



Ge.M.I.C.



Gender, Migration and Intercultural Interactions in the Mediterranean and South-East Europe

Deliverable No. 3

Title of Deliverable:

Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2)

Due date of Deliverable: December 2008

Project coordinator: • Panteion University (UPSPS), Greece

Partners:

- International Centre for Minority Studies & Intercultural Relations (IMIR), Bulgaria
- University of Cyprus (UCY), Cyprus
- University of Bologna (UNIBO), Italy
- "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati (UDJG), Romania
- Institute of Childhood and Urban World (CIIMU), Spain
- "Euro-Balkan" Institute (EU-BAL), FYROM
- Bilkent University (BILKENT-U), Turkey

Grant Agreement no. 216065

Thematic Area: Cultural Interactions and Multiculturalism in European Societies

Start date of Project: 1st February 2008

Duration: 3 years

Dissemination Level

PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium	
Co	Confidential	

Gender, Migration and intercultural Interaction
in South-East Europe
(www.gemic.eu)

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Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report

Synthesis Report

Alexandra Zavos

Centre for Gender Studies (UPSPS)

in consultation with **Dina Vaiou**

National Technical University of Athens

Grant Agreement no. 216065

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
<u>1. National profiles.....</u>	6
<u>1.1. Cyprus – Greece – Italy – Spain.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>1.2. Bulgaria – Romania.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>1.4. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>1.5. Turkey.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>2. State of the art migration research.....</u>	12
<u>2.1. Gender – migration – intercultural relations.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>2.2. Thematic Research Areas.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>2.2.1. National identity and media.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>2.2.3. Intercultural education.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>2.2.4. Religion.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>2.2.5. Urban intercultural spaces and social movements.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>2.2.6. Intercultural violence.....</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>2.2.7. Mixed and transnational families.....</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>2.3. General methodological considerations.....</u>	<u>18</u>
Conclusions.....	19
References.....	21

Introduction¹

To begin with, we would like to comment on the heterogeneity of the reports, in both content and structure, which presents particular challenges for the Ge.M.IC. project. Even though common guidelines were set, it becomes obvious, upon reading the reports, that many of these could not be fulfilled not for lack of attention, but, rather, because of the significantly different experiences of migration encompassed within the Ge.M.IC. partnership. Rather than unifying these experiences, we have decided to attend to differences and consider their implications and – where possible - the complementarities between them.

In all national accounts 1989 marks a turning point for larger or smaller scale social transformations, impacting among other things, contemporary migration processes in Europe, sometimes referred to as 'New Migration'. So far, research on migration in both EU member states and third countries, has identified European countries as mainly 'sending', 'receiving' and/or 'transit', depending on dominant national migration trends. Thus, among the eight Ge.M.IC. partner countries, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain, comprising the Southern European or Mediterranean area, have developed into prime destinations for migrants from eastern European, African, Asian and Latin American countries. On the other hand, based on the large number of immigrants leaving Bulgaria and Romania, for the EU and other Western destinations, these countries have been identified primarily as migration sources, while the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey are represented mostly as transit countries for the 'New Migration'. However, recent developments ensuing from EU enlargement have impacted on existing migration trends, leading to a multiplication of both destination choices and migration patterns, gradually shifting the fixed boundaries between 'sending', 'receiving' and 'transit' societies.

¹ This summary report is based on the following eight national reports, which were prepared in fulfillment of the requirements of WP 2 – Context Analysis and Methodology Review and can be accessed at www.gemic.eu:

Mancheva, Mila and Evgenia Troeva (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Bulgaria" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Bulgaria);
Gregoriou, Zelia and Sylvia Michael (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Cyprus" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Cyprus);
Gajdoska, Dusica Dimitrovska, Gavritova Viktorija, and Ilija Milcevski (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on FYROM);
Lafazani, Olga (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Greece" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Greece);
Roggero, Gigi (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Italy" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Italy);
Colipca, Gabriela Iuliana, in collaboration with Gabriela Dima (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Romania" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Romania);
Baylina, Mireia; Diaz, Fabià; Ortiz, Anna and Maria Prats (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Spain" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Spain);
Cindoglu, Dilek (2008), "Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2): Turkey" (henceforth referred to as WP2 – National Report on Turkey).

A review of the literature on migration in older destination countries, such as Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain, indicates that recent debate is shifting attention from calculating the effects of migration towards addressing issues of integration and the growing need for institutional and policy interventions promoting intercultural relations and new citizenship rights that encompass the irrevocable heterogeneity and plurality of socio-cultural identities and practices. This trend coincides with current EU migration mainstreaming directives. On the other hand, research in new member states, Bulgaria and Romania, and associate countries, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, has focused mostly on studying the causes and effects of emigration as well as problems associated with transit migration and trafficking. While studies of incoming migration in new member states have not yet developed into a substantial body of research there is, within recent literature, a growing discussion of current changes, to which the Ge.M.IC. research project intends to contribute in significant ways. Main trends and developments will be briefly summarized in the following section.

