such support provides invaluable "stress-buffering" effects¹⁴⁸⁾.

Substance abuse is a problem that mainly affects single immigrants. A 1996 World Health Organisation (WHO) report noted that the consumption of tranquillisers and anti-depressants by young immigrant people across Europe is growing¹⁴⁹⁾.

A 2002-2003 report of the AC Company (the European network for the target group of mobile drug users) finds that the complex issue of drugs, foreigners and mobility is not sufficiently addressed in international discussions¹⁵⁰⁾. According to the organisation, there is still a lack of information and data from within and outside the EU.

According to **Caritas Russia**, drug dealers use Russia as an intermediate country for trafficking drugs to western Europe. Open and half-open borders allow drug dealers to bring in drugs and addiction is on the rise in Russia.

Organizations that take up the challenge of working with these target groups often face great problems of acceptance and funding. Often, local authorities do not feel that it is their responsibility to take care of foreigners. And national and European bodies offer no funding at all.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to solving the problem of drug use among immigrants. This is a diverse group with members from various countries. Some people tend to hide their problems and to seek solutions without external support. There is a dramatic lack of mediators and social workers from these immigrant groups. There are very few international exchanges of good practice or practice in general.



147) Carballo, M. & Nerukar, A., op. cit., p. 6.

148) McKay, L., Macintyre, S. & Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 13.

149) Council of Europe: Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, op. cit.

150) AC Company Report available at: http://www.ac-company.org/en/product_en.html (last accessed 30.03.2006)

Caritas in action : CARITAS LUXEMBOURG

Asylum-seekers arriving in Luxembourg today tend to be younger and more isolated than in the past. Until recently, they were left to themselves and were not provided with support to help with their difficult circumstances. Depression and conflicts were common.

In order to overcome these problems and to prevent members of this group from sliding into delinquency, the government has adopted Caritas' recommendations for better support for asylum-seekers. A group of professionals now provides individual follow-up of residents in asylum-seeker accommodation.

At the site that is managed by Caritas Luxembourg there is a three-person team looking after the well-being of 87 residents. Many problems are solved quickly and therefore do not escalate into crises. There is an emphasis on respect, safety and peace and quiet.

Sick, traumatised and school-age people are given priority in accommodation.

The asylum-seekers are also given assistance on administrative and medical matters and in researching possibilities for training and other activities. They feel less alone and disadvantaged and are able to make long-term plans for their future in Luxembourg or back in their country of origin.

■ Access to healthcare

There have been a number of reports documenting the limited access to healthcare and the health consequences for migrants in many parts of Europe¹⁵¹. Caritas Europa member organisations in

many countries, too, have observed that foreigners face considerable problems in gaining access to public health services.



A Caritas experience : CARITAS GREECE – ATHENS REFUGEE PROGRAMME

"Asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants with residence permits and those with work permits have access to state healthcare services.

People without residence rights are assisted by NGOs. In the Attica region, we advise undocumented migrants who come to our centre to go to Médecins Sans Frontières or Médecins du Monde for free care and medication.

Our research shows that 43% of our clients go to hospital if they have a problem, 13% go to Médecins du Monde, 14% to Médecins Sans Frontières, 5% to a private doctor. 11% buy medicines on their own and 9% do nothing about their health problem"¹⁵².

151) Duckett, M., op. cit.

152) The remaining 5% is 'unknown'.

HIGH-RISK GROUPS

Women and children

Women migrants can be caught between traditional values and practices and those of the environment in which they live and work.

At least one study has looked at difficult pregnancies and pregnancy-related illness among migrants in western Europe¹⁵³. In Sweden, another study found that women of foreign origin, especially from sub-Saharan Africa, have a higher risk of perinatal mortality than native Swedish women¹⁵⁴.

When migrant couples separate, the support options are likely to be more limited than what is available for nationals, and problems of loneliness,

fear and poor self-esteem are often exacerbated. Women can be significant 'losers', particularly in countries where their job opportunities are limited and where their social status in immigrant communities is tied to marriage and family¹⁵⁵.

Immigrant children are also more likely to have accidents. In Germany, non-German children in the five- to nine-year-old age bracket are more prone to traffic and other injuries. In the Netherlands, there is a higher incidence of domestic and traffic accidents among children of migrant workers than Dutch children. Poor housing may be one of the risk factors. In France, lead poisoning from old and poorly-maintained houses is a common problem affecting migrant children¹⁵⁶.

A Caritas experience : CARITAS TURKEY

In a satellite city, an Iraqi woman in her 30s gave birth to her children in the waiting room of a hospital without any assistance from a doctor or a nurse.

She did not receive any help from the hospital after the delivery because she was a foreigner, did not speak the language and had no money.

This happened six years ago. We heard this story only recently, when she managed to tell us about it. She was still very ashamed and was crying while she told us the story.



The elderly

Not much research has been done on the health of elderly migrants. A study in Sweden, found large differences in physical activity, smoking habits and BMI in elderly foreign-born people. The men of this group ran an increased risk of engaging in no physical activity, being a smoker, and having an increased BMI¹⁵⁷.

Asylum-seekers and refugees

In general, refugees are more exposed to mental illness due to their dramatic and often traumatic past experiences. Many refugees were tortured before fleeing their country of origin. Often they suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

153) Carballo, M. & Nerukar, A., op. cit., p. 4.

154) Essen, B. et al., "Increased prenatal mortality among sub-Saharan immigrants in a city-population in Sweden", Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand, 79, 2000, pp. 737-743.

155) Council of Europe: Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, op. cit.

156) Council of Europe: Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, op. cit.

157) Pudarc, S. et al., op. cit, pp. 137-150.

Caritas in action : CARITAS LUXEMBOURG

Many refugees have suffered violence : war, torture, rape and depression from being torn away from their homes and societies. Unlike other European countries, Luxembourg does not offer targeted psychosocial services for refugees.

To address the needs, Caritas set up a network of psychologists and psychiatrists with an interest in the area, and who were willing to work with refugees.

After a while, it became obvious that there was a linguistic barrier that could only be overcome by the use of interpreters. So a training course on mental health was organised for 12 interpreters who spoke the languages of the main refugee groups : Albanian, Arabic, Serbian and Russian.

Caritas member organisations in the UK report that refugees are particularly vulnerable because, apart from the mental and psychological effects of fleeing from persecution, healthcare is not always a first priority compared with the immediate need for housing and employment.

Undocumented immigrants

The situation of irregular immigrants is even more difficult, because they usually live with long periods of uncertainty about their fate. They tend to have no access to healthcare services or in some countries they have access only to emergency treatment. All these elements have a negative impact on their mental and physical well-being. Health, as well as employment and housing, are the ever-present worries in the lives of undocumented immigrants. In a 2003 study, undocumented immigrants said that they thought a lot about health and were afraid of falling ill¹⁵⁸.

Migrant sex workers

Conditions of migrant sex workers differ in view of national laws on prostitution and immigration.

In general, migrant sex workers in Europe have extremely limited access to healthcare and social services¹⁵⁹. A report by the department of healthcare and culture of the University of Amsterdam argues that that internationalisation has an important influence on the organisation of prostitution and healthcare today¹⁶⁰. Prostitution can no longer be viewed as a local or national phenomenon but must be treated as an international issue, involving multicultural groups and international organisations. New policies are needed, according to the report.

Victims of people-smuggling

When looking at high-risk groups the numerous casualties among would-be immigrants at European borders cannot be overlooked. Hundreds of people die while trying to enter European countries, as regularly reported by the media. In June 2000, 54 Chinese suffocated in the back of a lorry in Dover. Many bodies are found on the Spanish coast near the Strait of Gibraltar or on the Italian coast. The risk of dying while trying to enter Europe in an irregular manner has increased to an alarming level.

158) Alt, J., *Leben in der Schattenwelt. Problemkomplex "illegale" Migration*, Von Loeper Verlag, Karlsruhe, 2004.

159) Duckett, M., op. cit., p. 34.

160) Brussa, L., *"Migrant sex workers in Europe"*, Research for sex work 2, Research Department of Health Care and Culture (HCC) of VU University Medical Centre in Amsterdam, 1999.

Caritas in action : CARITAS BULGARIA

In July 2005, a group of about 20 Afghans crossed the Bulgarian border illegally. They were all injured, some of them were hospitalised with fractures from being pushed off the train after crossing the border. Caritas provided care, food packages and hygiene items to the injured people.

People are often drugged, to keep them quiet. One 13-year-old boy was hospitalised with severe brain and lung damage and died after three months in a coma. However, government officials were not interested in the details of the accident as the child was deemed to be a foreigner with no identification.

Immigrants do not always receive the same level of healthcare in terms of consultation, treatment and preventive services as the average population.

Caritas in action : CARITAS ROME

In 1983, Caritas Rome set up a health service for disadvantaged people who did not have free access to the public health system : the Health Area of Caritas Rome. The main beneficiaries were migrants, and in particular, migrants without legal status in Italy.

The aims of the service are to address the immediate needs of the affected people, and to encourage the authorities to take on the problems. It offers general and specialist healthcare services, especially for women and minors. It also carries out research and gives training to volunteers, on health, integration and transcultural medicine.

In 1987, special attention was given to the health of the Roma people living in camps in the suburbs of the city. Recently, Caritas Rome set up a research centre on the health of migrants and Roma.

Caritas Austria reports that access to health-care is very difficult for people who do not have health insurance and who cannot obtain social assistance. In the municipality of Vienna, social assistance is available to migrants only after five years of residence and on the condition that they have a permanent residence permit. Under extreme conditions, the municipality of Vienna may grant assistance as an exception. Also, in addition to language problems, migrants who are illiterate or who have had little schooling have difficulty understanding explanations by medical staff.

Most countries provide only essential care or emergency treatment to non-citizens. The obligation to provide healthcare is interpreted in different ways in different countries¹⁶¹⁾. In some countries, certain categories of migrants may not be eligible for national health insurance plans. Legal systems distinguish between regular and irregular migrants and between refugees and asylum-seekers. A substantial number of seasonal migrant farm workers, for instance, are never registered as employees and therefore do not receive sickness benefits or sick leave if they fall ill.



