



Ge.M.I.C.

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Final Synthesis Report

Gender, Migration and intercultural Interaction
in South-East Europe
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Ge.M.I.C.



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Introduction

The main objective of the Ge.M.IC. project was to study the relations of gender, migration and intercultural interaction in Southeast Europe, a fast changing and diverse region situated at the borders of the EU. The multiple challenges that emerged and the new findings that were produced throughout the three year research conducted in Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, FYROM, Italy, Romania, Spain and Turkey by an interdisciplinary consortium are presented and synthesized in this report. The report is divided into four sections. The first section outlines the main theoretical premises of the project and the second outlines the principle findings of the research conducted in eight thematic areas: national identity and the media, intercultural education, religion, intercultural spaces and movements, intercultural violence, mixed and transnational families. The third section, analyzes the cross-cutting concepts that inform these findings and assess their implications for theory. The fourth section proposes a set of comprehensive policy recommendations with Europe-wide implications.

1. Outline of the research project

The FP7 funded research project “Gender, migration and intercultural interactions in South-east Europe and the Mediterranean” (Ge.M.IC.), was implemented over a three year period (2008-2011) in eight countries of South-east Europe and the Mediterranean, including Bulgaria, Cyprus, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain, Turkey and was coordinated by the Gender Studies Institute, Department of Social Policy, Panteion University.

1.1. Aim - Objectives - Methodology

The aim was to study the intesections of migration, gender and intercultural relations in a regional context (SE Europe/ Mediterranean), based on the assumptions that:

- Migration is a driving force of socio-cultural and institutional change in the European social sphere.
- Migration is a gendered process.
- Southeast Europe and the Mediterranean comprise an important geopolitical and socio-cultural area for migration and EU integration.

The main objectives of the project were:

- -To trace similarities and differences between sending-receiving-transit countries and old-new-prospective EU member states.
- To study the impact of migration on different socio-cultural processes and institutions.
- To draw further implications for theory and policy.

The theoretical framework of the project was based on the following three premises:

- A positive approach to migration as a force of social-cultural change and democratization.
- An intersectional approach to gender as a social relation influenced by, among others, social differences and inequalities related to class, 'race', age, nationality / ethnicity.
- A critical approach to culture as always already hybrid, produced through various ongoing socio-cultural interactions.

The project implemented a qualitative methodological approach through the choice of critically relevant case-studies in all partner countries, and included participant observation, interviews and focus groups, and discourse analysis.

The project comprises significant European added value for three reasons:

- It centers a geographic area of unique importance for Europe, precisely because of the strong impact, irregularity and social conflict, with which migration has occurred.
- It develops a thematic rather than national focus of several areas of social interaction, acquiring thereby a broad overview, and, through its qualitative methodology, an in-depth understanding, of different but interconnected socio-cultural processes.
- It places under critical scrutiny EU and national migration and integration policies, in relation to the socio-cultural dynamics of migration and the imperative of democratic inclusion.

1.2. Structure of the research

We designed a thematic, rather than country-focused research identifying key areas for studying the socio-cultural impact of migration *across* - not just within - different national contexts. These areas included:

- Media and National Identity: Looking at representations of 'self' and 'other' through discourses on migration in national film and press (Romania, FYROM, Greece).
- Intercultural Education: Looking at the effectiveness of intercultural education policies and the negotiation of ethno-cultural borders in school (Cyprus, FYROM, Greece).
- Religion: Looking at how migration impacts and transforms religious practices and identities (Italy, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey).
- Urban Spaces and Social Movements: Looking at how Migrants' presence challenges and changes the city; the city enables migrants' presence (Spain, Greece, Italy).
- Intercultural Violence: Looking at the intersections of migration and gender in violence occurring in sex-work/trafficking, family and labour relations (FYROM, Cyprus, Greece, Romania).
- Mixed and Transnational Families: Looking at the impact of migration on gender roles and family dynamics (Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey).

Limitations encountered by the research project bring up following issues:

- Access to research participants was often cumbersome or hindered because of lack of familiarity, trust and time.
- Institutional access, especially in the case of schools and women's shelters, was restricted or prohibited and had to be contrived through informal arrangements.
- The importance of researchers' social networks both in finding research participants and in negotiating institutional access was critical for the implementation of the project.
- Language of interaction with research participants was, as a rule, the national language, rather than the participants' native language. In rare cases the use of an interpreter was called for, but as a rule the participants were required to communicate in the dominant, for each country, linguistic mode.
- The research, implementing a qualitative approach, allows in-depth understanding of socio-cultural dynamics through analysis of particular case-studies, rather than generalizability.

2. Literature and Policy Analysis

The literature and policy analyses focused on the national perspectives and emphasized common themes and policy gaps that were in turn studied and incorporated into the thematic studies. More specifically:

2.1. Context Analysis and Methodology review findings¹

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

- migration in Europe 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.

- 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. 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. 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

¹ Alexandra Zavos (in consultation with Dina Vaiou), 2008, "Synthesis: Context Analysis and Methodology Review" available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=54>

Feminist research on migration in Europe 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. 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. 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 .

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

From the perspective of the Ge.M.I.C. 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.I.C. 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. 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.

- 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

2.2. Policy Analysis Review Findings²

Based on the research and policy analysis conducted by GeMIC researchers, we have reached the following conclusions:

- The migrant-receiving bias

² Nelli Kambouri and Maria Stratigaki, 2008, Synthesis Policy Analysis Report available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?p=297>

Focusing almost exclusively on state policies and labour needs of migrant receiving societies, European migration policies have imposed restrictive security measures and precarious labour conditions for migrants, but have failed to address both the complexities of migrant mobility and migrant agency. This perspective is reflected also in the lack of reliable official statistics on migration in Southeast Europe, which have persistently ignored the autonomous and changing dynamics of migrant movements.

- Security policies cultivate migrant precarity

Because the external borders of Southern European states are increasingly conceived as “European”, intensified measures of policing and control are imposed. These do not arrest migrant movements, but create the conditions for the construction of migrants as precarious labour.

- Gender neutrality and the victimization of migrant women

EU migration policies are based on a gender neutral approach, which silences gender equality objectives, and promotes representations of migrant women only as a specifically vulnerable and dependent social group.

- Silencing of migrant women’s agency and autonomy

On the contrary, migrant women are silenced in the EU policy context as autonomous agents. The lack of a policy framework to regulate the feminized sector of domestic work is a particularly salient issue that has been left outside the EU policy agenda. The persistent failure to address migrant women as workers in this sector is in sharp contrast to the overwhelming interest in migrant women as trafficking victims in public discourse at the EU level.

- Intersectionality and gender mainstreaming in migration policies

The construction of migrant women as vulnerable and dependent in EU gender equality policies is based on a very narrow conception of gender mainstreaming that ignores intersectionality, and assumes a very simplistic additive approach to different forms of inequality, that ultimately reduce gender to one amongst other forms of discrimination.