1. National profiles

1.1. Cyprus – Greece – Italy – Spain

All four countries have emerged as prime destination targets for post 1989 migrations from Eastern European, Balkan, Asian, African and Latin American countries. While there are important differences between them with regard to migrants' countries of origin, as well as migrants' integration in host societies, they share certain common features which have been described as the 'Mediterranean/South European Immigration Model'. "The most important of these common features seems to be the segmented labour market and the large informal sector, alongside the high demand for labour" mainly in the agricultural, construction and care sectors (WP2 – National Report for Greece). Today, almost two decades after the first large migration flows, and following several legalization processes, (regular and irregular) migrants constitute approximately 10 percent of the population in each of the four countries. The need to deal with the social and political changes that are taking place, the rise of xenophobic and racist reactions, as well as EU directives for migration mainstreaming, has signaled the development and implementation of integration policies as issues of crucial importance.

The study of migration in these four countries, whether formally institutionalized in particular research and academic programs or not, has produced a significant and diversified body of research. Regarding the consequences of migration flows on receiving societies, among the most consistently researched topics we find: economy-labour, racism-xenophobia and nationalism, and, to a lesser extent, socio-spatial changes. Central to these studies, which tend to utilize quantitative methodologies, is the question whether immigrants have a positive or negative impact, and how their presence affects the overall development of economic and social relations. Particularly with regards to the economic effects of migration on formal and informal labour relations and the restructuring of the labour market, research in Greece and Italy challenges the prevailing public notion of an 'immigrant invasion' in favour of a more complex reading of push-and-pull factors influencing migration and integration. While such research has some generalizing value, as the Spanish report points out it is also important "to consider the local scale in migration studies. It is on the municipal scale that the knowledge generated by general data acquires the more marked tones of daily reality and where diversity, needs, opportunities and conflicts structure both day-to-day community relations and the agenda of social interventions and public administrative policies" (WP2 – National Report for Spain).

Another significant trend in migration research in these four countries concerns the effects of migration on migrants themselves, focusing on issues of social exclusion/integration, trans-national families and practices. As the Greek report elaborates "On the one hand, issues of exclusion are closely connected to racism, xenophobia and (lack of) migration policies, while, on the other hand, the discussion on 'integration' vs. 'inclusion' usually refers to processes interrelated to several economic, social and political conditions, such as legal status, participation in the labour market, access in housing, education, health and social security" (WP2 – National Report for Greece). These studies usually comprise both

quantitative and qualitative approaches and distinguish between men and women migrants as demographic categories but do not always actualize a gender perspective.

Research on migration policies has received varied attention in the four countries and will be explicitly addressed in the WP3 report. However, it is worth mentioning that, progressively, there is a shift from questions of legalization policy to a proliferation of policy-related topics regarding various aspects of migrants' integration, such as health, housing, welfare, and the, perhaps most politically potent, question of citizenship. On this later issue, "If we assume the migrant as a paradigm of the social and political transformations of the contemporary transnational context, this suggests to re-think the question of citizenship. ... The study of this concept is related to the changes of the nation-state, and the reshaping of the sovereignty forms" (WP2 – National Report for Italy). In fact, as the Italian report further highlights, based on studies that focus less on formal and juridical aspects of citizenship, and more on the self-organizing processes of the migrants themselves, "citizenship practices [emerge] as a new field of research, displacing the traditional modern concept of citizenship, above all that related to the nation-state" (WP2 – National Report for Italy). The limited scope and interpretive value of state-oriented migration research, as opposed to research with a trans-national perspective, is brought up in the Spanish report as well. "In this sense the demarcation of the phenomenon [of migration] around a closed territory can only be sustained via determinate strategies – the control or the utilization of migrants – or by ideologies which take the nation-state to be the 'natural' realm from which such phenomena should be analyzed" (WP2 – National Report for Spain).

The transnational dimension of migration is highlighted more prominently in gendered studies of migration. The prevalent focus in all four countries has been on the nexus between migration, gender and labour, articulated in the domain of domestic work. The question of domestic work comprises a number of different aspects, including family relations, labour market relations, urban practices and integration policies. In addition, in Spain and Italy transnational family practices have also received more specific attention.

While these studies remain relatively secondary in relation to the predominant gender-blind approaches, they actually elaborate a central standpoint from which "to read the transformations of the labour market and the welfare system, the transformations of citizenship and demographic trends, the apparatuses of control and criminalization, the forms of integration, the social construction of identity and culture, as well as the experiences of agency and resistance" (WP2 – National Report for Italy). Nevertheless, a certain 'gendered' thematization of migration research appears to have been established. As the example of Greece highlights, "while literature on migration in Greece focuses on more general issues, like migration policies, integration/exclusion, economy and labour, racism and xenophobia, the literature on gender and migration has developed quite different 'trends', addressing issues such as domestic labour, trafficking, prostitution and every day life" (WP2 - National Report for Greece).