161) Duckett, M., op. cit., summary, p. V.

Caritas in action : CARITAS SWITZERLAND

Health professionals and health institutions are under pressure of cost and time considerations. The department "Health and Integration" of Caritas Switzerland offers tailor-made services. They aim to provide more efficiency in the medical treatment and care of migrant women and men and to thus better target the human and financial resources available. Sickness and health are fundamental issues in human life. It is essential to be able to overcome language barriers when it comes to complaints, feelings and living conditions. Language barriers can also hinder communications with regard to diagnosis, medical and nursing measures. The particular living conditions before, during and after the migration are often the key to understanding of the sickness. Health professionals face the challenge to recognise the history and the circumstances of their patients with a migration background, and to develop the appropriate responses. The Caritas department "Health and Integration" therefore focuses on targeted information and intercultural training of health professionals, and thus contributes to a cooperation of trust between the professionals and the patients of diverse origin and to effective and mutually satisfactory treatment. The department also helps in the further development of hospitals in Switzerland to become 'migrant friendly hospitals'.

Caritas Europa member organisations observe that in most European countries, it is difficult for irregular migrants and asylum-seekers to access the health system. **Caritas Greece**, for example, reports that asylum-seekers and irregular migrants do not have access to state hospitals or medical care. They have access only to care provided by NGOs and often need to be assisted by Greek citizens.

A survey of health centres by the Italian Federation of Organisations for the Homeless found that all the centres surveyed received foreign patients. In 83% of cases the majority of immigrants were without legal residence¹⁶²⁾.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stated that it was "greatly concerned that in many European countries there are migrants who fall outside the scope of existing health and social

services"¹⁶³⁾. Migrants, even those who are legally resident, tend to have access to a lower level of healthcare than nationals. This is due to political, administrative and cultural reasons.

Problems arise not only from the lack of medical resources but also from migrants' low purchasing power¹⁶⁴⁾. **Caritas Norway** reports cases of resident migrants who did not have the money to buy medicines they needed.

In the Athens Declaration of November 1999, the European Project Aids & Mobility¹⁶⁵⁾ noted that migrants living with HIV/Aids in Europe had only limited access to healthcare, specifically to HIV treatment. They noted that this was due to legal and administrative obstacles, socio-economic problems, lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate information and services, and stigmatisation¹⁶⁶⁾.

162) Edgar, B., Doherty, J. & Meert H., op. cit., p. 116.

163) Council of Europe: Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, op. cit.

164) Duckett, M., op. cit.

165) This project is bringing together National Focal Points representing 14 European Union member states.

It is predominantly focusing on HIV/AIDS prevention, targeting travellers and migrants in Europe.

Available at: <http://www.aidsmobility.org/index.cfm> (last accessed 29.03.2006)

166) Duckett, M., op. cit., p. 33.

Caritas Europa member organisations observe that there appears to be insufficient information for migrants about the national health system in all countries. In some countries, including Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria and Denmark, Caritas organisations report that the situation seems to be improving, with action being taken to make sure that migrants are aware of their rights on health.

The Aids & Mobility Project, composed of representatives of EU member states, noted that although in theory, EU member states are not allowed to deport migrants with serious health problems to countries where their health needs cannot be met, there are many examples to show that this does happen¹⁶⁷⁾.

In general, migrant workers with health problems often go back to their home countries. And if they become very ill, people go home to die among their relatives or original communities¹⁶⁸⁾.

A Caritas experience : CARITAS CZECH REPUBLIC

A woman from Mongolia came to work in the Czech Republic, accompanied by her 12-year-old son. She worked as a seamstress among compatriots in a small border town.

Trouble set in when the boy lost his passport, which contained his visa.

His mother travelled home to arrange new papers for her son. When she came back, they went to see the alien and border police. Neither mother nor son had a good command of the Czech language and were very surprised when, instead of a family unification visa for over 90 days, the police marked the passport with an exit order.

Soon afterwards, the woman became seriously ill and was hospitalised. Her employer did not renew her contract due to her long-term illness. In the meantime, her son left school and looked after the children of other Mongolians, who sheltered him. He hardly ever left the flat, for fear of police.

His mother was recovering slowly, but with the loss of her job, her visa became invalid.

Throughout this time, she was helped by an Austrian, who later asked for her hand in marriage. The woman hopes to be rejoined by her son in Austria after the wedding and hopes to start a new life in another country.



167) Duckett, M., op. cit., p. 33.

168) Duckett, M., op. cit., p. 33.

■ Language and other socio-cultural barriers

Increasingly, evidence indicates that immigrants tend to be unwilling or unable to use local health and social services for fear of being reported (if they are not legally resident) or because they do not receive culturally-sensitive support¹⁶⁹⁾.

Language and other communication problems can be considered the main difficulties for health professionals and their immigrant patients. Cultural misunderstandings complicate the situation. Healthcare services are generally not geared to the needs of migrants and to differences in culture, with different beliefs on sickness and healthcare. For example, **Caritas Bulgaria** reports that due to religious considerations, many refugees, asylum-seekers and trafficked people – especially women – do not seek medical help.

Many Caritas Europa member organisations see a lack of awareness of patients' cultural values. Health professionals also encounter difficulties if faced with patients who have had experiences that are not easy to understand. Frequently, the medical response is unsuitable or inadequate.

Caritas Belgium states that those who deliver healthcare and social service lack up-to-date information on cultural specificities of their clients. There is also a lack of mediation and interpretation services, and of legislation on medical aid to people with irregular residence status.

These factors taken together may help explain why many health problems, and especially mental health problems, tend to be misdiagnosed in migrant groups. To some extent, medical professionals make

diagnoses and treat illnesses on the basis of cultural assumptions. These patterns may not be appropriate to migrant and ethnic minority patients. Research has found that differences in symptom profiles could simply be the result of cultural variations in the expression of psychological distress¹⁷⁰⁾.

Health literacy among migrants also plays a role. Migrants tend to have poor knowledge of European healthcare systems. This limited understanding of how local healthcare works makes it difficult for them to seek care.

Poor living conditions also contribute to poor health. Immigrants tend to be exposed to poverty-related diseases. If they are socially excluded from society, they may not come into contact with the available healthcare services. This is especially marked in the case of migrants who move for short-term work, and even more so for undocumented migrants¹⁷¹⁾.

The above are examples of selective barriers¹⁷²⁾ that can lead to isolation and feelings of helplessness. In general, poor health and lack of access to healthcare is more marked among recent arrivals and groups who are otherwise more socially disadvantaged, such as north Africans in France and Bangladeshis in the UK¹⁷³⁾.

Finally, it needs to be said that there is still some racism among service providers and in society in general. Foreign communities have very little involvement in decision-making in the health sector.

169) Carballo, M. & Nerukar, A., op. cit., p. 7.

170) McKay, L., Macintyre, S., Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 13.

171) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: *Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe*, op. cit.

172) Duckett, M., op. cit., partly referring to Bollini, P. & Siem, H., "No Real Progress towards Equity: Health of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities on the eve of the year 2000"; Soc. Sci. Med., vol. 41, No 6, 1995, pp. 819-828.

173) Duckett, M., op. cit., p.7.

Caritas in action : CARITAS GERMANY

The SPuK project, 'Language and culture : foundations for effective healthcare', aimed to stabilise the health situation of refugees and asylum-seekers by developing new concepts in healthcare.

The project provided training for asylum-seekers and migrants without secured residence to become language and cultural mediators in the German health system.

The project also developed political recommendations on the need for information, linguistic and cultural mediation and improvement of psycho-social care for the target groups within the German healthcare system.

■ Summary of chapter 3 on health

- Among migrants, illness can be a result of their environment in the country of origin, the destination country, or of the process of migration itself. Changes in environment and cultural context, social isolation, language barriers and cultural attitudes to seeking healthcare often increase health risks.
- While migrants do not necessarily have worse health than non-migrants¹⁷⁴⁾, they tend to be at higher risk of certain health problems. A loss of socio-economic status resulting from migration can lead to poor nutrition, overcrowding, and inadequate sanitation and housing.
- Although migrant workers are selected for their good health and ability to work (the 'healthy migrant effect'), there is evidence that later in life many end up with a substantial burden of disability (the 'exhausted migrant effect')¹⁷⁵⁾.
- Immigrants often lack information on where and how to seek help, on available hospital and ambulatory care services.
- Access to healthcare may be restricted by the government of the receiving country.
- Evidence indicates that pathologies in the first generation of migrants are not imported, but frequently picked up in the receiving country or caused by adjustment to their new situation.
- TB, Hepatitis A and other diseases associated with poverty affect immigrants to a much higher degree than in other groups in European countries¹⁷⁶⁾.
- Immigrants are more likely to have accidents and pregnancy-related illnesses. They are also more frequently subject to hypertension, chronic conditions, and overweight and obesity¹⁷⁷⁾. Their ill health may worsen the longer they stay¹⁷⁸⁾.
- Although migration does not necessarily threaten mental health, it may affect mental health when combined with other risk factors¹⁷⁹⁾. Refugees, asylum-seekers and other migrants who suffered trauma are especially at risk.



174) McKay, L., Macintyre S. & Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 9.

175) Duckett, M., op. cit.

176) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Health conditions of migrants and refugees in Europe, op. cit.

177) McKay, L., Macintyre S. & Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 18.

178) McKay, L., Macintyre S. & Ellaway, A., op. cit., p. 17.

179) International Organization for Migration: IOM Position Paper on psychosocial and mental well-being of migrants, 10 November 2003.

MIGRATION, A JOURNEY INTO POVERTY ?

- The migrant groups that are most vulnerable to poor health are : women, children, the elderly, immigrants in difficult jobs, certain ethnic groups, asylum-seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants.
- Health services are generally not culturally sensitive. Even basic support services, such as interpretation, are not available in most countries. There are few programmes that train healthcare providers on migrants' needs.
- The close link between health and poverty is most obvious among undocumented migrants. Lack of access to healthcare leads to otherwise avoidable complications of disease or illness, sometimes even to disability and the frustration of the person's migration project.