- Intercultural Interactions vrs integration policy

Intercultural interaction in South Europe has been dominated by policies of integration, which in most cases has promoted objectives of assimilation and acculturation in both national and local politics. Gender issues have been silenced, while the nuclear heterosexual middle class family has been set as exemplary.

- EU policies on out, circular and transit migration

EU enlargement has challenged the one sided migrant-receiving perspective since many new and prospective member states experience large out, transit and circular migration flows. However, through harmonization, EU migration policies are adopted by new and prospective member states, although for many of them the implementation of those principles may be impossible, not only because of the lack of infrastructures, but also because of differences in migration flows and political traditions. Through this process the gender neutral approach to migration policy is gradually adopted by new and prospective EU member states.

Overall, the greatest obstacles to intercultural dialogue and cooperation is the migrant receiving and gender neutral bias of existing migration policies, which strips migrants in general and migrant women in particular of their agency and denies the diversity and autonomous character of migrant movements. Migrant women are included only as a vulnerable and dependent category in migration

and gender equality policies. In order to devise alternative policy recommendations and theoretical perspectives on gender, migration and intercultural interaction in Southeast Europe it is necessary to address the autonomous dynamics of migrant movements and intersectionality in gender relations.

3. Thematic Research Findings

As explained above, the GEMIC research uses migration as a lens or frame through which to interrogate what occurs in key social fields, including the media, school, religion, the city, the family. Some of the main findings and their implications are discussed below.

3.1. National Identity and the media: transnational and transgendered challenges to European identity³

Challenging from the outset the assumption that culture is a bounded concept, the thematic study on national identity and the media demonstrates how Southeast Europe is becoming increasingly situated at the crossroads of emigration and immigration, the East and the West. The main literature on the discourse and representations of migration in the media in Europe is focused on the media of host societies and address mainly questions that involve the dissemination of negative images of immigrants, racist arguments and the racialization of cultural difference (Wood and King 2001). In these debates, Europe is represented as a relatively homogeneous space, in which migrants are constituted as paradigmatic “strangers”, while cultures of emigration, diaspora and transnationalism (Bailey et al, 2007) are treated as being situated either outside Europe or at the margins of Europe. GeMIC research contributes to the existing academic and policy discussions by adding the transit and emigration perspectives.

Research in this work package has been focused on three case studies in Southeast Europe: Greece, Romania and FYROM, which all combine elements of host, sending and transit migration. The analysis included the usage of imagology, contextual and discourse analysis of press and film in order to emphasize the diversity of perspectives and mediums in media production within and between Southeast European societies. The research included the analysis of 36 films (both fiction and documentaries) and the analysis of selected articles on migration from 10 national newspapers (two for each partner) covering the period from 2007-2009 and 4 Italian newspapers for a specific incident. The most important findings of the GeMIC thematic study can be summarized as follows:

³ **Synthesis Report** Gabriela Iuliana Colipcă, Ioana Ivan-Mohor, Michaela Praisler, Antoanela Marta Dumitraşcu, 2010, *Thematic Report «National Identity and the Media»* and **Case studies:** Slavcho Dimitrov and Jana Lozanoska, 2010, «National Identity and the Media: FYROM», Maria Paradeisi and Ioanna Vovou, 2010, «National Identity and the Media: Greece», Gabriela Iuliana Colipcă, Ioana Ivan-Mohor, Michaela Praisler, Gabriela Dima, Antoanela Marta Dumitraşcu, Mariana Neagu, 2010, «National Identity and the Media: Romania» available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=13>

Differences in the written press between sending and receiving perspectives

In the written press, national identity plays a crucial role in determining how migrant lives are perceived and migrant identities imagined and represented. The same events may be reported in antithetical ways depending on the national context. These representations are highly gendered. For example, the GeMIC study discusses the opposing ways in which the case of Nicolae Mailat, a Romanian migrant in Italy who was accused in November 2007 and later convicted for the rape and murder of an Italian woman, was reported and represented by the Italian and the Romanian press. While in the Italian press, this masculine migrant figure was constructed as symbolic of a security threat and became a stereotypical of the violent East, in Romania the press presented Mailat as a victim - reversing the stereotype and arguing that he was the product of economic and social discrimination against emigrants in Italy. As the synthesis report argues

“The Romanian researchers’ case analysis seems to show that both the Romanian and the Italian newspapers start from the preconceived idea that migration and criminality go, unavoidably, hand in hand (“many Romanians’ status of legal/illegal *migrants* favour their criminal attitudes against the population of the host country” - *WP4 National Case Study - Romania*, 2010: 29); yet, what they cannot agree on is whether the attitudes and policies of the host society’s government and public opinion have contributed (or not) to the late 2007 escalation of violent crime, damaging even more the already tense relations between the Romanian and Italian communities”. (WP4, p. 20)

Press debates, like this one, are overwhelmed by binary representations of the East and the West and nationalist stereotypes of masculinity and femininity.

Gendered representations and trafficking discourse in the press

The representations of migrant men as dangerous criminals are complemented by those of migrant women as victims. In this respect, the rhetoric of trafficking dominates what is being written in the press across what are perceived as “host”, “sending” and “transit” societies.

“The gender-migration relation with the institutional and policy framework is not so well nuanced in the written press. Moreover, the cases which may be discussed from this perspective are most often associated with trafficking of women for sex work or prostitution (see the Romanian and FYROM press) which requires collaboration on the part of institutions, both in the host and in the sending countries (see section 4.3 in *WP4 National Case Study - FYROM*, 2010: 27-30). If reference is made to migrant men, their frequent association with violence and crime also favours institutional collaboration either for their capturing and punishment, or for their expatriation in the sending country.” (WP4, p. 43)

Although the identity of the victim is usually attached to migrant women as a natural trait, it may also be associated (in the narratives of the “host” or “transit” press mainly) with specific ethnic or social groups of migrant men who are

perceived and represented as effeminated, weak and impotent vis-à-vis the host society. Such representations of migrant men mirror and, in turn, reinforce conceptions of Southeast Europe as a perpetually underdeveloped, violent and conflictual place –whose marks are inscribed onto the bodies of migrants traveling to Western Europe like a primordial trait. These gendered representations, however, are reversed in the written press produced from an emigration perspective, which attribute the vulnerability of migrant bodies (male or female) mainly to the specific historical circumstances of post communist transition rather than to primordial, cultural characteristics of South Europeans.

Challenging the East- West dichotomy through film

Contrary to the written press, the films analyzed by GeMIC researchers are characterized by narratives that often challenge the predominant nationalist identities of host, sending or transit societies. While gender and nationalist stereotypes of migration are reproduced in several films, there are also many examples of transgression of national identities and binary representations of East/West, masculine/feminine, victim/ criminal.