Finally, with respect to the consolidation of migration studies in each of the four countries, we note the following developments. "In recent years in Italy, parallel to the growth of

academic studies, the sociology of migration is establishing itself as an important field of research. It combines political, economic, juridical and cultural categories, focusing on social interactions of the migrants both with the sending and the receiving societies" (WP2 – National Report for Italy). In Spain also, beginning in 1997, regular congresses on immigration provide up to date information about the progress of migration research. "Such state congresses have become social and academic reference points on immigration issues and they constitute an example of the changes in focus and methodology produced over the last decade, of which the principle were: a. a greater diversity of themes, b. the growing presence of research using qualitative methods, and c. the increase in studies from transnational and gender perspectives" (WP2 – National Report for Spain). In Greece, on the other hand, the field of migration research, while growing in importance, does not yet constitute a separate area of study but is rather subsumed in other established disciplines, such as sociology, criminology, anthropology and urban studies.

1.2. Bulgaria – Romania

1.3.

In spite of differences, post 1989, Bulgaria and Romania have been identified as primarily sending countries, involving various types of migration, both permanent and temporary, transnational or circular, labour, professional and educational, to EU and North American destinations. Research in both countries points to a wide range of positive as well as negative effects on sending societies. "At present Bulgaria follows a 'south-south' model of migration with about half of the emigration flow being directed to south-European countries, with labour markets more open to immigrants. On the overall, Bulgarian emigrants today live transnationally and develop multiple attachments. By remittances and transfer of social capital and know-how they play a structural role in Bulgaria's transition" (WP2 – National Report for Bulgaria). In Romania, instead, "four international migration trends have been established: Italy-Spain-Portugal, Germany-Austria-Hungary, France-Belgium-UK, and USA-Australia-Canada." (WP2 – National Report for Romania). These trends display significant differences in their development and in the profile of the migrants involved, with educational level presenting a special factor in the choice of different migration destinations and employment opportunities. Thus, Italy and Spain increasingly became the favourite destinations of mainly semi-skilled and unskilled Romanian migrants who eventually formed the largest Romanian diasporas in Europe. Instead, European destination countries of the second and third trend attracted mostly semi-skilled and skilled work migration. Finally, the fourth trend (the USA, Australia, and Canada) was targeted mostly by a highly qualified labour force and has contributed considerably to the brain-drain effect and skilled work shortage on the Romanian market. In all cases, migration trajectories present important gender differentiations, with the feminization of domestic labour migration emerging as a dominant trend in migrations towards EU countries.

Both countries, however, also comprise significant ethnic minority populations, which impact intercultural relations as well as the overall migration movements observed. The relocation of large numbers of ethnic minority populations to neighboring countries, either

enabled or enforced after 1989, has resulted in changes in the national demographic composition, as well as the development of transnational migration practices and networks towards non-EU countries (e.g. from Bulgaria to Turkey, or, from Romania to Germany, Hungary or Israel). Intercultural relations and tensions between majority and minority populations have been the topic of most intercultural research.

Research on migration in both countries has focused mainly on emigration, assessing dominant demographic and regional trends, the ethno-cultural characteristics of emigrants, motivation for migration, the impact of migration (emigration and return migration) on the national economy, on home communities, families and gender relations, as well as the integration of Bulgarian and Romanian immigrants in host societies and the development of diasporic communities in other European and Western countries. "Migration studies that employed more relevant methodologies started appearing with greater frequency since the late 1990s. The field today is rather interdisciplinary, attracting the interest of demographers, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, political scientists, as well as historians. The methods of research are correspondingly diverse and produce knowledge on migration processes from a number of perspectives. Main topics of research include: general trends and patterns of emigration, migrant networks and transnational migrant practices, integration in host societies, im(migrant) profiles and motivations, issues of culture, identity and religion." (WP2 – Bulgarian National Report). In this sense, the development of interdisciplinary and specialized research on migration in these countries, investigating multiple (social, economic, identity) subjective and collective aspects of the migration experience and its effects, can be seen as offering important additional perspectives on the phenomenon of European migration that complement studies of migration in receiving countries. Interestingly, research on intercultural interaction has mainly focused on relations between majority and minority populations in each country, rather than migration.

More recently, studies of incoming migration towards Bulgaria and Romania have also begun to develop, registering the changes occurring after the recent EU enlargement process and the countries' change of status as a member state. Apart from research on the characteristics of particular groups of migrants settling in the country, questions regarding the harmonization of national, refugee, asylum and immigration, legislation with EU directives constitute key focal areas of immigration research. Regarding the reception of new migrants in both countries, there is – contrary to the situation in older host societies - "an absence of political instrumentalization of xenophobic attitudes in contrast to the negative attitude to traditional minorities" (WP2 –National Report for Bulgaria).