CHAPTER 4.

EDUCATION : AN ESSENTIAL STEPPING STONE OUT OF POVERTY

"The planning capacity of a society oriented towards the common good and looking to the future is measured also and above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer. The high level of unemployment, the presence of obsolete educational systems and of persistent difficulties in gaining access to professional formation and the job market represent, especially for many young people, a huge obstacle on the road to human and professional fulfilment [...] In general, this is the drama that strikes not only young people, but also [...], immigrants, [...]."

"Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one's responsibilities"¹⁸⁰⁾.

■ Right to education

The right to education is laid down in Article 26 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 28 of the convention states that "State Parties recognize the right of the child to education; and with a view to achieving the right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity they shall in particular make primary education compulsory and available free to all"¹⁸¹⁾.

Universal primary education is also one of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

whose aim is to reduce extreme poverty around the globe. Signatory countries commit to ensuring that "children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling"¹⁸²⁾.

In public discussion about immigration and education, two issues have been dominant over the last few years : schools with a high number of foreign-born pupils, and PISA, the OECD's programme for international student assessment.

PISA assesses 15-year-old pupils' knowledge and skills in reading literacy, mathematics literacy and scientific literacy. The 2003 report revealed the extent to which nationality could be considered an educational handicap. In France, for example, in 2002, 'socio-economic and cultural origin' accounts for 12% of the difference in students' literacy scores at the end of obligatory schooling¹⁸³⁾.

The concentration of foreign-born pupils in certain schools is on the rise, in part because neighbourhood schools sometimes move their immigrant pupils to what are called 'ghetto schools'. At the same time, nationals avoid placing their children in these schools. **Caritas Belgium** observes a parallel trend among Turkish and Moroccan parents, who take their children out of schools where the number of Roma children is increasing.

In Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK, there is a great imbalance in the distribution of foreign and national adult population (25-64) by level of education.

180) Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church, op cit. paragraphs 289 and 290.

181) Convention on the Rights of the Child, Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990.

182) Millennium Development Goals available at: <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/goals03.htm>, (last accessed 06.03.2006)

183) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA): Education Policy Analysis, 2002 Edition, OECD, Paris.

Table 2 : Distribution of foreign and national adult populations (25-64) by level of education in selected OECD countries (2002-2003 average; percentages)¹⁸⁴⁾

COUNTRY	LESS THAN UPPER SECONDARY		UPPER SECONDARY	
	Foreigners	Nationals	Foreigners	Nationals
Austria	42.9	19.3	43.4	63.7
Belgium	52.3	37.8	25.7	33.5
Czech Republic	25.9	11.7	52.5	76.6
France	63.9	33.5	20.6	42.5
Germany	47.1	13.6	38.2	62.4
Luxembourg	43.8	27.5	38.0	56.7
Netherlands	43.7	31.9	31.5	43.4
Switzerland	31.4	8.1	44.6	65.2
UK	30.9	17.4	25.5	53.1

These data show that in some countries foreigners have markedly lower educational statuses than nationals. As stated in chapter 1 on employment, the lower the education profile of a person, the higher the risk of being unemployed.

At the same time, it must be noted that immigrants who bring valuable qualifications are often unable to put them to use in the labour market.



184) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Trends in International Migration, OECD Annual Report 2004, SOPEMI, OECD 2005.

Caritas in action : CARITAS GERMANY

Comprehensive approach to exclusion :

The capability initiative of Caritas Germany for disadvantaged children and youngsters

In the context of the publication of the second Poverty and Wealth Report of the German government 2005, the president of Caritas Germany Dr. Peter Neher, called for a capability initiative within Caritas in Germany. According to this report, in Germany 1.7 million children and youngsters under 15 live on social benefits.

Consequences are visible in the field of education and access to the labour market. 15% of youngsters of one age-group and 33% of all youngsters with a migration background do not have professional education; while 9% of youngsters of one age-group do not have secondary school qualifications. This affects 19.2% of those with a migration background.

The initiative starts from the assumption, that every person has a potential to take responsibility for its own life, provided that some basic conditions are secured, which the human being cannot secure by himself.

Justice to promote capability implies that a society should provide for the necessary means for a life of dignity.

In this framework, the German Caritas does not only want to make demands on policy makers and society, but it also wants to strengthen its own activities in these areas. All institutions and services are called upon to contribute with their experience and knowledge to the development of policies in order to develop activities in the interest of disadvantaged children and youngsters. Among them a strong focus lies on children and youngsters with a migration background.

Children should be enabled to achieve their own potential; for this education and training are a fundamental basis for the development of independency and self reliability among youngster. They should have the opportunity to develop their talents in emotional issues, social issues, the arts and sports; they reflect upon cultural and religious values and develop their own values. They should be enabled to obtain school diplomas according to their individual talents. Youngsters, who have not finished secondary school, should get access to the labour market for specific professions.

The project should mobilise all possibilities of support of the capability initiative within Caritas in Germany.

The impact of this initiative will be evaluated in 2007.

Caritas in action : CARITAS GREECE – ATHENS REFUGEE PROGRAMME

All children have free access to state schools until the age of 18 (the end of secondary school), regardless of the legal status of their parents. Like Greeks, they may continue to university, which is free, if they meet the required academic standards. Students at state universities can obtain residence permits. They also have access to technical schools.

In certain areas, some state schools offer free help with the Greek language and educational system.

The Caritas Athens refugee programme has started twice-weekly free English and Greek lessons for adults at their refugee centre.

■ Barriers to education

Many countries afford the right to basic education to all students regardless of their citizenship status. Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, Greece, the Netherlands, and Portugal permit enrolment of children of immigrants without regular residence status.

Caritas Russia reports that the constitution of the Russian Federation gives everyone the right to free secondary education, including children without Russian citizenship or legal status. Also, families with more than three children, including refugees, are entitled to direct material support. Children from large families also receive a free meal at school. There are no restrictions on refugees wishing to enrol in state professional schools.

However, in a few countries (Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden and Iceland), proof of residence status is needed for enrolment in a school. In Poland, children must be registered as a resident of the municipality, while in Iceland children must have

their legal domicile in the country¹⁸⁵. The connection between residence and right to education is a hindrance for many with an irregular residence status.

In other countries, either there is no link between type of residence status and access to schooling, or no mention is made at all of which children have a right and an obligation to attend school¹⁸⁶. This is the case in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the UK. This leads to a wide variety of administrative practices, differing not only from country to country, but even from region to region within countries.

For example, in Austria, some foreign citizens are excluded from a component of the vocational education system that is linked to apprenticeships. This is because an apprenticeship counts as a form of employment under the Alien Employment Act. This law affects foreign citizens who are not EU or EEA citizens or who are refugees recognized according to the Geneva Convention¹⁸⁷.

Caritas in action : CARITAS LUXEMBOURG

In Luxembourg, young non-Europeans must have a work permit if they wish to do an apprenticeship. This meant that asylum-seekers did not have access to this form of training and many people were unable to continue their education.

To address this problem, Caritas set up the *Passepartout* project in 2001. The project was partly funded by the European Fund for Refugees and the Ministry of Family. Based on a European directive giving access to professional training for asylum-seekers, the project opened a discussion between the relevant social partners and actors and put in place internships for the young people affected by the law on asylum-seekers.

Since 2002, 180 young people have enrolled for the internships. To date, 13 students have graduated.

185) Eurydice, The information network on education in Europe: *Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe*, June 2004, p. 34. Available at: <http://www.eurydice.org> (last accessed 30.03.2006)

186) Eurydice: *Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe*, *ibid.*, p. 33.

187) European monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia: *Racism and Xenophobia in the EU Member States, trends, developments and good practice*, EUMC Annual Report 2003/2004, pp.123-124.

A German report on poverty and wealth states that over recent years, the gap between those seeking vocational training and availability of vacancies has increased markedly. While in 1990, there were more places available than people to fill them, today there is a lack of vocational training opportunities. This shortage results in exclusion of those with the lowest educational grades and suggests that there may be a lack of incentive for governments to increase access to apprenticeships for foreigners¹⁸⁸⁾.

CHILDREN OF ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Many Caritas organisations throughout Europe consider asylum-seekers as the group most affected by lack of access to education. **Caritas Belgium** reports that asylum-seekers do not have access to education in the first part of the asylum procedure, while the admissibility of their application is being assessed. This is a huge problem because this process can take several months, and in some cases, years.

The constant threat of deportation affects the educational prospects of asylum-seeker children and adults in colleges and other educational establishments, according to **Caritas organisations in the UK**.

In other countries, access to education after the obligatory schooling years is not guaranteed for children of asylum-seekers. **Caritas Austria** reports that although children from 6 to 15 can attend school, after that age, asylum-seekers and immigrants in an irregular situation are excluded from public schools.

According to research carried out by MAZLUMDER in Istanbul, Ankara and eight other

Turkish cities in 2005, 63% of asylum-seeker children did not have access to any kind of education¹⁸⁹⁾. Access was denied because of their residency status, for economic reasons or because of language problems. Among the 500 children surveyed, 50% were receiving an education through NGOs like Caritas Turkey and the Turkish Education Volunteer Foundation's educational projects.

Caritas Turkey observed that asylum-seekers, economic migrants and migrants in an irregular situation have a better chance of accessing education if they are in a community network or if they approach NGOs.

Caritas Greece reports that there is hardly any language tuition for asylum-seekers. This finding is echoed by other Caritas organisations throughout Europe. Some governments make no secret of the fact that any action that could be seen as integration of asylum-seekers is to be avoided.

LANGUAGE : A MAJOR BARRIER

One of the major obstacles that migrant pupils encounter when they enter the school system is language. The 2003 PISA report estimates that the total population of non-native language speakers is between 3% and 8% in the EU member states¹⁹⁰⁾.

Caritas Czech Republic reports that in the state integration programme, recognised refugees can have 150 hours of free Czech language lessons. Other groups of migrants do not receive free language lessons. The children of asylum-seekers or refugees have free lessons with Czech remedial teachers. However, children of other migrants (except EU citizens) are not entitled to this.