The paradigmatic figure of the migrant in film is not that of the dangerous male criminal or the victimized female migrant, but of the female or male migrant who escapes the precarious conditions of the society of origin only to become exploited, disappointed and disillusioned in the West. Instead of a better life migrants in film get “deprived of some of their essential rights (e.g. freedom of movement, medical care, etc.), putting up with violence and exploitation, leaving in constant fear of police pursuit and deportation, occasionally easy targets for police or migrant-migrant brutality” (WP4, p. 24). It is in such filmic moments that the distinction between the East and the West collapses producing a sense of continuity of precariousness and insecurity experienced by migrants across borders. The continuity of this experience is visualized in particular in “accented” films (directed by migrant directors themselves), in which the distinction between host and sending perspectives collapses too (Nacify 2001).

Codifications of gender and sexuality in the media

It should be mentioned finally that despite their differences, and although they are often antithetical, both written and visual mediums, sending, host and transit perspectives share the same codifications of masculinity and femininity and end up being complementary. As the GeMIC report argues, with the exception of a handful of films directed by female directors, where the possibilities of emancipation and escape from gender inequalities can be detected, migrant women’s representations are focused on victimization. Romanian films, for example, “foreground the figure of the woman migrant as a product of the post-communist realities of Romania, insisting on her role as victim of a range of grave social, economic and cultural problems such as unemployment, poverty, limited child-care options and the continuing domination of male centred values and hierarchies at both domestic and public levels.” (WP4 National Case Study – Romania, 2010, p. 50) The post-communist transformations of the everyday life of women are epitomized in their becoming emigrants willing to accept unconditionally feminized low-paid, unskilled employment - mainly in the domestic, care and agricultural sectors- or in prostitution and sex work in the

West. “Irrespective of their nationality and of the labour sector migrant men and women are engaged in, their illegal status and social marginalization make them prone to becoming victims of different forms of violence, ranging from discrimination to rape and even murder” (WP4, p. 36). In other words, what representations of emigration allude to is the idea that migrant women and men are not victimized because of their national and ethnic identity (i.e. because they are Eastern), but rather because they are constructed as victims by the EU policies and perceptions of immigration.

Cinematic moments when migrant women escape abusive relationships, marriages, discrimination in domestic, care/sex work, or claim their autonomy are motivated by a feminist critique that questions the traditional roles attached to women (motherhood, dependency on men, vulnerability) in nationalist narratives. These representations intentionally challenge the victimization of migrant women and transform border crossings into expressions of women’s agency.

“Always marred by their “otherness”, the female migrant characters in the above-mentioned films are subjected to demeaning experiences rooted in prejudice and inertia towards intercultural exchange which, strangely enough, also bring about difficulties in establishing intra and inter-gender relationships... Nevertheless, there are instances which might suggest the possibility for migrant women to be empowered in adopting active roles in the host society. Liubi in *Diorthosi (Correction, 2007)* turns her back on her past as a victim and, “determined to raise her child alone, leaves behind the corruption of the family with which she lived temporarily”, the film thus showing that what had seemed to be “the weakest link is in fact the strongest one” (WP4 National Case Study – Greece, 2010, p. 30). Anya “moves on and starts afresh” after “a human relationship which is created in unfavourable circumstances” helps both herself and her employer discover who they are. “In this manner, despite the differences in ethnic origin, class, age and language, what will surface is what these two women share in common: a common fate as it is encapsulated by the loss of their home country, their family, and, ultimately, their identity.” (WP4 National Case Study – Greece, 2010, p. 31)”

A different escape from the established gender roles in media, emerges also in FYROM film-making. “In the case of the FYROM corpus what needs to be reiterated is the fact that the image of the migrant is constructed along male lines, having masculine characters as protagonist, which entails, nonetheless, a reversal of the traditional mapping of migration in the gendered dichotomy of the feminine East and masculine West” (W.P.4, p. 41) The play of migrant masculinities along the lines of gender, class, ethnicity, race, nationality, age and sexuality reveals the intersectional dynamics of filmic representation and narrative producing unexpected escapes from the dominant binaries of East/West, female/male. This is most evident with the treatment of “intra-national, inter-group, cross-gender transgressors” in FYROM film, migrant characters who “do not fit into the stereotypical images of ethnocentric masculinity and femininity and attempt often fatal gestures of transgression of the established boundaries of East and West” (WP4, p. 41). By focusing on the ambivalent identities and ethnicized performativities of empowered migrant women or cross-gender transgressors, South east European film making proposes perspectives on migration that immediately challenge the gendering of the East-

West divide and emphasize the intersectional power relations that dominate border crossings in the area.

3.2. Intercultural Education: The school as ‘borderland’, contact zone, space of encounter⁴

“Cultural raciolgies structure Europe’s modernity, including the educational declaration of respect for migrant and ethnic students’ difference ... racism is reduced to a practical problem of attitudes or ignorance to be tackled through intercultural education” (WP5, p.8). Intercultural education has been one of the more invoked mainstays of EU social integration politics for the promotion of social cohesion. The basic premise on which policy frameworks for intercultural education are developed concerns a notion of culture as a fixed property or characteristic of ethnic groups and national social formations and, in the case of non-European, non-majority populations, as a mark of difference. Conflict and violence are attributed to cultural incommensurability, rather than socio-economic and legal inequality. Knowledge of the others’ culture, to be acquired through educationally operationalised measures, canonized and produced for institutional contexts (schools) in terms of folk knowledge of linguistic, religious, social ‘traditions’, is presumed to facilitate understanding and appreciation of difference and combat xenophobia and racism. However, “critical voices from within the field of intercultural education are increasingly questioning ... invocations to diversity and tolerance for becoming banners for a depoliticized version of intercultural education, particularly a conservatised version that does more to sustain inequities than to demolish them. Concerns about the depoliticization of intercultural education echo similar concerns that have already been expressed about the overall project of multiculturalism as a hegemonic response to migrant Europe.” (WP5, p.6-7).

The Thematic Study “Intercultural Education” (WP5) was carried out in Cyprus, FYROM and Greece and included analysis of intercultural education policies in the respective countries and fieldwork in particular schools chosen as case-studies for their mixed student population. Fieldwork, following the methodological approach of critical ethnography, involved participant observation in classrooms for a period of 4 to 5 months, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with teachers and students, as well as activities and workshops with students on issues of diversity and conflict. The Cyprus case-study was carried out as a multi-sited ethnography of two primary and three secondary schools, with different trajectories of incorporation of migrant and/or Turkish Cypriot students, in four different cities, Nicosia, Larnaka, Limassol, Paphos. In FYROM fieldwork was carried out in the only two-shift (FYROM and Albanian) multi-ethnic secondary school in Skopje. In Greece an inner-city Athenian primary school with a majority Albanian and a large number of temporary refugee student population was chosen. Gaining access to the schools in all three countries involved complex negotiations with educational authorities, and in the Greek case could only be procured through the researcher’s social networks, a point which from the outset

⁴ **Synthesis Report:** Zelia Gregoriou, 2010, *Thematic Report «Intercultural Education»* **Case studies:** Zelia Gregoriou, 2010, «Intercultural Education: Cyprus», Ana Blazheva, Viktoriza Borovska 2010, «Intercultural Education: FYROM», Alexandra Zavos, 2010, «Intercultural Education: Greece», available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=10>

suggests that schools, administered as sensitive and off-limits zones, are placed under restrictive institutional regulations closely monitored by the state and aligned with not only educational but also national priorities.