The relationship between gender and migration has not been extensively researched in either country, in spite of the growing field of migration studies. Such studies as there are focus either on the analysis of demographic data for determining dominant and changing trends, or on the experiences and subjectivities of migrant women negotiating different kinds of belonging in home and host societies.

1.4. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

Ethno-cultural differences, as represented by the seven different ethnic groups comprising the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia polity, form the core of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia society and are reflected in both constitutional stipulations and institutional provisions. Therefore, developing intercultural and interethnic relations is a central political premise of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia state. "By fully recognizing the differences in its citizens' ethnocultural identities (and their equality) in its basic definition, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia state strictly follows the political model of multiculturalism" (WP2 - National Report for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). In relation to migration, the most important problem that has emerged since the 1990's is the issue of human trafficking of women and illegal migrants, with Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia being identified as a transit or destination country for trafficking networks. Trafficking of human beings is one of the forms of migration in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that shows a strong gender aspect. Mostly, the aim of trafficking is sexual exploitation (dominantly women, a few cases of men), trafficking of illegal migrants and in some cases exploitation of labour (dominantly male victims). Other forms of incoming or outgoing migration are not observed in significant numbers and have not been studied.

Research and policy on migration have mainly focused on the issue of trafficking (prevention and protection of victims), and have developed in collaboration between local and international NGOs active in the area. Trafficking has been addressed either from a gender-neutral, universalist legal and human rights perspective or from a more critical gender perspective that integrates an intersectional approach in assessing the social positioning and status of victims. In the second case, trafficking has been identified as a "form of gender determined violence and sexually determined exploitation" (WP2 - National Report for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). While women migrants constitute the main trafficked population, a smaller number of men are also represented in this context. This means that the different trafficking experiences of women and men, as well as their social, cultural and political backgrounds and resources, need to be taken into account when trying to understand and intervene in the phenomenon of trafficking, either at a policy or at an implementation level. Moreover, a gendered analysis of trafficking discourses reveals the construction of stereotypical representations of women and men migrants that hinder the development of pertinent policies for successful intervention in this complex phenomenon.

1.5. Turkey

Migration in Turkey represents a complex phenomenon comprising various, overlapping trends including Turkish labour emigration to European, Commonwealth and Arab countries, political migration and family reunification towards already established western European diaspora communities, as well as temporary immigration and circular or transit migration flows from other Middle Eastern and Asian countries. In fact, Turkey has been

identified as one of the major transit stations for so-called irregular migration towards EU destinations. Consequently, "All these trends together created extremely complex patterns of migration both for people from Turkey, i.e. migrant workers; and also for people migrating to Turkey" (WP2 – National Report for Turkey). "The current trends in migration flows are extremely hard to distinguish in contemporary Turkey, partly due to the insufficient nature of the recording and filing procedures in the borders and partly due to the illegal or unregistered nature of the migration that is taking place" (WP2 – National Report for Turkey).

Research on migration has developed in a number of different areas, although predominantly focusing on issues associated with Turkish emigration. Within this literature prominent themes include the economic dimensions of migration comprising the question of remittances, the impact of Turkish emigration and diasporas to Turkey's accession to the EU, and questions concerning the political and social integration of Turkish migrants in European host societies. "Research on gender and migration has shifted from more descriptive studies, focusing mostly on the European experiences, towards understanding the complexity of the process more within the transnational movement and its complexities" (WP2 – National Report for Turkey). The notion of 'circular migration' is supposed to capture the nature of temporary, transnational migration practices associated with the phenomenon of feminization of migration, that refers both to the growing number of women migrating as well as their "ghettoization in the international division of labour" (WP2 – National Report for Turkey). Women migrants in Turkey are represented in the domestic labour, entertainment and suitcase trade sectors and these have been the subjects of some recent research. However this research needs to be extended further to address the broad scope of women migrants' familial, social and cultural experiences, as well as the gendered aspects of migration highlighted in the Ge.M.IC. project.

2. State of the art migration research

In this section we will review key research developments in relation to the three intersecting focal areas of the project as well as for each thematic work package as they are represented in the eight partner countries' reports. Several gaps in the research literature have been identified, towards the elaboration of which we hope the Ge.M.IC. project will contribute.

2.1. Gender – migration – intercultural relations

As previously noted, research on women and migration in the eight partner countries, while addressing the particular experiences and trajectories of female migrants, does not always constitute a gendered approach. In many cases, particularly with regards to quantitative studies, women migrants are included as a separate population category but migration (and integration) as such is not identified and discussed as an inherently gendered phenomenon.