188) *Stellungnahme des deutschen Caritasverbandes zum Entwurf des 2. Armuts- und Reichtumsberichtes der Bundesregierung "Lebenslagen in Deutschland"*, op cit., p. 17.

189) The research of MAZLUMDER (Organization of Human Rights and Solidarity of Oppressed People)

190) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Programme for International Student Assessment, Report 2003, PISA, OECD, Paris.



EU member states may have laws that give migrant children the right to language instruction in their mother tongue, but many of these countries do not have enough instructors who are native speakers in various languages. In Austria, for instance, lack of training programmes for native language teachers has led to a shortage of effective native language instruction¹⁹¹⁾.

France's national education system lacks teachers for non-French speakers and seems to be unprepared for recent influxes of learners¹⁹²⁾. In Italy, there appears to be no common standard for how teachers of Italian as a second language are to be trained. Many schools resort to using cultural and linguistic mediators to provide external language support to pupils who have only been in the country for a short time. The use of these mediators as language teachers has been criticized because in most cases, the mediators are not trained teachers or experts in language learning¹⁹³⁾.

For many migrant parents, it is impossible to read notes sent by the school or attend meetings, because they do not understand the language. A few countries try to involve parents by making interpretation services available to them. In Sweden and Finland immigrant parents even have the legal right to an interpreter¹⁹⁴⁾. In England, schools are advised to provide translations of essential information and to use interpreters for school admission, interviews, assessments, and parent-teacher meetings¹⁹⁵⁾. In Denmark, the decision to use an interpreter is made by the teacher on a case-to-case basis¹⁹⁶⁾.

Caritas in action : QANTARA PROJECT OF CARITAS IN PEINE, GERMANY

Qantara is the Arabic word for the arch of a bridge. It is also the name of a project for asylum-seekers and refugees run by the Caritas association in Peine, Germany. We offer a training course in mediation, consultation and intercultural communication to teach people to make connections to local society.

The course simulates situations like school, the government department responsible for children, or youth organisations. In conflicts, for example between a teacher and a parent, the mediator can take the role of a neutral third, supporting and explaining the different interests¹⁹⁷⁾.

The women and men who take part in the Qantara project come from different cultures and bring a lot of knowledge with them. After the course they can communicate between the different cultures. They can translate not only language but also cultural norms and values, to show that a different perception can lead to different interpretations of situations.

191) European monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia: Racism and Xenophobia in the EU Member States, trends, developments and good practice, op. cit., p. 139.

192) French National Focal Point, RAXEN, 2003, p. 25.

193) European monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia: Racism and Xenophobia in the EU Member States, trends, developments and good practice, op. cit., p. 137.

194) Eurydice: Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe, op. cit., p. 38.

195) Eurydice: Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe, op. cit., p. 39.

196) Eurydice: Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe, op. cit., p. 39.

197) Müller Alarcón, U., Qantara, Ausbildung von Flüchtlingen zu Mediatorinnen und Mediatoren im Jugendhilfe- und Schulbereich, 19 April 2004. Available at: <http://www.stadtteilarbeit.de/seiten/projekte/peine/qantara.htm> (last accessed 24.03.2006)

ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION

Caritas organisations in the UK report that the Commission for Racial Equality observed that school exclusion (suspension or expulsion from school) disproportionately affects minority ethnic children, especially those of African-Caribbean origin. They are four to six times more likely to be excluded from school than their White counterparts, for similar behaviour. Three out of four African-Caribbean boys fail to reach the basic threshold of five good subject passes at age 16. Most Black boys come out of school under-qualified and unemployable.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Migrant pupils seem to be over-represented in special education in many EU countries. According to official statistics, foreign pupils made up 9.2% in all forms of Austrian schools in the academic year 2001/2002, and 20.6% in special schools. **Caritas Austria** reports that there are more immigrant children in schools for the mentally-disabled than Austrian children.

The Council of Europe's Committee on migration, refugees and demography believes that "separate schooling may have a stigmatising effect on the pupils concerned, which reduces rather than improves their chances for social integration and participation. Member states should respond to the needs of migrant students through the general school system or with additional courses which integrate the ordinary curriculum. However, additional investment is necessary in the training of

teachers, the support of additional staff such as psychologists, pedagogues and social workers, the sensitisation of parents, special facilities in ordinary schools and the training and employment of cultural mediators"¹⁹⁸.

In the Belgian French community, foreign pupils make up about 12% of primary and secondary school populations. Over 18% of foreign pupils are in special education¹⁹⁹. How such pupils come to be placed in special education schools is alarming. According to one report, "[s]pecial education schools apply to 'type 3' target pupils 'with character and/or personality problems' according to the official terminology. In practice, an organization assessing the pupils issues a recommendation for referral to a special education program. The parents still may decide autonomously whether or not to follow this recommendation. However, given the low social position of migrant parents, which often inhibits them from acting on their own behalf, such recommendation is almost binding"²⁰⁰.

In Germany, too, foreign children are systematically disadvantaged, according to a study from the German Union for Education and Science. Since the 1980s there have been twice as many foreign children in special schools than German children²⁰¹.

In 2001, a survey conducted by the Centre for Equal Treatment of the Disabled in Special Education found that there was an over-representation of bilingual pupils in Danish special education programmes. While bilingual pupils are referred to special education systems because of general

198) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Situation of young migrants in Europe, Report of the Committee on migration, refugees and demography, 13 January 2003, pt. 49.

Available at: <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc03/EDOC9645.htm>, (last accessed 24.03.2006)

199) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, Equality and diversity for an inclusive Europe – EUMC comparative study, EUMC, Vienna, June 2004, p. 28.

200) Belgian National Focal Point, RAXEN, 2003.

201) Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft (German Union for Education and Science): Ausländerkinder werden systematisch benachteiligt! (Migrant children are systematically discriminated!).

Available at: http://www.gew-bw.de/Studie_zur_Auslaenderintegration.html (last accessed 22.03.2006)



learning difficulties, the report also shows that monolingual pupils in these schools tend to have specific disabilities²⁰²⁾.

In France, special or 'adapted' education was developed for children with severe learning or cognitive difficulties. However, certain nationalities are over-represented in sections of adapted general and professional teaching (SEGPA) and in regional establishments for adapted teaching (EREA). In aggregate data, foreign pupils make up 7.4%, which is a somewhat higher than in other secondary tracks²⁰³⁾.

SCHOOL DROP-OUT RATE AND EARLY SCHOOL COMPLETION

Research shows that school drop-out rates are generally high for immigrants in the EU : about 35% of young non-EU nationals do not finish secondary school, compared to about 17% young EU nationals²⁰⁴⁾.

In Austria, foreign-born pupils are more likely than native pupils to finish schooling when the compulsory years have been completed²⁰⁵⁾. **Caritas Austria** reports that four out of five immigrant children stop studying after secondary school.

In Denmark, immigrants from third countries show lower completion rates compared to the general population in all education levels, from general upper secondary education to Master's level. In 1998, the average completion rates were 75.9% for all pupils and 64.1% for immigrants²⁰⁶⁾. Ethnic

minorities are twice as likely to drop out as Danes. The drop-out rate in vocational education is almost 60% higher for ethnic minorities. Even at universities the drop-out rate is almost 25%, whereas for Danes it is 13%.

The same is true in the Netherlands : more ethnic minority pupils leave school without completing the course than native Dutch pupils, and at younger ages. This tendency is especially prevalent among the Antilleans and Surinamese, but also among Turks and Moroccans²⁰⁷⁾. Furthermore, immigrant pupils are older than Dutch pupils in the same school year. Their level of attainment is lower and they have higher absenteeism rates.

In Switzerland, far more foreign young people (23%) do not enter education and training at the upper secondary level than Swiss young people (8%)²⁰⁸⁾.

In Germany, migrant pupils finish school at an earlier age with significantly lower qualifications than German pupils. In 2001, 74,381 migrant pupils with foreign citizenship finished school in general education. Of these, 20.3% left without formal qualifications, compared to only 8.6% of German pupils. 29% received the general certificate of secondary education, compared to 41.7% of Germans. Only 10.7% of migrant pupils obtained the right to study at university level compared to 25.5% of Germans²⁰⁹⁾.

In the UK, in 1993, a quarter of male migrants and less than a third of female migrants of working

202) Danish National Focal Point, RAXEN, 2003.

203) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 30.

204) Australia Immigration Visa Services: Immigration Laws, No 15, January, 2004.

Available at: http://www.migrationint.com.au/news/tokelau/jan_2004-15mn.asp (last accessed 22.03.2006)

205) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 44.

206) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 44.

207) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, pp. 49-50.

208) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Situation of young migrants in Europe, op. cit., pt. 46.

209) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 46.

age had no educational qualifications, while over half of the men and three-fifths of the women in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community were without qualifications²¹⁰.

In Greece, there is a high drop-out rate among migrant and refugee pupils after primary education, even though lower secondary education is compulsory.

In Italy, according to figures for 1998-1999, 98.8% of primary school pupils passed their grade, compared to only 95.5% for migrant children. The difference was even more evident in 'Scuola Media' (pupils from 11 to 13 years old), where 94.8% of students passed their grade compared to only 84% of migrant children²¹¹.

In France, the probability of a 6th class student leaving the education system without qualifications is 15.1% for immigrant students but only 8.7% for French students²¹².

In Flemish Belgium, non-Belgians are more likely (42.2%) than Belgians (18.3%) to leave secondary school before obtaining a certificate. Also, **Caritas Belgium** reports, foreign pupils are less likely to go on to higher education²¹³.

The 'national plan for social inclusion 2003-2005' states that there is a link between early school-

leaving and the educational level of the parents. In 2000, 26% of the children whose parents had completed only primary or lower secondary education left school early, while only 3% of the children of parents with higher education did so. Thus, disadvantage is passed from generation to generation.