At policy level a top-down model of intercultural education, framed as orthodoxy of any educational initiative that wants to be regarded as progressive, modernizing and European, reiterating catchall phrases, such as “promoting respect and tolerance for others”, “acceptance of difference”, and “developing cultural awareness”, is advanced and adopted. Local, regional and historical context is overstepped, hindering the development of historically and socially targeted educational agendas (WP5, p.8). Indeed, one of the main findings of the GEMIC research is that in spite of, or perhaps in tandem with, the explicit promotion of intercultural educational agendas for multicultural integration, racism is a persistent, systemic feature of/in schools and national educational politics. The presence of racism, as GEMIC argues, does not represent an extraordinary condition, but is actually articulated to the notion of ‘culture’ found in integration and education policies, and is also linked to the implicit ideological premises of the national politics of education, which are expected to safeguard national identity against outside threats (WP5, p.64-65). Simply put, intercultural education agendas serve to conserve national and western supremacy through attempts to manage and contain ‘difference’, rather than address racism as a constitutive social relation of liberal European nation-states.

Logic of exception

The critical analysis of intercultural education policies in Cyprus and Greece, both countries with centralized educational systems that prohibit local or regional differentiation and long histories of nationalist battles over education, further confirms the above observation. Intercultural education policies invoke multicultural diversity as an exceptional, rather than ordinary, condition potentially disruptive to national cohesion, which the school is called upon to manage and contain (WP5, p.54, 58-59). In this sense, intercultural education, formulated under the logic of exception already positions foreign students (migrants, refugees, minorities) in the structural and essentialised position of ‘other’ to the ordinary, proper and natural culture of the native or majority population. For example, in FYROM, a country where multiculturalism is instituted at the level of the constitution, linguistic and religious difference remain embattled issues between the country’s FYROM majority and ethnic minority populations, both at the level of educational policy development and with regards to actual policy implementation in school contexts (WP5, p.62, 64). What appears to be at stake in all three cases is the integration of what are considered ‘non-ordinary’ (migrant or minority) students into ‘ordinary’ school life.

Containment of ‘destabilization’

As the research in all three countries shows, even in multicultural schools, let alone in more nationally homogeneous schools, the presence of national or ethnic ‘others’ is considered a problem that destabilizes the proper functioning of the school and needs to be contained and smoothed over. In this sense, normative ideological aspects of school are not questioned, as teachers, whether of multicultural or ‘ordinary’ schools, are interpellated in the service of national

ideals. In spite of efforts to contain the disruption, assumed to be caused by the presence of ethno-cultural others, there is always, in teachers' accounts, an unassimilable remainder, often represented as non-negotiable difference between native and foreign, or ethnic majority and ethnic minority students, which places multicultural schools at continuous risk and in constant need to invent new special measures for the management of this difference (WP5, p.109).

Gap between policy and practice

The GEMIC research draws further attention to the gap between policy formulations and policy implementation. There is, clearly, a discord between official national declarations for promoting intercultural dialogue and actual arrangements and practices developed in school (WP5, p.108). This cannot be explained only as faulty enforcement of or non-compliance to policy directives, although this is also the case, but needs to be analyzed in terms of the gaps or contradictions of educational policies themselves. Even though the need to develop tolerance for diversity is invoked in official recommendations towards schools, when actual problems and conflicts, or violence between different student populations, do occur, schools are left to deal with them on their own and ad hoc, usually falling back on stereotypical notions of cultural hierarchy. Thus, even though learning about 'other cultures' is considered the most effective educational tool for combating prejudice and discrimination, in fact, teachers' and students' most common response to problems or conflicts in school is to attribute them to the 'other' students' violent 'culture' or 'nature', based on the assumption of the superiority of national culture vs. the inferiority of other, non-Western cultures. In other words, as long as the debate on intercultural education remains focused on notions of 'culture', rather than address issues of racism and exclusion produced through the systematic depreciation of ethno-cultural difference and unequal access to socio-economic and cultural resources, educational policies will remain disconnected from the ongoing and emerging social antagonisms that characterize school reality. As the GEMIC report argues, "intercultural education policies, arrangements, measures, activities, actions, and performances are played amidst, with and not against conflictual and dissymmetric relations" (WP5, p.10).

The projection and/or normalization of violence

In the Cypriot and Greek case-studies, conflicts in schools with mixed student populations are represented as an extraordinary condition and are commonly attributed, by teachers and native or majority students alike, to the presence of violence-bearing 'others' that do not belong to the standard school population. Violence, then, assumed to manifest mostly in conflicts and fights between students, and not in teachers' practices (e.g. requiring students who cannot speak the language of instruction to sit through classes in silence), is considered an innate characteristic of some students linked either to their 'culture' or to particular circumstances in their country of origin, such as war, which have influenced them negatively (WP5, p.92-93). In the FYROM case-study, on the other hand, where existing ethno-cultural conflict is suppressed in official educational discourse, violence in school is normalized and silenced (WP5, p.93-94). What is of particular interest in all three cases is the denial of violence as part of the dynamic of school. In the first two cases violence is projected outside,

onto others, who, as 'natural' bearers of violence, invade and disturb the previously accomplished peaceful and harmonious coexistence of students, and teachers. In the third case violence is rendered invisible. Such denial obfuscates the school's complicity in instituting practices of discrimination and, sometimes, oppression, and in producing, itself, possibilities for the expression of violence (WP5, p.92).

Normative gender thinking and ethno-cultural boundaries

In teachers' and students' discourse, gender functions as a mark of cultural 'otherness' and backwardness through which racialized ethno-cultural boundaries are naturalized and redrawn in the school context. Stereotypes about masculinities, femininities and national identities intersect with and reinforce culturalist assumptions of the perceived difference of 'others' (WP5, p.72-76). It is regularly assumed that the construction and performance of gender identities by migrants and ethnic minorities is determined by and reflects national cultural codes and values, rather than representing an adjustment to specific circumstances (WP5, p.85-87). Cultural codes and values are hierarchically ordered in terms of their perceived closeness or distance to normative liberal western ideals and gender regimes (WP5, p.66-67). For example, representations of women's oppression in 'other cultures' construct violence as a cultural trait, assumed to inhere in cultural codes rather than produced through situated socio-economic inequalities and legal-institutional divisions. Discourses of unassimilable cultural difference justify discrimination and exclusion (WP5, p.66-71). At the same time, students' territorial disputes and disruptive gender performances in school reveal not only the institutional boundaries they encounter but also their desires for inclusion, participation, and non-discrimination (WP5, p.90-92).