Gendered approaches to migration research have mainly focused on following issues:

- Gender, migration and labour transformations. In receiving countries, such as Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain, these studies focus on domestic labour, which is identified as the single most important area of female migrant employment, linked in significant ways to the labour and welfare regimes affecting native women,
- Gender, migration and transnational family practices. Here, research has focused on changing familial and inter-generational relations, particularly in relation to the central role of women in securing the reproduction of the family, both as breadwinners and caretakers, and, secondarily, on the enhanced role of older generations raising children in the absence of their parents,
- Gender, migration and material spaces. In receiving societies, such as Greece and Spain, research focuses on social transformations taking place in local neighborhoods, in relation to the changing uses (and significations) of public and private space, where gender and ethnic relations (and changing identifications) are forged and negotiated, and where citizenship is constituted through everyday spatial strategies,
- Gender, migration and trafficking. This topic has received much attention in particular countries, such as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where trafficking in human beings is considered one of the central problems associated with migration, and involves mostly women in relations of sexual exploitation.

Intercultural interaction is variously identified among partner countries as involving both majority-minority relations, as well as migration and integration processes. In the 'receiving' countries (Cyprus – Greece – Italy – Spain), intercultural relations have been conceptualized as involving mainly interactions between natives and migrants, whereas in 'sending' and 'transit' countries (Bulgaria – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Romania), focus has

been placed primarily on the status and integration of ethnic minority populations. This means that the scope of intercultural interaction can indeed be understood as encompassing complex - multiple, diverse and overlapping - experiences of belonging, inclusion and exclusion, some of which are associated with the movement of populations while others with the condition of localized ethno-cultural difference, as well as the intersections of both. Researching intercultural interaction from a gendered perspective further requires a consideration not only of the macro but also of micro-dynamics of power relations structuring the field of encounter between different populations. This points to the need for an intersectional approach that will take into account both the interactions of multiple overlapping identities, as well as the specific context within which these take place, as critically important for developing a sophisticated research methodology. As, for example, the Romanian WP2 national report highlights, "the Romanian academia and research circles have felt the need of reconsidering the main lines along which intercultural relations should be discussed ... setting out to question first of all the terminology in use – intercultural/inter-ethnic; ethnic minorities/pluralism/multiculturalism", and raising awareness "of the different interpretations of 'minority' in the Romanian and, respectively, the European, migration-marked cultural spaces, deciding eventually in favour of 'intercultural' as more relevant not only for the co-existence of several cultures within the borderlines of the same country, but also for the relations they establish." (WP2 – National Report for Romania). However, as the Italian report points out, "it is important to deconstruct the smothering concept of culture proposed by many analyses of interculturality, in order to more accurately think intercultural interactions" (WP2 – National Report for Italy).

2.2. Thematic Research Areas

2.2.1. National identity and media

2.2.2.

The topic of national identity and the media, considered in its relation to gender and migration, undeniably intersects with issues of nationalism, racism and xenophobia propagated in the media, but also with the construction of the migrant as 'the other' in mainstream discourses. In this context, unfortunately, the representations of women migrants in the media seem to draw extensively on and to reproduce without challenging stereotypical patterns resulting from the overlapping of negative images of gender and cultural differences. They link migrant women to different forms of male violence (mostly as victims of domestic violence, harassment and xenophobic rage or trafficking), to criminal activities (not only as victims but also – occasionally – as the perpetrating agents themselves) as well as to the inability/ unwillingness of fulfilling their role in the family as 'good' wives and especially as 'good' mothers (hence massive child abandonment so often signaled, in particular, by the Romanian media).

The study of representations of migration in the media has not received uniform attention in different partner countries. In some sending (e.g. Romanian) and receiving (e.g. Greek)

societies, despite the wealth of extant material, the topic has received little direct attention. Nonetheless, keener interest in the systematic study of (gendered) migration representations seems to have become manifest especially in certain receiving countries, whether subsumed to broader research in the field of the sociology of migration (e.g. in Italy) or explored in a more thorough and elaborated manner, with reference to the development of collective counter-practices linked to communication studies (e.g. the experiments Migracom and Migra Media in Spain) which try to systematically reflect on and debate media practices in relation to migration. The various studies thus issued share a common perspective, namely the critique and deconstruction of alarmist and criminalizing media discourses in favour of the recognition of migration as a structural phenomenon, and, progressively, of the appreciation of migrants' positive impact on the receiving societies.