Possibly, families living in poverty are unable to pay school fees. The contribution of a working family member can help provide necessities the family would otherwise lack. In Greece, for example, it appears that many pupils drop out to find work in order to assist their parents²¹⁴.

In German vocational schools, many more migrant pupils left school without qualifications than German ones. Of all migrant pupils who graduated from vocational schools in 2001, 38.8% did not obtain a school-leaving certificate, compared to 19.5% of their German peers. While 64% of German vocational school pupils were in an apprenticeship in 2001, only around 46% of the migrant pupils were in a similar position²¹⁵. Official education statistics from several studies lead to the conclusion that Turkish and Italian children do not thrive in the German education system²¹⁶.

210) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Situation of young migrants in Europe, op. cit., pt. 46.

211) Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly: Situation of young migrants in Europe, op. cit., pt. 46.

212) Étude Direction de l'évaluation et de la prospective (Survey of the Direction of the evaluation and forecast), Les inégalités de scolarisation : disparités et/ou territoriales, France, 2003.

213) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 44.

214) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 48.

215) German National Focal Point (2002), p. 38.

216) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 47.



■ Achievements in education

The PISA 2000 report revealed important information about the scholastic performance of various groups in different states. It also compared the performances of native pupils, non-native pupils and native-born pupils whose parents were born in another country. Non-native born pupils had much lower literacy scores than native pupils with no foreign background²¹⁷⁾.

The EUMC reported that aggregate data on the educational performance of migrants and ethnic minorities indicated lower academic achievements compared to the majority populations in all EU member states²¹⁸⁾.

REASONS FOR UNDER-ACHIEVEMENT

The EUMC suggested various reasons for lower results among immigrant pupils compared to non-migrants²¹⁹⁾ :

- Factors relating to Cultural Group : Comprehension of the majority language affects the educational attainment of ethnic minority pupils. The same is true for culturally based differences in values, experiences with formal education, religion etc. Research suggests that social class strongly influences ethnic minority attainment. Pupils from lower socio-economic groups tend to achieve worse results than those from higher socio-economic groups. Low parental educational attainment and expectations negatively affect educational outcomes for their children.
- Factors of Institutional Discrimination : Placement in "minority classes" has been criticised as a strong negative characterisation, which may lead

to groups with strong racial identity, a practice which interferes with integration into the dominant culture and identification with values that promote educational achievement. The practice of placing such pupils in classes that are lower than their ages has a demoralising effect and may cause high dropout rates among foreign pupils. Discrepancies between public and private school admittance as well as between prestigious and ordinary educational institutions interfere with access to equal chances in education and may limit future opportunities. For example, some companies do not recruit from schools or universities in which ethnic minorities are concentrated. Examples include a lack of effective compensatory language programmes, second language teaching undertaken by teachers who are not specifically trained, lack of native language instruction, lack of intercultural curricula approaches in school programmes to foster diversity, and lack of religious pluralism, etc.

- Factors related to Teachers or Peers : Studies have shown that low expectations from the side of teachers deter some ethnic minority pupils from doing well. In addition, this has been named as a factor in the wrongful assignment of pupils to appropriate classes, such as special education programmes or age-inappropriate grade levels. Prejudice, which tends to be expressed in harassment, racial slurs, and scapegoating may have the result that migrant and minority pupils perceive themselves as not being accepted or excluded by members of the dominant culture.
- Other Factors : Minority ethnic pupils more often live in disadvantaged, ethnically diverse urban areas. Schools in these segregated residential areas are often stigmatised, which has been

217) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 43.

218) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, p. 52.

219) European monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia: Migrants, minorities and education – documenting discrimination and integration in 15 member states of the European Union, op. cit, pp. 54-56.

shown to have a negative effect on educational outcomes. It has been shown that in "migrant dense" schools there is a higher risk to leave school without a completed curriculum or with very low performance records. Having attended a school with a "low" reputation often limits the option to be admitted to more challenging schools or to be considered for better jobs. Compared to the majority population, migrants and ethnic minority members tend to experience greater difficulty in finding employment according to their attained educational level. In particular, they often have greater difficulties in obtaining an initial job. An awareness of the existence of a "job-ceiling" for certain groups may interfere with the motivation to succeed in school.

CONSEQUENCES OF LOW EDUCATION

Caritas Belgium notes that highly educated people get along better despite discrimination than under-qualified people. Well educated people can work in jobs requiring lower qualification than they have. For people with low qualifications, it is much more difficult to overcome the consequences of discrimination, such as a feeling of powerlessness, lack of motivation, instability, professional and social devaluation, risk of unemployment, and poverty. All this can result in depression, illness, or in violence against themselves, their family or against society.

■ Summary of chapter 4 on education

- Migrant and minority pupils are markedly over-represented in special education streams in most countries. This suggests that many such pupils are unnecessarily classed as needing special education.
- Language is a big hurdle for immigrant pupils. According to research, proficiency in the language of instruction of the receiving country is a sine qua non for success at school²²⁰⁾.
- Data on migrant pupils shows significantly lower academic achievement compared to the majority populations. Migrants tend to attain lower educational credentials, finish school earlier, and have higher than normal dropout rates²²¹⁾. People without a secondary school diploma are more likely to experience poverty, unemployment, teenage parenthood, and to become involved in criminal activity.
- There is a clear connection between social origin, migration and educational success. People of low socio-economic status and migrant background are most at risk of falling into and/or remaining in poverty.
- Lack of satisfactory education and low vocational qualifications are major reasons for poverty and social exclusion. This was also the conclusion of the German government's second report on poverty and wealth, 2005²²²⁾.
- Informal education may play an important role in teaching skills such as communication, planning, teamwork, intercultural awareness and public-speaking. Participation by young migrants in community work, theatre and social work should therefore be encouraged and supported²²³⁾.

220) Eurydice: *Integrating Immigrant children into Schools in Europe*, op. cit., p. 68.

221) European monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia: *Racism and Xenophobia in the EU Member States, trends, developments and good practice*, op. cit., p. 119.

222) Compare *Stellungnahme des deutschen Caritasverbandes zum Entwurf des 2. Armuts- und Reichtumsberichtes der Bundesregierung "Lebenslagen in Deutschland"*, op. cit., p. 16.

223) Council of Europe: *Situation of young migrants in Europe*, op. cit., p. 52.





CHAPTER 5.

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE : UNCOUNTED VOTES

"The characteristic implication of subsidiarity is participation, which is expressed essentially in a series of activities by means of which the citizen, either as an individual or in association with others, whether directly or through representation, contributes to the cultural, economic, political and social life of the civil community to which he belongs. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good"²²⁴⁾.

As demonstrated in earlier chapters, immigrants face considerable disadvantages in employment, housing, health and education, compared to nationals. And unlike nationals, immigrants have hardly any influence on political decision-making, even on issues that directly concern them.

In Caritas Europa's definition of poverty²²⁵⁾, participation is a central element to overcoming poverty. There is interdependency between financial and material poverty and lack of participation and exclusion. Having no contacts or connection to networks and lacking opportunities to influence the political context are dimensions of poverty.

Nationals have the right and/or obligation to participate in elections. In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht granted all EU citizens with residence in another member state the right to vote and run for office in elections at the local level. In this chapter, we look at what opportunities are available for other non-citizens to participate in public life.

Naturally, every country has criteria for denying the right to vote to certain groups. These may be people with mental disabilities, or people who are too young. People who have just arrived in the territory and who may not yet have had the time to learn about the political systems could also be excluded from the electoral roll. And electoral rights are likely to be withheld from people whose stay in the territory is temporary, as they will not be subject to the consequences of the decisions²²⁶⁾.

However, many Caritas organisations observe that frequently, immigrants do not have the right to vote even if they do not fit into any of the usual categories. This is the case even for immigrants who are permanent residents, and who may have been living in the country for years or even decades. Unfortunately, lack of comparable data makes it impossible to look into participation in other areas of public life, such as associations, trade unions and consultative bodies²²⁷⁾.

224) Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, Vatican City, 2005, paragraph 189.

225) This definition is underpinned by *Report on social inclusion 2005*, An analysis of the National Action Plans on Social Inclusion (2004-2006) submitted by the 10 new member states.

Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/sec256printed_en.pdf (last accessed 24.03.2006)

226) On the basis of: Waldrauch, H., *Electoral rights for foreign nationals: a comparative overview of regulations in 36 countries*, European Center for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna, National Europe Centre Paper, No. 73, February 2003.

227) *Country reports on active civic participation of immigrants from all 25 countries of the European Union*, Carl von Ossietzky University, 2005.

Available at: <http://www.uni-oldenburg.de/politis-europe/9812.html> (last accessed 24.03.2006)



■ Exclusion of non-citizens

NON-CITIZENS' RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO STAND AS CANDIDATES IN LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS

On the local level, there is a growing trend towards granting electoral rights to foreigners. In the EU, the majority of new and old member states have now granted some electoral rights to immigrants at the local level. With the upcoming directive on the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents, other member states will be considering granting more political rights to immigrants²²⁸⁾.

Electoral rights at the regional level mean any level of government between the lowest local and

the highest national level. On the regional level, only a few countries give foreigners the right to vote and almost none allow them to stand as candidates. In some countries, non-citizens do have electoral rights at the regional level, although this is usually defined as a part of the local government structure.

The right to vote at national elections is granted least often. Nevertheless, there are countries in which some non-citizens have the right to vote in national elections. The UK is the only country where non-citizens can stand for election at national level²²⁹⁾.

Withdrawal of electoral rights after they have been granted to legally-resident foreign nationals is rare²³⁰⁾.

■ Voting rights and citizenship

Table 3 : Electoral rights for foreign nationals in selected countries : general regulations²³¹⁾

	Rules in force since	Right to vote : conditions			Right to stand ? If yes : conditions
		For citizens of	Minimum residence	Other conditions	
Armenia	1999	All countries		With refugee status; only for local elections	Direct ²³²⁾ : yes Indirect : in principle yes, but not specified in the law and not put into practice in Armenia
Austria	2002 (only in Vienna)	All countries	5 years	Uninterrupted legal residence	Direct : yes Indirect : not to head of urban district, his/her deputy & member of building board
Belgium	2004	All countries	5 years	Permanent residence permit	Yes
Cyprus		No voting rights for third-country nationals	No	No	No
Czech Republic		Czech Republic	No	No	No
Denmark	a : 1977 b : 1981	a : Nordic countries b : Other countries	a : no b : 3 years	Legal residence	Yes

228) Commission of the European Communities: *First Annual Report on Migration and Integration*, op. cit.