Repoliticizing intercultural education

The encounter of educational practice and policy with what is considered non-ordinary brings up the political dilemma of repoliticizing intercultural education. To do so, the GEMIC research argues, it is necessary to engage with the issue of racism not in terms of developing cultural knowledge against prejudice but by attending to the school's ideological and actual complicity in reproducing regimes of inequality based on national identity / ethno-cultural difference (WP5, p.108-109). Thus, at the level of curriculum development, for example, rather than teaching national history, it would be important to teach the histories of imperialism, colonialism and migration (especially with regards to the countries of origin of foreign students), as well as introduce translation classes, instead of language classes, and teach the language of instruction (commonly the native language) as a foreign language. At the level of teaching practices it would be important to initiate peer tutoring among students as a regular form of instruction, and to encourage teachers to entertain an open relationship with the neighborhood, using local residents and parents personal accounts as sources of knowledge about migration and coexistence (WP5, p.110-111).

3.3. Religion: Challenging the exceptionality of Islam from a gender perspective⁵

During the past decades, the relationship between migration and religion has become a central issue in European public debates. However, these debates have been almost exclusively focused on Islam as an exceptional religion that threatens the fundamental values and traditions of Europe (namely those of tolerance, multiculturalism, or secularism) (Talal 2003, Göle 2006). Gender issues conditioned this perception of Islam as exceptional: veiled migrant Muslim women have become the most visible signs of the seemingly intolerant and patriarchal attitudes of Muslim migrant communities in Europe (Göle 1996, Mahmood 2004). Facing this challenge, the reconceptualisation of religion from a gender perspective has opened up diverse fields of enquiry into the theme of religion and migration that have emphasized the pivotal role of religious practices in the formation of migrant subjectivities and gender relations in migrant communities and in host societies. Research in Northern Europe has produced very important insights into the role of religion in negotiating the positioning of women in the private sphere and the participation of women into the public sphere (Cesari, 2004; Jouili, 2008; Fernando 2005; Fadil, 2008). In Southeast Europe, however, although the exceptionality of Islam argument is increasingly dominant in public debates, the relationship between gender, migration and religion was until recently an understudied topic. GeMIC research has addressed this gap in the literature from a gender perspective that openly challenges the exceptionality of Islam thesis. Research and analysis in this WP sought to address those challenges within the context of Southeast Europe. “The general aim of this research is to explore the re-positioning of religion in the public and private sphere among immigrant women and to challenge the idea of the exceptionality of Islam as a religion, the supposed only religion, that poses exceptional challenges to European secularism and the majority religion of the receiving country. The transnational dimension of this study intends to help re-examine and re-contextualize some of the debates that keep portraying the tensions between secular and religious spheres in terms of a so-called clash of “civilizations” between Islam and Europe” (p. 6).

The thematic study on “religion” (WP) was carried out in four locations in the period of 2008-2009: Rome, Athens, Sofia and Istanbul. The research included a combination of 65 semi-standardized in depth interviews (Bulgaria, Italy, Turkey, and Greece), 4 focus group discussions (Greece, Turkey) and participant observation (Italy, Bulgaria).

The most important findings of the GeMIC thematic study can be summarized as follows:

The revival of religious identities in migration

⁵ **Synthesis Report** Renata Pepicelli, 2010, *Thematic Report «Religion»* and **Case studies:** Evgenia Troeva and Mila Mancheva, 2010, «Religion: Bulgaria», Pavlos Hatzopouloups and Nelli Kambouri, 2010, «Religion: Greece», Renata Pepicelli, 2010, «Religion: Italy» Dilek Cindoglu and Saime Ozcurumez, 2010, «Religion: Turkey», available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=16>

As the Ge.M.IC. report argues, while Islam may be framed as the most common theme in public debates in Europe, the revival of religious identities is a much broader phenomenon that spreads across different sociopolitical -secular and religious- contexts and encompasses many different faiths (including the different Christian and Islamic faiths) and atheism. Religious revivalism, thus, cannot be limited to the much discussed conflict between Islam and secularism in the European public sphere, but includes the diverse practices of religiosity that transform the every day life of European migrants and citizens in the public and the private sphere. In order to operationalize this argument, Ge.M.IC. research has focused on the Christian and Muslim religious practices of migrants in an orthodox (Greece), a post-communist (Bulgaria), a catholic (Italy) and a Muslim society (Turkey).

The idea of a “global resurgence of religion” ultimately rests upon the belief that “we” all share a common understanding of what religion is. (Deridda, 1998). “This conviction that we all share a common meaning of religion, however, is simultaneously an admittance of our own insecurity over the multiple meanings that people may attach in different local and transnational contexts to religion. This is particularly significant when we consider the intimate relationship between religious and national identities, as well as the tensions that arise when immigrants attempt to express their own religious beliefs in the public space of receiving societies”. With this premise in mind the Ge.M.IC. study analyses the different meanings migrants may attach to religion and faith not only through their own beliefs and sayings but also through their actual every-day practices (praying, dressing, cooking, eating, gestures, attitudes towards other faiths). Wearing religious symbols and clothing, such as the cross or the veil, acting in respectful ways, praying and eating according to religious customs becomes private issues of central significance. The visibility of migrant women’s religious practices turns into a central concern with regards to gender. Ethno-religious norms, secular regulations and political processes in each of the societies studied determine the extent to which migrant women’s religiosity can be expressed in public. In many cases such forms of religiosity -in particular when they are hybrid- remain hidden and unrecognizable in private “feminine” spaces of migrant everyday lives.

As the WP4 synthesis report argues, in contemporary European societies the notion of religion as a private a-political form of socialization opposed to the secularism of the public sphere is questioned by the actual activities of religious migrants and organizations. Religion becomes a social dynamic that enables the participation of migrants in the public sphere and allows migrant women especially to develop strategies of making public not only their religious identities but also social and political demands. Migration and gender becomes inextricably linked to religion as it becomes the locus of a distinct but also powerful form of personal and collective affiliation against that overcomes the experiences of alienation that migrants often face. Through religious processes, a new sense of belonging emerges among migrant women that often leads to a questioning not only of their position in host societies but also of the gendered hierarchies and preconceptions that dominate both host societies and immigrant communities.

“Thus, the identities of female immigrants are perceived as coming into being in the process of transformation of social roles and positions. This complex and

multidimensional process is conditioned by the power hierarchies of the receiving society and the respective adaptation strategies on the part of immigrants. The religious identity of immigrant women is approached as one among many facets of a complex personal identity that become reinvented and reconfigured in the process of immigration. The question of the role of religion in the process of identity negotiation by female immigrants is especially relevant in the context of a receiving society with a religion different from that of the immigrants' and with levels and forms of secularization different from those in immigrants' receiving countries. Given this context of negotiation, this research approached religion as a potential tool to gain access to European public spheres and to redefine the idea of citizenship, rather than as a form of "ghetto-ization" and seclusion. According to this approach, turning to religion is not perceived as a turning to the past, but instead an expression of individual and collective re-invention, a strategy of relating to modernity that does not exclude the participation of women to the modern self" (WP6, p. 11).