2.2.3. Intercultural education

In receiving countries (Cyprus – Greece – Italy – Spain) the field of education represents one of the spearheads of integration challenges related to migration, with problems ranging from nationalist racism in schools, to classroom conflicts, poor performance by migrant children and the segregation/ghettoization of schools with large numbers of migrant students. While there is no unified approach, occasional attempts to address these problems – either at a national or a local level - have followed different multicultural or intercultural directions, which, in principle, try to encompass cultural difference and combat discrimination in schools. In Spain, specific research and training programs, one university directed and the other private, have been developed to promote intercultural relations in education. In Greece and Italy, the question of intercultural education, and of migrant students' integration into the national school system, is addressed within currently developing research on second-generation migrants, but has not yet been the subject of general policy adjustments. However, as highlighted in the example of Cyprus, even in cases where multiculturalism and tolerance have been instituted in formal educational policy, their interpretation and implementation actually translates into reinstating essentialist notions of national culture as the dominant one against which all others are measured and positioned, rather than promote critical educational interventions based on the notions of hybridization and dialogue. In this sense, as reflected in the Italian report, our analysis needs to focus "attention on the disorientation and displacement of cognitive experiences in the double sense of the intercultural relationship, that is to say, the experiences of both the teacher and the student. This allows the contestation of the objectification of the 'Other', and a critique of the cultural homogeneity of curriculum and didactic programs" (WP2 – National Report for Italy).

The intersection of gender with other social identifications and divisions in education has not been extensively studied. Nevertheless, more recent work on this issue in Spain has highlighted the need to account for conflicts occurring in schools as caused not only by cultural difference but by overlapping social inequalities as well. "Diverse authors reflect upon the need to recognize not only cultural diversity but also internal diversity within the

receiving society and to accept the pluralism encountered in classrooms via other types of 'markers' (political, social, economic, or related to gender)" (WP2 – National Report for Spain).

In contrast, in countries with established ethnic minority populations and stronger emigration trends (Bulgaria – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Romania), research and policy on intercultural education, where reported, has mainly focused on the integration of local children with different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds (e.g. Roma children in Romania), or, on guaranteeing educational rights and institutions to different minority communities (e.g. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), rather than migrants.

In this sense, studies on intercultural education in these countries have been developed independently of migration processes, but could in fact offer important insights for addressing emerging needs based on changing migration patterns, as well as for formulating more complex and contextualized approaches in older host societies. In Romania, for example, intercultural education represents one of the most developed areas of research, among the Ge.M.IC. topics. "Books and study programs on intercultural relations mainly aim at the integration in the Romanian educational system of children belonging to the different ethnic minorities (Roma in particular) on the Romanian territory. ... Gradually, however, more and more interest has been shown to the integration, by means of education, of migrating groups as well [...] in order to promote the dialogue between host society and the immigrants who, by given access to education, could better integrate and take part in the social and cultural life of the larger community." (WP2 – National Report for Romania).

2.2.4. Religion

In the older receiving countries religion represents, in public opinion, another area of pronounced concern regarding the politics of integration of migrants, even though it has not been the subject of much academic or policy research. In Spain religion has been studied in relation to racism and, particularly, 'Islamophobia'. Some work has also been done on migrants' religious practices and identities, and on the transformations of urban public culture to accommodate plural religious expressions. However, except for the study of the veil, religion in the context of migration has not been approached from a gendered perspective and represents therefore an important area for further inquiry. In Greece the topic of religion, whether from the migrants' or the hosts' perspective, has not been studied, even though a heated public debate that has been going on for a number of years about whether or not to allow the building of a Mosque in Athens. In Italy, also, in spite of the growing field of the sociology of migration and the proliferation of migration studies, the question of religion and its articulation to gender, in relation to migration, does not seem to have attracted much scholarship. In Turkey and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, both identified as 'transit' countries, the issue of religion does not occur in migration related research. However, in sending countries with ethnic minority populations of different religious faiths, such as Bulgaria and Romania, religion has been studied as an aspect or

factor contributing to the decision to migrate as well as regulating the experience (and difficulties) of integration in host societies and the formation of migrant networks and diasporas. Religion is also discussed in the context of mixed families, as one of the differences impacting gender relations and family cultural practices, such as naming, choice of religion for children, etc. In this sense, these studies address issues of religious identity and practice as an expression of subjectivity and sociality, rather than from the perspective of the formal organization of faith communities and religious orthodoxies.

In general, we could observe the tendency in host societies for the study of migration and religion to be influenced by a sense of cultural endangerment and (feared) conflict, addressing religious differences from the institutional perspective of the state and in relation to the challenges presented to dominant cultural practices and assumptions associated with secularism and/or Christianity. In this sense, religion is closely associated with issues of national identity. In contrast, in sending societies religion is approached from the point of view of every-day community and family life.

2.2.5. Urban intercultural spaces and social movements

This area of research has been mostly developed in some of the receiving countries, notably, Italy, Greece and Spain, and represents a prominent theme in migration studies, particularly in relation to gendered understandings of migration. It is worth mentioning that in Greece, for example, urban studies constituted the first major discipline, along with social anthropology, that elaborated a gendered approach to migration. In Spain, where a strong tradition of local self-government has led to a more pronounced presence of migrants in municipal affairs, the shift from relative invisibility to heightened visibility has put the experience of proximity and everyday life "at the center of studies and politics, particularly in the local and municipal realms" (WP2 – National Report for Spain).

