



# Ge.M.I.C.



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

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- International Centre for Minority Studies & Intercultural Relations (IMIR), Bulgaria
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- University of Bologna (UNIBO), Italy
- "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati (UDJG), Romania
- Institute of Childhood and Urban World (CIIMU), Spain
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Gender, Migration and intercultural Interaction  
in South-East Europe  
([www.gemic.eu](http://www.gemic.eu))

**Ge.M.I.C.**



# Thematic Workshops Report on “Urban Intercultural Spaces and Movements” (WP7).

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Spain, Italy, Greece

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## **WP 7 - Urban Intercultural Spaces and Movements Coordinator Institute of Childhood and Urban World (CIIMU)**

### **1. Purpose of the research**

The purpose of this research is to analyze the role of urban public spaces in the creation of intercultural and social inclusion/exclusion relations. We focus in the use and appropriation of these spaces from a gender approach that considers specifically the migrant families experiences. Besides, we use the feminist concept of positionality to understand how the social situatedness of migrants conditioning their practices of citizenship (gender, ethnicity, education, immigration status, social class, age and generations, length of stay, and migration experiences).

We propose the idea of citizenship as social practice that migrants engage at multiples scales and with multiples public spheres across national boundaries. From this point of view the urban spaces are a privileged place to understand migrant citizenships practices.

Place, in this logic, is not regarded as a static, determinate and bounded 'object' but as temporary and open, as the varying outcome of the dynamics between specific relations and processes, conceptualizations, demands and claims by the individuals and groups that inhabit it as subjects of divergent experiences and needs.

### **2. Starting Points**

-Public spaces as privileged places of conflict, encounter, interaction, participation, political action, and intercultural relations.

-Public spaces as crucial for the identifications processes, in the elaboration of senses of place and belonging, and in the construction of citizenship

-Gender as a transversal variable crucial in the unequal access and use of urban public spaces.

- Positionality as power relations.

-Migrations are triggers for intercultural relationships.

### **3. Thematic Workshops**

In order to reach the objectives we organize two Thematic Workshops:

#### **3.1. Workshop in Bologna**

On 29 May 2009 the Italian team organized a workshop to discuss the progress made in the research and submit the first results of the fieldwork done in each of the districts selected in Barcelona, Athens and Bologna.

In the first part of the workshop the following technical subjects were discussed:

- Migrants as residents of the place allows us to analyzed their role as creators of scale without recourse to preconceived ideas about weather their relations with the place are determined by nationality or ethnicity. (Glick Schiller, 2008)

- Analysis of the (public and private) agents who make up the organization of daily life (e.g. community public social services or health services and immigrants' associations or "ethnic" businesses)
- Positionality of the gender category with other systems of social inequality and impact on the ways of organizing, acceding to and taking part in public spaces
- Importance of representations of gender and immigration in the design, management and assessment of the urban "integration" and "participation" policies and programmes.
- To explore the connections between public/private, universalism/particularism, equality/difference in the discourses and practices aimed at the integration of immigrants:

- ✓How are the immigrant population and their integration seen and through what mechanisms can that integration be activated?
- ✓Who is the (imagined) user of these programmes and plans?
- ✓What is the aim of the intervention?
- ✓What are the instruments or devices for the intervention?
- ✓How are they managed?
  - ✓What relations are established between the regional public administration, social initiatives and the professionals (social workers, educators, psychologists, mediators)?

In the second part of the workshop, each partner described the characteristics of the district chosen and presented the first results of the fieldwork.

### **3.1.1. National case-studies**

#### **3.1.1.1. Greece**

The case study will take place in the neighbourhood of Kypseli, a neighbourhood where more than 25% of the population are migrants. In this neighbourhood we intend to focus on two interrelated spaces: the central square and the old Market place (henceforth 'Agora'). The square of Kypseli is a crowded public space where migrant and local people meet and interconnect in various ways. The 'Agora' has been squatted two years ago by residents opposing the plans of the municipality to transform it into a commercial centre and is now functioning as a cultural and social centre run by grassroots organizations. Among other activities there is an evening school where volunteer teachers give free lessons of Greek language to migrants who live in the neighbourhood. Focusing mainly on these two spaces we will try to analyze the intercultural interaction between 'migrants' and 'locals' and the ways in which this interaction is articulated in urban space.

#### **3.1.1.2. Italy**

Starting from a central neighbourhood (Bolognina), that is the most populous migrant zone in Bologna. Bolognina is not only an area of residence, but also it is a space of relationships and transit of migrants. Bolognina is a sort of "hub" for the migrants: in this way it is particular interesting to analyze the theoretical research questions. Starting from Bolognina, we will try to follow the trajectories and movements of the migrants in the city, illustrating the transformations of the gender relationship, the urban spaces, the citizenship, and the labour market.

#### **3.1.1.3. Spain**

The fieldwork will be done in Poble Sec, a working-class neighbourhood which, in January 2008, registered an immigrant population of 27.9%. Pakistanis and Moroccans are the

largest groups, followed by a wide variety of other nationalities. However, the most visible section of the population in the use of public space is the Latin American, especially Dominican.

The aim is to focus on Blai St. -a very busy pedestrian and commercial thoroughfare with small shops, a large proportion staffed by immigrants-, and Surtidor Square -where the local Civic Centre provides social and cultural services for migrants and locals alike (including Catalan classes)-, and the Health Centre serves every member of the community.

These two spaces – Blai St. and Surtidor Square- make an excellent field for analyzing the use of public space by the newcomers and the local population (already quite mixed between native Catalans and Spanish migrants since the 60s). We are also interested in analyzing the new forms of citizenship which are being created by sharing the communal space and applying a gender perspective to all this.

The agreements we reached in Bologna was that each partner will send an update on the fieldwork at the beginning of December and those drafts circulated among the partners for feedback.

These reports consider the main points:

- Context of the studied area: geographic, demographic, social and political characteristics of the chosen neighbourhood.
- State of affairs with the fieldwork: how many interviews with migrants; how many interviews with key informants; how many participant observations.
- We suggest two tables as a way of organizing part of the qualitative information gathered during the interviews with migrants and key informants. Any additional variables you think should be added according to your results would also be appreciated.

### **3.2. Workshop in Barcelona**

On 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> March the second Workshop will be held in Barcelona.  
The aim of this meeting is:

The main aim of this workshop is to have a joint presentation of the results in the study cases (Athens, Bologna and Barcelona) and to organize the theoretical and empirical contents to write the final WP7 report.

The activities which will take place are:

Friday 5th March

10:30- 14:00

Presentation of the results of the study cases: Athens, Bologna, Barcelona.

- Developments in the research since the last meeting in Italy.
- Main theoretical results in relation to WP7 subject.
- Changes that took place in relation to the project's aims and adaptations to the initial scheme in order to produce the final report.

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- Limitations/difficulties in the fieldwork and the impact which may have when analyzing data. Debate about fieldwork policies.

14:00-16:00: Lunch

16:00-18:

- Discussion and analysis of the studied theme.
- Coordinate WP7 final report to be delivered in Athens in April 2010.
- Organization of the script in order to structure the contents: common sections, particular sections for each context..
- Delivery dates of the final national report.

Saturday 6th March

11:00-15:00

Visits to the public spaces studied in the Poble Sec district in Barcelona.  
Interviews with members of Poble Sec Traders Association.

Lunch in the neighbourhood.