229) Waldrauch, H., op. cit., p. 26.

230) Waldrauch, H., op. cit., p. 30.

231) On the basis of: Waldrauch, H., op. cit., table simplified, completed and updated by Caritas Europa.

232) Direct = offices for which direct elections by the whole constituency are held; Indirect = offices for which an indirect election or appointment by a directly-elected representative body takes place.

Estonia	1996	All countries	5 years	Permanent residence permit (min. residence required : 3 years)	No
Finland	a : 1981 b : 1991	a : Nordic countries b : Other countries	a : no b : 2 years	Legal residence	Yes
Georgia		No voting rights for foreigners	No	No	No
Germany		No voting rights for third-country nationals	No	No	No
Hungary	1990	All countries	No	Immigration or settlement permit (both : durable residence)	No
Iceland	a : 1986 b : 2002	a : Nordic countries b : Other countries	a : 3 years b : 5 years	Uninterrupted legal residence	Yes
Ireland	Vote: 1963 Eligibility : 1974	All countries	No	Usual residence	Yes
Italy		No voting rights for foreigners	No	No	No
Lithuania	2004	All countries	5 years	Permanent residence permit	No
Luxembourg	a : 1999 b : 2005	a : EU citizens b : Third-country nationals	5 years	Permanent residence permit	Yes, but for third-country nationals not for mayor
Malta	1993	a : UK b : Member countries of Council of Europe	a : 6 months in past 18 months (same as for citizens of Malta)	Legal residence; b. under condition of reciprocity	Yes
Netherlands	1985	All countries	5 years	Uninterrupted legal residence	Yes
Norway	a : 1978 b : 1983	a : Nordic countries b : Other countries	3 years	Uninterrupted legal residence	Yes
Portugal	a : 1971 b : 1982 c : 1997 d : 1997	a : Brazil b : Cap Verde c : Peru, Uruguay d : Argentina, Chile, Estonia, Israel, Norway, Venezuela	a + b : 2 years c + d : 3 years	General : legal residence; b, c, d : reciprocity	Yes for citizens of a, b and c; conditions : 4 years residence
Slovakia	2002	All countries	10 years	Permanent residence permit	Yes
Slovenia	2002	All countries	8 years	Permanent residence permit	Yes; Conditions : foreigners can be- come local councillors, but not mayor
Spain	1985	Norway (since 1990)	No	Reciprocity; legal residence	Yes
Sweden	1975	a : Iceland, Norway b : Other countries	a : no b : 3 years	Uninterrupted legal residence	Yes
Switzerland	No info available (only in 3 cantons)	All countries	1 or 10 years (depends on canton)	Legal residence or permanent residence permit (minimum requirement 5-10 years), depending on canton	Depends on canton
United Kingdom	1972	Commonwealth countries, Ireland	No	Temporary legal residence is sufficient	Yes



DIFFERENT CONCEPTS

There is a broad range of approaches in the various countries.

- 1) Electoral rights in certain regions, provinces, states or municipalities only : considerable differences on voting rules within these countries.
- 2) Electoral rights for citizens of certain countries only : while some countries grant electoral rights to citizens of all countries, others limit rights to citizens from countries of the region or countries with which there are ex-colonial links or shared language or culture.
- 3) Electoral rights on the basis of reciprocity : some countries grant electoral rights only to citizens of countries where their own people have the same rights. The provision of voting rights to non-nationals is a way of safeguarding the rights of their own citizens living abroad.
- 4) Electoral rights which depend on residence status :
 - a. While some countries do not require a minimum length of stay, others require between one and 10 years of residence.
 - b. Some countries simply require residence, others require an uninterrupted legal residence or specific types of residency permits.
- 5) Conditions governing the right to stand for election also vary widely. While in some countries anyone who has the right to vote is eligible for all offices, in other countries foreigners may not hold high offices. In other cases, only nationals are eligible to be elected to any office.



Some countries do not give any electoral rights to any non-national residents, not even at local level. In most of these cases there are constitutional obstacles to the extension of voting rights as these rights are reserved for nationals only.

In EU member states, the only foreigners who are allowed to vote or to be a candidate in national elections are naturalised immigrants. Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Ireland and Belgium (as of 2006) also allow foreign residents with a certain residence record to vote and stand in local elections. This is not the case in the other member states, although exceptions are made for residents of certain nationalities, usually on the basis of reciprocity.

EU citizens living in a member state other than their own may take part in European and local elections in their country of residence, but not in national elections²³³⁾.

NON-CITIZEN TURNOUT

Participation in political decision-making is a sign of integration and participation. Immigrants, whether naturalised or foreign, tend to have below-average turnouts in elections. However, at local level, and particularly in the larger European cities, the political arena is increasingly being 'discovered' by migrants as an institution through which changes may be achieved, and integration promoted. At practically every local election the number of immigrant councillors increases, even though in nearly all cases it is still well below the proportion of the immigrant population of the constituency²³⁴⁾.

233) Entzinger, H. & Biezeveld, R., *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration*, European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER), Faculty of Social Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam, this report has been written for the European Commission, August 2003, p. 27.

234) Entzinger, H. & Biezeveld, R., *ibid.*, p. 27-28.

In a 2002 report, the European Commission stated that :

"It can be concluded that the participation of non-national citizens of the Union in local elections in their Member State of residence was in general quite low. Only in two member states, Ireland and Austria, were half of the non-national citizens entered on the electoral roll. The reason for the good Irish situation is probably the fact that non-nationals residing in Ireland have been able to vote there in all elections since 1963. The participation was strikingly weak in Greece, Portugal and Luxembourg, where the rate of registration was only around 10%"²³⁵⁾.

NATURALISATION

The issue of the electoral rights of foreign nationals fits into the wider context of a country's policy on acquisition of citizenship. In the EU, there are two main notions of right to citizenship. *Jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* form the basis of these differences :

- *jus sanguinis* means 'right of blood', so citizenship results from having a parent or parents with the citizenship of the state (citizenship by descent);
- *jus soli* means 'right of the territory', so citizenship results from being born in the state (birthright citizenship).

Countries whose laws on citizenship are based on *jus sanguinis* are, in general, the ones that have had to make changes in order to facilitate naturalisation for their migrants. Some member states are more sympathetic than others in allowing migrants

to hold dual citizenship. Some require that migrants give up their old citizenship upon becoming naturalised, on the assumption that dual citizenship leads to a conflict of loyalty.

Seen from that perspective, citizenship is clearly about more than just rights and duties. It includes notions of national identity that are meant to contribute to a cohesive society. However, this sense of nationality as integral to a shared identity is not felt to the same extent in all member states²³⁶⁾.

There is insufficient data for a comparison of naturalisation frameworks across Europe. However, statistics do exist on foreign-born populations, naturalised foreign-born people, annual naturalisation figures and so on.

The European Civic Citizenship and Social Inclusion INDEX 2004 states that naturalisation is one of the most problematic areas for EU member states²³⁷⁾ :

"The lowest EU-15 average of all the policy areas is naturalization. Naturalization is also, however, the area with the weakest Treaty base, and therefore the area in which the EU's competencies are weakest. This reflects the ongoing debate in the EU – member states have not yet decided whether to view migration as a temporary solution to labour market gaps; or as a permanent phenomenon with positive benefits to, for example, the pension system".

Claim to citizenship or naturalisation can also be complicated in cases where government introduce special or one-off schemes for particular groups of people, as illustrated in the following account.



235) Commission of the European Communities: Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of Directive 94/80/EC on the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in municipal elections, Brussels, 30.05.2002.

236) Entzinger, H. & Biezeveld, R., op. cit., p 25-26.

237) Geddes, A. & Niessen, J., Balch, A., Bullen C., Peiro, M. J., Citron, L. & Gowan, R. (comp.), European Civic citizenship and social inclusion INDEX 2004, British Council Brussels, 2005, pp. 27-28 & p. 32.

A Caritas experience : CARITAS CZECH REPUBLIC

Mrs Zoya came to us with her son in the winter of 2005. She was about 50 years old, her son about 25. They had come from northern Kazakhstan, where her grandfather had settled. He was originally from Moravia, in the east of the Czech Republic. A soldier, he was awarded honours for his service.

In 2003, mother and son left Kazakhstan for the Czech Republic because the situation in Kazakhstan had become untenable. Their migration was facilitated by contacts who made use of shady but licensed law firms here. The fees for the arrangements amounted to several thousand US dollars.

When they arrived, they encountered the inflexible and labyrinthine system of alien legislation. The visas that had been arranged for them were tourist visas, which expired after three months. They ended up in a refugee camp as asylum-seekers. Their application for refugee status was denied, but they continued to live in the camp, going from appeal to appeal.

When they arrived at the Caritas accommodation facility for foreigners they knew that they would not be granted refugee status. These well-educated and decent people of Czech origin were going to be deported for bureaucratic reasons and because nobody was interested.

A Caritas worker, eager to help, found accommodation and a job for Mrs Zoya and her son in car factory. He tried to find out what was required as proof of Czech origin. The grandfather's serviceman's identity card was insufficient. The Caritas worker searched archives for the grandfather's birth certificate. He knew the grandfather's name, birth date and that he came from Moravia and lived for a while in the Transcarpathian region. However, the Transcarpathian archives were destroyed by fire after the war and the document could not be found. The search took a long time.

Then, Mrs Zoya received the decision of the Supreme Court, rejecting their application for asylum. They were served with an exit order and had to leave the Czech Republic within 30 days.

Half a year later, the Caritas worker received a text message from Mrs Zoya in Kazakhstan.