Overall, the topic has been explored from the perspective of everyday life in relation to migrants' use of public spaces connected to labour and family practices and their social mobilizations. Particular attention has been given to women migrants' practices of settlement and mobility in urban contexts, in relation to parallel emerging socio-spatial transformations at the level of the neighborhood. It is argued that "this turn toward proximity facilitates a better understanding of a new reality while challenging prejudices and stereotypes; without isolating conflict, it highlights experience and spaces of coexistence even when cultural and ethnic dynamics are diverse" (WP2 – National Report for Spain).

As further observed in the Spanish national report "The importance of place; the recuperated study of concrete realms such as the neighborhood; and research on social dynamics in plazas, schools, call centers, and civic centers are increasingly more common in academic migration research" (WP2 – National Report for Spain). In both Spain and Greece, more attention has been directed to studying the gendered access to and use of public spaces, claims to rights, and the integrative functions of co-presence in public spaces. In Italy, on the other hand, the topic has been associated with notions of citizenship, migrants'

claims to (citizen and social) rights and migrants' social movements, linking the study of urban spaces with research on citizenship practices. Both perspectives can provide important complementary insights to understanding changing socio-cultural relations taking place at the local and every-day level, in relation to migrants' self-organization and agency, indicating at the same time key political interventions needed.

2.2.6. Intercultural violence

Intercultural violence in the context of migration has been mainly approached and conceptualized rather narrowly through the issue of trafficking in women. In fact, in most countries, migrant women's visibility is established on condition of their representation as victims of violence and exploitation. Research on trafficking comprises a very large body of literature, attending to human rights violations and international interventions at a legal, political and policy level. Trafficking, then, is traditionally addressed as a common problem concerning the 'global community', regardless of local, historical, ethnic, racial and class specificity. In fact, Ge.M.IC. partners point out the need to deconstruct such mainstream media and academic discourses in favour of drawing attention to the experience of and resistance to gendered violence of particular, and not stereotypical, subjects.

In receiving countries, the issue of violence linked to migration has also been represented in public opinion in terms of migrants' assumed criminality. Research on mainstream representations of migrants have tried to confront and deconstruct the nationalist and racist premises of such ideological discourses, thereby reversing the notion of danger and violence as something experienced, rather than exercised, by migrants in host societies. Similarly, racist violence in receiving societies has often had migrants as its targets. Research on this problem tries to address and confront both extraordinary as well as institutionalized and normalized forms of racism.

2.2.7. Mixed and transnational families

The topic of changing family relations in the context of migration, and the dynamics of mixed and transnational families, has received significant attention in the migration literature in most of the partner countries, except Greece, whether from the perspective of emigration in sending countries or from the perspective of integration in host societies. In fact, it is one of the areas of research on migration that has actualized a gendered and transnational approach. While the topic has been studied in relation to a number of aspects, ranging from negotiations of identity in home and diaspora communities, to changing cultural practices and, in some cases, domestic violence, it does not, however, comprise a unified approach. In this sense, transnationalism could offer an important unifying perspective. As the Spanish national report observes "Transnational practices are not new; what is new is an analytic perspective that gives priority to making visible and analyzing practices and institutions that cross borders" (WP2 - National Report for Spain). This point is

also stressed in the Turkish national report, where the notion of 'circular migration' is offered as a possible way of conceptualizing transnational migration movements.

In sending countries, Romania and Bulgaria, research has focused on the positive and negative effects of emigration on family and gender relations, as well as the development of new practices of socialization that involve negotiations of different ethno-cultural identities and tensions within the same household or community (e.g. naming practices in mixed Hungarian-Bulgarian families), or take into account the conditions of increased temporary or circular transnational mobility among female family members. The role of growing ethnic or national diasporas in changing family relations is another point of interest. In receiving countries, Italy and Spain, the topic has been approached mainly from the perspective of gender, studying transnational practices and strategies of integration of migrant families from different countries of origin (European and non-European), as well as the function of social networks across borders. "The transnational nature of migrations was analyzed as fluid relations between family members in different countries and as the circulation of resources and information between homes and borders" (WP2 – National Report for Spain). In both cases, an important aspect of this research is the emphasis on practices and subjectivities providing thereby a key field from to approach migrants' agency.

2.3. General methodological considerations

In most partner countries, research on migration (both emigration, immigration and transit migration) has tended to progress from more general quantitative to more context specific and fine tuned qualitative studies, deploying a variety of research methods based on ethnographic, narrative and discourse analytic methodologies, such as participant observation, focus groups, in-depth interviews and life histories. Such approaches are considered conducive towards developing a gendered understanding of migration and integration processes that integrates macro and micro perspectives of analysis while foregrounding migrants' agency, and are prioritized by all partners as most appropriate for the thematic areas addressed by the Ge.M.IC. project. Particularly for more sensitive topics, such as gendered violence, the importance of accessing the subjects' own unmediated accounts as well as avoiding the uncritical reproduction of gendered and racialized stereotypes is considered paramount for stopping their further victimization and marginalization. On questions of intercultural interaction, partners highlight the need to problematize essentialist, static and homogeneous notions of culture, in parallel with the deconstruction of mainstream representations of migration as a social threat, in order to address problems of social exclusion and ethno-cultural segregation. In fact, adopting migration as a paradigmatic lens for studying contemporary social, labour and political transformations, rather than an exception, will allow us to identify new practices of mobility and citizenship in a trans- and post-national European context. Finally, as has been indicated earlier, linking research on emigration and immigration, produced from the perspectives of sending and receiving countries respectively, can lead to more complex and integrated approaches to the migration phenomenon.