Religion and women's emancipation

Although religious men are portrayed as the agents of the processes of religious revivalism – in particular in connection to Islam –, religious women increasingly position themselves at the forefront of religious movements raising questions about gender relations and feminism. "Nowadays an increasing number of people, including many women, are repositioning religion by bringing it into the private sphere and, in some cases, to the forefront of the public's attention. Contrary to widely held mass media stereotypes of women, they, in fact, are not simply passive victims, but indeed are leading actors in religious realignment in the European countries analyzed" (WP6, p. 17). While most of these practices may be confined in the private sphere, many involve emancipatory and empowering processes, through which migrant women gain access not only to the public spaces of Southeast Europe, but also to the global transnational spaces of migrant activism. The example of the Muslim women in the Centrocelle Mosque in Rome best illustrate how Islam may become a source of migrant women's solidarity and empowerment channeling their collective energies in the direction of migrant struggles.

Furthermore, the Ge.M.IC. report argues that religion in Southeast Europe has become a determining force in migrant women's lives that challenges established religious institutions and divisions within and between religious faiths. For migrant women, religion either constitutes a return to their roots, or to the discovery of an entirely new source of belonging. Religion is, therefore, "one of the ways of defining a sense of belonging, to reconstruct a social community, in addition to the formation of cultural identities". (WP6, p. 19) In this context, religious sites, such as the Mosque or the Church, become spaces within which migrant women re-establish communal bonds, (re)claim a position in public and re-negotiate their transnational identities.

Hybrid Religiosities

There are several examples in the Ge.M.IC. report, also, of migrant women, who engage into hybrid religious practices. These were observed in particular amongst first generation migrant women, such as Muslim migrant women

frequently praying in the orthodox and catholic churches and celebrating Christian celebrations in Athens and Sofia, or Christian migrant women adopting the Muslim customs of their employers in Istanbul.

“A clear example comes from the story of a Muslim Albanian woman married to a Christian Catholic Albanian, who has never been baptized despite pressures from her husband's family and her Greek employers, goes to church every week with her Greek employers, who ask her to accompany the child she is babysitting. Whenever she goes to church, she prays and lights candles, but she refuses to accept communion. When she goes to the Greek Orthodox church as a Muslim woman, she manages to renegotiate her own identity, vis-à-vis her Greek wealthy employers - “who come to respect her and accept her for what she is”- but also vis-à-vis the Albanian friends and family who might accuse her of “hypocrisy” and “deceit”. The story of this Albanian woman, which is similar to many others collected in the Greek study, complicates the assumption that Greek Orthodox churches are ethnically homogeneous spaces where the same language, attitude and religious faith are practiced. Thus, the research results underline the fact that the attempt of re-construing religion, of re-interpreting the practices and traditions of the Greek Orthodox community by immigrants has a radical potential. It serves as a critique towards existing religious norms. Immigrants do not “know” the established processes of approaching, performing, and understanding religion. Therefore, they participate in a broad process of re-invention of religion that effect immigrants and Greek religious communities alike” (WP6, p. 22)

These example show that for many migrant women religion becomes a means of actively reinventing their social space and creating anew their identities in ways that in many cases create new (often invisible) intercultural relations within the established institutions of host societies. These religious practices shed light to the agency of migrants and migrant women in particular and contribute to the questioning of the argument that religious beliefs and practices, in particular Islamic ones, are backwards and conservative par excellence. Bodily performativities carrying different cultural traditions add an extra symbolism to these practcies. They become expressions of migrant agency and markers of social inequalities and hierarchies. A veil can be an overt statement of opposition to social discrimination and exclusion of migrants, while a cross hidden under one's clothes may be a marker of social inequality and cultural discrimination.

A polyphony of voices

In conclusion, the Ge.M.IC. study on gender, religion and migration calls for greater sensitivity to national contexts, cultural specificities and gendered realities against the homogenizing discourse of Islamic exceptionality. This applies to both policies on and studies of religious phenomena that should adopt a perspective that emphasizes religion as a “landscape of possibility” rather than as a sign of cultural backwardness, gender inequality and fundamentalism.

“Despite globalization, we cannot talk about a unique European model reproduced everywhere in Europe and particularly in the four southeastern countries analyzed. Secularism, dominant majority religions of the receiving countries (such as Catholicism, Islam and Orthodox Christianity), and migration

history affect the ways in which women (and men) live their religiosity in the public and in the private sphere. The relationship between gender, religion and liberal secularism is particularly diverse and depends on the local context. The same notions of secularism, as well as religion, should also be contextualized". (WP6, p. 30)

Contextualization does not erase the multiple forms of belonging and identity that emerge in migrant religious practices neither does it erase the possibilities of emancipation for migrant women that may arise through religion in a European or a transnational context. Instead a "polyphony of voices" and a multiplicity of agencies arises that transforming European societies in a profound way.

3.4. Urban Spaces and Social Movements: The city as an 'open' transnational space⁶

The Thematic Study "Urban Spaces and Social Movements" (WP7) has focused on "the role of urban public spaces in the creation of intercultural and social inclusion/exclusion relations." (p. 6) in Spain, Greece and Italy, three countries that, since 1989, have received large migration flows from different parts of the world (Africa, Asia, Balkans, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East). Despite important historical, socio-economic and institutional differences between the three countries, certain shared characteristics among them, such as their strategic geopolitical position as European borderlands, the systematic absorption, and entrapment, of migrant labour in the informal economy and the related absence of organized migration/integration policies and the 'management' of undocumented migration through ad hoc legalization measures, led migration theorists to elaborate a common pattern described as the 'Mediterranean migration model' (Baldwin-Edwards and Arango 1999, King et al. 2000). Importantly, these countries offer good examples for observing two key components of Europe's evolving migration regime: the progressive securitization and militarization of Europe's external borders and the role of restrictive measures of detention, containment and conditional (temporary) inclusion of undocumented migrants in the production of a precarious and mobile European labour force. Nevertheless, in all three countries, migrant livelihoods and migrant communities have been successfully established here over the last two decades, in spite of adverse circumstances, and the city, a key destination for the majority of migrants, has become a vital and vibrant space of interaction and coexistence, highlighting the new possibilities engendered through migration, for migrants and natives alike.