Recently, it was announced in the media that the Czech Republic will implement a second wave of resettlement of compatriots from Kazakhstan. We hope that Mrs Zoya will succeed in settling in the Czech Republic.



■ Summary of chapter 5 on participation in public life

- Foreigners without legal residence do not have any electoral rights.
- Many foreigners do not have the right to vote or to stand for election at all levels of government. The most common reasons include insufficient length of stay, restrictions imposed by the residence permit and constitutional barriers.
- Other than the emergence of a new concept of citizenship for third-country nationals²³⁸⁾, there is no significant political initiative towards changing the present situation.
- The lack of opportunity to participate in democratic institutions excludes migrants from decision-making about the community in which they live. It also adds to a feeling of discrimination and of unequal treatment.
- Having no say in government, in combination with elements of poverty (lack of adequate housing, healthcare, employment), aggravates the impoverishment. People who cannot vote are not a priority for politicians seeking election or re-election. Therefore, the problems faced by immigrants do not receive the level of political attention they deserve.



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238) The Commission of the European Communities, in its 2000 Communication on a Community Immigration Policy, introduced the concept of 'civic citizenship'. This would guarantee certain core rights and obligations to immigrants, which they would acquire gradually over years. Eventually, they would be treated the same as nationals of their host state, even if they were not naturalised.



CONCLUSIONS

"One cannot ignore the fact that the frontiers of wealth and poverty intersect within societies themselves, whether developed or developing"²³⁹⁾.

"Regulating immigration according to criteria of equity and balance is one of the indispensable conditions for ensuring that immigrants are integrated into society with the guarantees required by recognition of their human dignity. Immigrants are to be received as persons and helped, together with their families, to become a part of societal life"²⁴⁰⁾.

Caritas experience and a broad variety of research show that large numbers of immigrants live in poverty. Many others are in a precarious state, at grave risk of impoverishment.

In employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life, there are many barriers to immigrants; by law, by administrative practice or simply from practical obstacles. Some immigrants are legally excluded from health services. In all countries, at least some jobs are reserved for nationals only.

These disadvantages are aggravated by discrimination. And the result of these factors combined is exclusion and even exploitation of immigrants.

Nowadays, employment, housing or health problems are not only acute in the initial stage after arrival but they continue for many years. Evidence suggests that employment, housing, health, education and participation in public life are intertwined. People experiencing difficulties in one of these areas are likely to be having trouble in the other areas as well.

Disadvantaged groups resort to employment or housing in the informal market. Shadow economies appear to be growing, increasing the risk of a drift into marginalisation for those caught up in them.

These pressures can affect mental health, especially when combined with other risk factors such as past traumas. Refugees and asylum-seekers are particularly vulnerable.

Throughout Europe, the groups most at risk of poverty are irregular migrants and asylum-seekers. It is clear that government policies aim to deter these two groups from settling in by making conditions for them as difficult as possible.

From available research it appears that other high risk migrant groups are sub-Saharan Africans, Turks, Moroccans, migrant women, children of migrants and elderly migrants.

Poverty can be passed on from generation to generation. Having an immigrant background can cast a shadow over the lives of children of migrants. They are often under-qualified, have few prospects in the labour market and live with others in the same situation. These communities feel that they are of little use to society.

Migrants have little or no chance of changing their situation through participation in the political process. If even being a citizen does not help against discrimination, exclusion and poverty, European immigration policies could be considered a failure²⁴¹⁾.

239) Pope John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 14: AAS 80 (1988), 526-527.

240) Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church*, Vatican City, 2005, paragraph 298.

241) Sassen, S., op. cit., p. 15.

Finally, it has to be noted that there are still too few studies, on only a handful of countries, which look into poverty and the risks faced by immigrants. More research is needed, on a Europe-wide basis.

This Caritas Europa report attempts to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on migration and its relationship with poverty. It asks the question "is migration a journey to poverty ?" and outlines the situations faced by immigrant groups upon their arrival in many European countries. The report's findings are summarised below.

As regards **employment** in European countries, many immigrants, although working, do not earn enough to support their families. They belong to the 'working poor'. People who work in the informal labour market have a much weaker position vis-à-vis their employers, particularly if they are also illegal in terms of residence status. They are much more likely to earn below-average wages, to be denied social rights and benefits such as holiday and sick leave, and to work longer hours. Qualified immigrants have trouble getting their diplomas recognised and, subsequently, in finding suitable job opportunities.

As regards **housing**, the living conditions of many immigrants are appalling. Some people have a bed for no longer than one night, which is shared with others. Some end up homeless. On average, immigrants pay significantly higher rents than nationals, even though their accommodation is of poorer quality.

As regards **health**, the risk of workplace accidents is higher for immigrants, who tend to have dirtier, more dangerous and more demanding jobs than nationals. Immigrants are also at higher risk of contracting infectious diseases such as TB and HIV/Aids.

As regards **education**, on average, immigrants are more likely to drop out of school than nationals. The achievements of immigrant children are lower than that of their national peers. And immigrant children are over-represented in special education streams even though this not justified by their level of ability.

As regards **participation in public life**, non-citizens living in European countries are generally excluded from democratic decision-making processes, even on issues that directly affect them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Barriers to education, the labour market and services, and the lack of rights and political participation mean that immigrants stay poor or become impoverished as a result of their migration. Caritas Europa makes the following **nine recommendations on poverty and exclusion of immigrants in Europe**.

1. Ensure ratification and application of international and national laws and legal instruments that strengthen the rights of immigrants.
2. Open channels for legal labour immigration.
3. Implement policies for social inclusion of immigrants, including targeted measures where necessary.
4. Strengthen education policies as a powerful tool for poverty reduction.
5. Remove barriers to the full development of the potential of immigrants.
6. Increase the share of EU Structural Funds to improve the situation of immigrants in the financial period 2007-2013.
7. Encourage and support the participation of immigrants in public life.
8. Counter the demonisation of immigration by promoting the advantages of an open immigration policy.
9. Promote Europe-wide research on discrimination against immigrants in employment, housing, healthcare, education and participation in public life.

These recommendations provide a general framework for national Caritas organisations' advocacy work on combating poverty. Each national Caritas organisation will follow up with advocacy work tailored to the specific conditions in their own country.

RECOMMENDATION 1 :

Ensure ratification and application of international and national laws and legal instruments that strengthen the rights of immigrants

Caritas Europa calls for the ratification and implementation of international conventions, Council of Europe conventions and recommendations, and EU directives on ensuring the rights of immigrants and fighting discrimination.

Specifically this means :

- Ratification of the United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which came into force in 2003. In total 34 countries, only two of them European (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey) have ratified the convention so far.
- Implementation of the Council of Europe's 1961 European Social Charter. To date, almost 40 European countries have ratified the charter.
- The implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level should be monitored and best practices be shared. The convention entered into force in May 1997 and has been ratified by eight countries : Albania, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.
- Implementation, at national level, of the 2000 EU Racial Equality and Employment Equality directives.

RECOMMENDATION 2 :

Open channels for legal labour immigration

Caritas Europa calls for the opening of channels for legal labour migration. Labour migration is a powerful way to decrease irregular migration and to give immigrants a chance to participate legally in the labour market.

The following points should be taken into account :

- Restrictive immigration policies create irregular immigration. Countries will only be successful in their efforts to combat irregular migration if they develop open and accessible labour migration mechanisms.
- European labour migration law should provide a comprehensive framework for agreements determining the transferability of social rights and benefits between countries. These agreements could include immigration quotas for all types of employment, from unskilled labour to highly qualified jobs. Quota systems, however, should not restrict existing rights, such as family reunification.

RECOMMENDATION 3 :

Implement policies for social inclusion of immigrants, including targeted measures where necessary

Caritas Europa welcomes the fact that the European Employment Strategy has set out to combat unemployment using the Integrated Employment Guidelines and national reform programmes in each country. Social inclusion of migrants is a separate entry in the guidelines.

Caritas Europa recommends that the European Commission encourage more targeted labour integration policies for third-country nationals. The Commission should make more specific recommendations towards the member states. Among other measures, this could include targeted training programmes or programmes to make recognition of qualifications more open and efficient.

RECOMMENDATION 4 :

Strengthen education policies as a powerful tool for poverty reduction

Education and training are the principal means of empowering immigrants, informing them about their rights and securing their access to the labour market. Education systems must be inclusive. The range of training options and opportunities for on-going education should be expanded.

Children who have not completed their schooling should have access to compulsory education, irrespective of their residency status or that of their parents.

There should be more integrated support programmes in regular schools in order to avoid segregation of migrant pupils into special schools. Targeted language teaching for immigrant pupils should be provided upon their arrival.

Schools should provide mediation and social assistance to immigrant families. The provision of such services should involve the immigrants themselves.

RECOMMENDATION 5 :

Remove barriers to the full development of the potential of immigrants

Immigrants should have access to information on where and how to seek help, and on education, healthcare and social services. This information should be culturally appropriate.

People working with immigrants should be trained in transcultural issues.

High-risk groups – women and children, elderly immigrants, immigrants in difficult jobs, disadvantaged ethnic groups, asylum-seekers, refugees and undocumented immigrants – should receive better support.

The denial of work permits to asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants are barriers to integration.

Access to employment should be conferred at the earliest possible stage. Work permit procedures for newly arriving immigrants should be simplified.

Immigrants should be entitled to job search assistance.

Regularisation schemes help to reduce exploitation and slave-like conditions. Employers involved in illegal employment should be heavily penalised. There should be more incentives for employees to work legally.

The right of all immigrants to decent housing, based on what is appropriate in each country, must be guaranteed. Caritas Europa strongly advocates for access to proper housing conditions for all immigrants, including undocumented migrants.

We recommend that social housing services take into account diversity in terms of income, culture and ethnicity. Attribution systems should guarantee a balanced distribution of available accommodation among customers, poor or less poor, migrants and nationals.

Landlords exploiting immigrants should be prosecuted.

Access to healthcare services – including preventive services – should be guaranteed to all migrants, documented or undocumented. Services should be culturally sensitive, involving and qualifying immigrants themselves to provide these services.