Conclusions

In relation to the development of the Ge.M.IC. project, the review of the relevant state-or-the-art literature on gender, migration and intercultural interaction in the eight partner countries helps us identify following key issues that should be taken into consideration in its subsequent implementation:

- migration comprises immigration, emigration, circular or transit migration

Here, the important issue to keep in mind is the complexity of the migration phenomenon that comprises different, non-linear movements between locations. While most European research on migration assumes the perspective of the 'host' country, focusing on problems of integration, the composition of the Ge.M.IC. consortium points to the need to encompass and synthesize multiple perspectives as well as ongoing transformations in migration movements. This means that, from the point of view of migration, research needs to elaborate on the proliferation of possible movement and settlement strategies that constitute the multifaceted European face of migration (Morokvasic ???). In this way, European migration can be understood and represented as a heterogeneous and resourceful social practice, expanding and hybridizing economic, cultural and political institutions and identities.

- trans-national vs. state-oriented perspective

From a trans-national perspective the movement of migration connects different locations, countries and cultures, through crossing and shifting of borders of belonging and entitlement (Salih 2003). A state-oriented perspective, on the other hand, assumes the national context as normative for understanding social and political processes linked to migration, and tries to evaluate the effects of migration in relation to an imaginary national well-being; this position, which has been criticized as 'methodological nationalism' (Sassen 2003), even inadvertently, can reproduce or foster ideologies of nationalist and racist prejudice. In the context of globalization, global economic restructuring, and the 'deterritorialization of culture', trans-national migration research can offer valuable insights into the ongoing processes of interaction and exchange that enrich and diversify European identity.

- women and migration vs. gender approach

Feminist research on migration in Europe (Kofman et al. 2000) has drawn attention to the fact that a gendered approach does not indeed mean adding on women as a social and demographic category to existing, genderless or masculinist, conceptualizations of migration in social science research. While many quantitative studies of migration include special references to the numbers and characteristics of women migrants in the national labour market, or other social institutions, these studies fail to address the complex and intersecting relations of power that shape the phenomenon of migration and integration,

and the differential position of men and women migrants in European societies. A gendered approach involves utilizing a methodology of 'intersectionality' that tries to account for multiple and overlapping discriminations and exclusions affected by 'racial', class, and gendered social divisions (Verloo 2006, Yuval-Davis 2006). Moreover, a gendered approach assumes the perspective of subjectivity, instead of structural explanations of migration, which allows for the consideration of migrants' agency in dealing with the challenges of mobility and integration (Morokvasic 2007).

- integration and multiculturalism refers to migrants as well as ethnic minorities

From the perspective of the Ge.M.IC. consortium, processes of integration and the recognition of multicultural pluralism are not only associated with the phenomenon of migration but with the long-standing co-existence, and interaction, of ethnic minorities as well. Several countries of the Ge.M.IC. consortium have developed significant political, institutional and cultural resources for dealing with ethnic, linguistic and religious heterogeneity, sometimes in the context of very serious social conflict and radical social transformation. Rather than assuming only a 'western' perspective on multiculturalism, based on the history of Western and Northern European societies dealing with new and older migration, significant insights can be gained from the traditions developed in Eastern European and Balkan countries. In this sense the conceptualization of multiculturalism needs to integrate both 'western' and 'eastern' experiences and practices.

- role of diasporas in both sending and receiving societies

An important aspect of migration involves the role of ethnic and national diasporas in establishing cultural and social ties across borders, facilitating integration of migrants in host societies, and supporting connections with home communities, but also catalyzing process of multicultural belonging (Brah 1996). Researching migration only in relation to the tensions and dynamics of majority and minority cultures and identities, obscures the important contributions of diasporic communities in shaping, through their interactions and conflicts, the multiplicity and creative heterogeneity European societies (Sassen 2000).

- intercultural interaction based on notion of cultural hybridity

Finally, the processes of intercultural interaction need to be considered not only in relation to the representations of majority/minority cultures, or based on assimilationist preoccupations, where migrants are expected to 'fit in' to (assumed) dominant cultural identities, but rather, from an understanding of culture as an always already hybrid, fluid, and open development of meanings, symbols, and practices as well as boundaries.

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