⁶ **Synthesis Report** Claudia Pedone, Sandra Gil Araujo, Lucía Solavagione, Belén Agrela Romero, 2010, *Thematic Report «Urban Spaces and social movements»* and **Case studies**: Olga Lafazani, Rouli Lykogianni, Dina Vaiou, 2010, «Urban Spaces and social movements: Greece», Giorgio Grappi and Gigi Roggero, Collaborators: Raffaella Avantaggiato, Lodovica Nuzzo, Marianna Pino, Edileny Tome de Mata, 2010, «Urban Spaces and social movements: Italy», Claudia Pedone, Belun Agrela Romero, Sandra Gil Araujo, Lucva Solavagione, 2010, «Urban Spaces and social movement: Spain» available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=17>

For this reason, three urban, working class neighborhoods in the above countries, with large established migrant populations were chosen as case-studies: Poble Sec in Barcelona, Kypseli in Athens, and Bolognina in Italy. “Nowadays, the three neighborhoods have high percentages of migrants population (Poble Sec, 28,1%, Kypseli, 21% and Bolognina, 17%). In the last decades, the three have experienced a process of revitalization and gentrification, and they also have a very rich associative network.” (WP7: 6). Research involved participant observation in public spaces, recording the presence of migrants and their different uses of public space, interviews with key informants and focus groups with neighborhood residents and users. Key findings from the three case-studies indicate certain common trends:

Neighborhood Revitalization and Hybridization

There are clear signs of revitalization in all three neighborhoods through low cost gentrification and the development of new trade trends by migrants. The housing market, public transport and commerce are energized. Ethnic businesses (food, call centers, money transfer services) grow. There is an “explosion of the neighborhood-form” (WP7, p. 36) that articulates an intricate relationship between place of residence and citizenship, place of family, place of sociality and often the workplace. The branding of the neighborhood as a multi-cultural or ethnic hot-spot enhances commercial activity and draws visitors and entrepreneurs from all over the city. The neighborhood emerges as an “urban hub” (WP7, p. 37) rather than a ghetto or ethnic enclave. Migrants’ transnational connections and practices transform urban spaces into sites of translation and hybridization, where new social relations and cultural meanings emerge that are more than the sum of different parts (WP7, p.22). The three neighborhood studies indicate that, in spite of institutional marks of separation (having papers or not) through which migrants are always pushed back to their separateness (WP7, p.35), integration does indeed take place from below through small daily interactions and exchanges, rather than from above. In this respect, migrants’ practices trace a double map of the city, the lived city built up of informal daily interactions and networks and the official city, based on formal institutional structures and policies, which are often impediments to successful coexistence.

New Belongings

Migrants’ settlement is motivated by their “desire of the city” (WP7, p. 19), a wish to enter and become immersed in urban life. Often, people from the same village settle in the same neighborhood. In fact, family networks play a key role in decisions to migrate. Elements from the origin country are brought to the destination country and vice versa (WP7, p. 35). “Transnational practices and the consolidation of social transnational fields does not necessarily interfere with the feeling of belonging to the places of settlement” (WP7, p. 32). Migrants manifest a double consciousness, or double belonging, to both home and host country (WP7, p. 22). This doubled presence can be experienced both in terms of enrichment and of displacement: making a new home, and/or, always waiting for the day of return (WP7, p.35). In this sense, both sides of the double consciousness – the ‘here’ and ‘there’ – are put into question (WP7, p. 37). This leads to a redefinition of presence: one discovers ones ethnic identity in the destination country (e.g. discovering oneself as African in Italy), but national

identity is also multiplied (e.g. there is a migrant Italianness and an Italian Italianness) (WP7, p.35). Importantly, second generation migrants will not go back; 'home' is the country where they were born and/or grew up in (WP7, p.33).

Visibility, Coexistence, Conflict

Visibility of migrants in public spaces is a key factor facilitating coexistence. "We became aware of them mostly in the streets" (WP7, p.18). Visibility and co-presence turns the unfamiliar into familiar, and leads to new trans-national languages and forms of interaction, as well as conflicts (WP7, p.22). However, as the report argues, conflicts around public space exceed and pre-exist the arrival of migrants, even though they were subsequently attributed to them (WP7, p. 20). "It is dangerously likely for coexistence problems to be reduced to the relations between the autochthonous and the immigrant population or between different collectives of immigrants, thus naturalizing their equivalence, as if they were synonyms" (WP7, p.20). Often, migrants' precarious living and housing situations lead them to a more intensive use of public spaces, what some have called 'compensatory agglomeration', which the native population may consider inappropriate or offensive, and may in fact attract retribution. Here, the question of who is considered a legal immigrant (WP7, p.21) is important for understanding the dynamics of local conflicts, since it is usual for so-called illegal immigrants to be considered as trespassers of public space, whereas so-called legal immigrants are considered well-adjusted and conforming to the social order. In this sense, formal top-down social cohesion policies, based on legal constructions of categories of migrants with different entitlements, but otherwise similar, can interfere with the successful management of conflicts locally.

'The right to the city'

"Local spaces seem to be the places where belonging and citizenship are performed" (WP7, p. 37). Citizenship as the 'right to the city' references local (not national) belonging and participation. This represents de facto citizenship: belonging to the neighborhood and forming attachments, regardless of their legal status as 'aliens', migrants create space through their presence and practices (WP7, p.34). Migrants, especially those without documents, are people whose unauthorized presence generates rights, but for whom, also, getting residence papers equals the consolidation of their sense of belonging (WP7, p.35). "The repetitive practices do not challenge in any way the status of migrants towards the law ... but their embodied presence makes claims to participation in urban life and tends to destabilize commonly held ideas about strangers, outsiders, or 'righteous' owners of everyday public spaces ... shared practices gradually modify earlier attitudes" (WP7, p.34). Practices of de facto citizenship create multiple scales and multiple public spheres that exceed the limits and jurisdictions of the nation-state (WP7, p.32). The need to access citizenship rights is dissociated from 'national feeling' (WP7, p.33).

Gender and the dynamics of visibility

The study of the three neighborhoods and their public spaces from a gendered perspective throws light on the informal regulations of space, revealing conditions of unequal access and exclusion (WP7, p.23). It is observed that

women migrants use public spaces more intensively, both for work and leisure, forming informal local social support networks through everyday routines (WP7, p. 24). “The home, the community, the neighborhood and the school become spaces where women are key actors” (WP7, p.11). Nevertheless, women migrants’ access to public spaces is not uniform, but rather conditioned by socio-cultural parameters. Age, ethnicity, and religious affiliation, as well as legal status, circumscribe different practices of territorial appropriation. In some cases, for example in Barcelona, women migrants from Latin America are more visible than Muslim women from Arab countries (WP7, p.24). In Athens, the home and the open spaces of the neighborhood play a more important role in women migrants’ lives, than they do for men migrants, who are more visible in the workplace, or cafes (p. 34). In Bolognina, the use of public space by women migrants is linked to notions of independence and freedom: they value the freedom of being on their own, but also criticize the informal social restrictions imposed on Muslim migrant women who want to wear the veil in public (WP7, p.25).

Clearly, migrants’ visibility is a key factor for mobilizing relations of coexistence between themselves and the native population. However, as we have observed, the dynamics of their visibility are complex. Visibility of certain migrants, such as women migrants domestic workers, is considered less threatening as they can ‘fit in’ to the neighborhood more easily, whereas visibility of Muslim and male migrants is perceived as disruptive and threatening. In this sense, Muslim migrants are rendered ‘hypervisible’, whereas assimilable migrants become almost ‘invisible’.