There should be cultural mediators in the healthcare system.

Undocumented immigrants who are sick and who do not have access to the necessary healthcare in their country of origin should not be deported.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and other immigrants who suffered trauma such as torture, war or persecution should receive the medical and psychological care that they need.

RECOMMENDATION 6 :

Increase share of EU Structural Funds to improve the situation of immigrants in the financial period 2007-2013

Part of Objective 3 of the Structural Funds is to "help implement the principle of equal employment opportunities, measures are needed to help women develop their careers [...] Apart from discrimination towards women it is important to combat discrimination that affect certain categories of people in the labour market because of their ethnic origin, handicap, or age"²⁴²⁾.

It is unfortunate that Objective 3 only covers 12.3% of the budget from 2000-2006. Caritas Europa recommends that this be increased.

RECOMMENDATION 7 :

Encourage and support the participation of immigrants in public life

Voting rights – at least in local, regional and EU elections – should be given to all legally-resident migrants to increase their participation in society.

After five years of legal residence, a migrant should be entitled to apply for nationality. The conditions for naturalisation should be reasonable.

Community programmes that empower residents of deprived neighbourhoods should be implemented. Infrastructure in such communities should be improved and means of participation provided. Emphasis should be placed on young people so that the vicious circle of poverty can be broken.

242) Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/intro/regions9_en.htm (last accessed 10.04.2006)

RECOMMENDATION 8 :

Counter the demonisation of immigration by promoting the advantages of an open immigration policy

Governments should provide their citizens with facts about immigration. For example, as cited in the introduction of this report, the contribution made by immigrants to the social system in their receiving countries exceeds the cost of social benefits for immigrants.

Governments should also hold constructive debates about immigrants' place in society and tackle problems arising from cultural and religious differences in order to build an inclusive society based on solidarity.

It is time to remove disadvantages in education, employment, health, housing and public participation for immigrants and to bring them out of the shadows of poverty and illegality.

The working population is shrinking in Europe. In the EU, we will move from having four working people for every elderly person to having two working people for every elderly person. Although migration is not the only solution to demographic decline, our societies need immigrants.

RECOMMENDATION 9 :

Promote Europe-wide research on discrimination against immigrants in employment, housing, healthcare, education and participation in public life

More research needs to be conducted on the root causes of discrimination against immigrants. National and European legislation against discrimination should be enforced so that immigrants can live a life based on rights and human dignity. Immigrants, too, should be able to develop their full potential.

Caritas Europa member organisations strive to implement these recommendations. Too many migrants live in poverty as a result of discrimination, social exclusion, unequal rights and lack of access to services. With this report, Caritas Europa calls for real efforts to bring migrants out of poverty and for a true integration of migrants in our fast-changing Europe.

Caritas organisations support the non-discriminatory provision of public and private services and facilitate access of migrants to these services.

“The poor should be seen not as a problem, but as people who can become the principal builders of a new and more human future for everyone”²⁴³⁾.

243) John Paul II, *Message for the World Day of Peace 2000*, 14: AAS 92, p. 366.

GLOSSARY

<u>3D jobs</u> :	Jobs that are dirty, dangerous, demanding.
<u>Informal market</u> :	Unregulated economic activities. Also described as the grey economy.
<u>Labour force participation rate</u> :	A measure of the proportion of an economy's working-age population that is economically active.
<u>Migration</u> :	The movement of people from one country to another for permanent or temporary residence. Immigration is the movement of people into a country. Emigration is the movement of people out of a country.
<u>Net discrimination rate</u> (NDR) :	Percentage of cases in which national citizens applying for a job were accepted minus the percentage of cases in which migrants applying for a job were preferred)
<u>National median earnings/income</u> :	The median earning divides the earnings distribution in a given country into two equal groups with 50% of the people having an earning under, 50% above the median.
<u>Rack-rent</u> :	An extortionate rent.
<u>Squat</u> :	A dwelling occupied illegally.
<u>Underemployment</u> :	The employment of skilled workers in jobs that require only a lower level of abilities and skills.
<u>Unemployment</u> :	The situation that a person is in when they are willing and able to work but unable to find a job.
<u>Working poor</u> :	People who have jobs but who do not earn enough to meet the needs of their household.
<u>Irregular migrants</u> :	Migrants without legally-required residency documents, also called undocumented migrants.
<u>Council housing</u> :	Housing provided by the state or local government authorities. Also called social housing.
<u>Asylum-seeker</u> :	A migrant who has applied for refugee status on the grounds of fear of persecution in the country of origin.
<u>Third-country nationals</u> :	Citizens of non-European countries.
<u>Economic migrants</u> :	People who have emigrated mainly in search of a better quality of life, without having been forced to leave their country of origin.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 : Labour market situation of foreigners and nationals in selected OECD countries, 2003²⁴⁴⁾

	Foreign labour force	Participation rate (%)		Unemployment rate (%)		Employment ratio (%)	
	% of total labour force	Nationals	Foreigners	Nationals	Foreigners	Nationals	Foreigners
Austria	9.2	71.4	74.0	4.4	8.3	68.2	67.8
Belgium	7.7	65.1	55.6	6.9	18.2	60.6	45.5
Czech Republic	1.6	70.2	69.6	7.5	10.2	64.9	62.5
Denmark	3.5	79.3	51.7	4.1	9.2	76.0	47.0
Finland	1.6	76.9	71.5	10.4	18.3	68.9	58.4
France	5.2	69.8	63.3	8.5	18.8	63.9	51.4
Germany	9.0	72.8	65.2	9.2	16.7	66.1	54.4
Greece	9.5 (2001)*	63.3	73.4	9.1	8.8	57.5	66.9
Hungary	1.0 (2002)	60.6	61.6	5.8	n.a.	57.0	58.1
Iceland (figures from 2000)	n.a.	88.8	89.7	1.9	n.a.	87.1	88.5
Ireland	6.5	68.3	65.3	4.4	6.5	65.3	61.0
Italy (figures from 1995)	3.8 (2002)	57.3	66.7	11.9	12.9	50.4	58.1
Luxembourg	45.0	61.0	70.9	2.4	5.2	59.6	67.2
Netherlands	3.8	77.1	62.2	3.4	9.5	74.5	56.3
Norway	3.6	79.2	71.9	4.1	10.1	76.0	64.7
Portugal	2.7	72.7	79.6	6.4	11.2	68.1	70.7
Slovak Republic	n.a.	69.8	82.4	17.1	n.a.	57.8	n.a.
Spain	3.7	66.7	76.9	11.0	14.8	59.4	65.5
Sweden	4.6	87.5	67.4	5.3	13.2	74.4	58.5
Switzerland	21.9	81.6	79.7	2.9	8.8	79.2	72.7
United Kingdom	5.1	75.9	67.1	4.7	7.9	72.3	61.8

* foreigners who entered Greece for employment purposes

244) OECD "Trends in international migration: SOPEMI 2004 edition", 2005; pp. 59, 87.

*Annex 2 : Labour market situation of foreigners and nationals in selected OECD countries, 2003,
men (M) and women (W)*

	Participation rate (%)				Unemployment rate (%)				Employment ratio (%)			
	Nationals		Foreigners		Nationals		Foreigners		Nationals		Foreigners	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
Austria	78.9	64.0	84.2	63.6	4.7	4.0	9.3	7.1	75.2	61.4	76.4	76.4
Belgium	73.0	57.2	68.3	41.3	6.5	7.3	17.4	19.8	68.2	53.0	56.4	33.2
Czech Republic	77.8	62.7	79.4	60.8	5.8	9.6	7.1	13.9	73.2	56.6	73.8	52.3
Denmark	82.2	76.3	58.7	45.2	3.9	4.3	8.9	9.6	79.0	73.0	53.5	40.8
Finland	79.1	74.7	80.8	63.7	10.9	9.9	n.a.	n.a.	70.4	67.3	65.5	52.5
France	75.4	64.3	74.8	51.5	7.6	9.5	18.6	19.3	69.7	58.2	60.9	41.5
Germany	79.2	66.4	77.6	52.0	9.4	8.9	17.9	14.7	71.7	60.5	63.7	44.3
Greece	76.3	50.7	89.7	56.6	5.9	13.8	5.8	13.8	71.8	43.7	84.5	48.8
Hungary	67.7	53.8	77.3	49.7	6.2	5.4	n.a.	n.a.	63.5	50.9	75.8	44.5
Iceland (figures from 2000)	91.5	86.0	95.5	84.1	1.3	2.5	n.a.	n.a.	90.3	83.9	95.5	81.7
Ireland	78.6	57.9	74.9	55.2	4.8	3.9	6.7	n.a.	74.8	55.6	69.9	51.8
Italy (figures from 1995)	72.4	42.5	84.6	49.3	9.3	16.3	n.a.	22.8	65.6	35.6	78.7	38.1
Luxembourg	71.9	49.9	80.7	61.1	1.9	3.2	4.4	6.4	70.5	48.3	77.2	57.2
Netherlands	84.8	69.2	72.1	52.0	3.2	3.6	9.2	9.9	82.0	66.7	65.5	46.8
Norway	82.3	76.1	81.3	62.8	4.2	3.9	12.3	n.a.	78.9	73.1	71.2	58.3
Portugal	79.2	66.5	87.7	71.0	5.4	7.5	n.a.	n.a.	75.0	61.5	78.8	62.1
Slovak Republic	76.6	63.2	n.a.	n.a.	17.0	17.3	n.a.	n.a.	63.5	52.3	n.a.	n.a.
Spain	79.1	54.2	89.1	65.0	7.8	15.8	12.3	18.2	73.0	45.6	78.1	53.2
Sweden	80.3	76.8	71.6	63.3	5.7	4.8	15.8	10.3	75.7	73.1	60.3	56.8
Switzerland	88.5	74.9	88.0	70.1	2.7	3.1	7.7	10.3	86.1	72.6	81.3	62.9
United Kingdom	82.7	68.8	77.2	57.8	5.3	3.9	8.5	7.2	78.3	66.1	70.6	53.7



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