Precarity and agency

Precarity in the life of migrants involves two main aspects: labour precarity and restriction of movement. Regarding labour precarity, post-fordist migration is determined by the destabilization of labour in late capitalism, which divides the labour market into a minority labour aristocracy with secured rights, and a majority of fragile subjects, largely migrants, “who cultivate the culture of the random” (WP7, p. 26). In other words, economic and legal reasons push migrants to accept any kind of job, living a life dedicated to work with no security. Especially migrant women’s precarity is linked to family migration policies (which often prevent women’s independent legal status) and the female labour market, which is largely based on the informal and unregulated domestic sphere (WP7, p.24). For migrants, security and insecurity is also linked to the freedom to move in and use public spaces. In some cases, as the recent rise in violent racist attacks indicate, the place of emigration may become more unsafe than the country of origin (WP7, p.26). In addition, city-planned gentrification (Bolognina) and the economic crisis (Athens) lead to the exodus of migrants from previously settled neighborhoods (WP7, p.19).

As the Italian case-study observes, migrants’ precarious status often leads to political absence. “Why struggle in a country where you do not know if you will be able to remain and have a future?” (WP7, p. 35); or where you are living with the dream of return (WP7, p.36). However, for others, it is precisely political subjectivity/engagement that turns their double absence (both from ‘home’ and their new dwelling) into a presence, a new form of participation (WP7, p.36).

Through political mobilization, precariousness transforms itself from a problem that prevents migrants from organizing their lives, into a new position for claiming rights, the right to claim rights not as a proper national subject and worker, but as a precarious subject (WP7, p.36).

Urban differences affect social inclusion

Differences between the three case-studies highlight how migrant trajectories are influenced by local conditions and what kinds of compensatory mechanisms and strategies emerge: e.g. of the three neighborhoods, Kypseli in Athens has the least developed municipal infrastructure and administration, as well as very low municipal funding, which means that it is almost impossible for migrants to secure municipal resources for developing commercial, business or socio-cultural initiatives. Instead, there is a wealth of informal social networks, whose importance is crucial in compensating for the lack of migrant support and integration policies (WP7, p.29-30). In Barcelona, on the other hand, migrants can take advantage of the developed municipal infrastructure and municipal funding programs for building entrepreneurship and social support and outreach projects. Here, local opportunities help migrants become more active in city commerce and government. In Bolognina, a proper gentrification process organized top-down by the City Council and private enterprise, gradually forces migrants to leave the neighborhood which they have helped revitalize. These differences reveal the importance of local government and the neighborhood for processes of inclusion. Local institutions and policies can foster migrants' social integration and advancement, whereas formal interventions can lead to migrants' further precaritization. On the other hand, the absence of institutional measures enhances the importance of daily contact and shared practices in combating exclusion, even though it does not challenge formal restrictions imposed on migrants.

3.5. Intercultural Violence: beyond the trafficking discourse ⁷

The study of gender, migration and violence has been focused mostly on trafficking as it is considered to be the meeting point of these three social dynamics. A polemic has developed within feminist and gender studies over the political meaning and utilization of trafficking and anti-trafficking narratives and policies for the purposes of gender equality. On the one hand there are those scholars who argue that trafficking is a form of patriarchal violence –at once structural and physical- that forces migrant women into relations of domination and exploitation mostly in prostitution, but also in care and domestic work and in other sectors stereotypically branded as “feminine” (Barry 1995). According to this perspective, trafficking policies should aim at the protection of the victims and the fight against traffickers and clients. On the other hand, there are those who argue that trafficking policies are mostly aimed against migrant flows as part

⁷ **Synthesis Report** Katerina Kolozova and Dusica Dimitrovska, 2010, *Thematic Report «Intercultural Violence»* and **Case studies:** Zelia Gregoriou, 2010, «Intercultural Violence: Cyprus», 2010, Katerina Kolozova, Viktorija Borovska, Slavco Dimitrov, 2010, «Intercultural Violence: FYROM», Nelli Kambouri, 2010, «Intercultural Violence: Greece», Gabriela Iuliana Colipcă, Steluța Stan, 2010, «Intercultural Violence: Romania» available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=17>

of the overall objective of safeguarding European borders from immigrant influxes (Augustin 2007, Adrijasevic 2003). They criticize the victimization of women by anti-trafficking discourse and argue that they are instrumental to border control and policing. Furthermore immigrant women employed in the sex and domestic sectors in Northern Europe have criticized anti-trafficking policies through their sex and domestic work organization arguing that these policies do not protect them but use them as paradigmatic victims in order to advance anti-migration objectives (Doezema 2000 and 2001 and Kempadoo and Doezema 1998). The GeMIC research has taken into account the challenges that these debates pose for the study of gender, migration and violence, but attempted to moved beyond the trafficking polemic by exploring how migrant women in general and not only in the sex work sector become normalized as vulnerable to violence.

The thematic study on “intercultural violence” (WP 8) was carried out in Cyprus, FYROM, Greece and Romania. The research included 28 oral history and semi-structured interviews with migrant women, 14 interviews and 1 focus group with professionals. The main findings of the GeMIC research on violence include the following:

Trafficking and gendered violence affecting migrants

Ge.M.IC. research reached the conclusion that trafficking are not the sole nor the principal areas where migration, gender and violence intersect. In fact, there are many forms of sexualized and ethnicized violence that impact on migrant women in Europe – trafficking being only one of its manifestations. Although the migrant victims of trafficking may be less numerous than those hit by other forms of violence, however it has become the focal point of public debate and policy making. In particular the relation between trafficking and sex work has dominated so much public debates that other spaces where gender violence against migrants is dominant, such as domestic, care and cleaning work, have been silenced. In fact most of the narratives of migrant victims of violence collected in Greece, Cyprus and Romania for this work package were from women working in those informal sectors of female migrant employment and in particular in the domestic sector.

However, even though trafficking does not constitute the sole or in fact the principle area where gender, migration and violence meet, anti-trafficking laws and policies have become the main areas where the issues of migration and gendered violence are dealt with. Assessing the findings of the life stories of migrant women victims of violence vis-à-vis the existing anti-trafficking laws and policies, the Ge.M.IC. report has concluded that it is impossible to protect the victims and prevent many forms of vulnerability to gender violence that may arise in the course of migration within the existing anti-trafficking framework.

Anti-trafficking law constructs migrant women as naturally victimized because of their cultural origins. As the narratives collected during the Ge.M.IC. fieldwork illustrate, however, structural factors and patriarchal social structures and institutions in both host and sending societies constitute far more important factors determining vulnerability to violence. According to the Ge.M.IC. study, many migrant women who fall victims of violence are single women and mothers

who have taken the decision to migrate alone in order to improve their working and living conditions (see Greek and Cypriot report). Their experiences take place in different forms and in different contexts – but cannot be limited to the forced crossings of borders. By framing the problem of gender violence as the forced crossing of borders, trafficking policies fail to acknowledge the diverse experiences of violence that migrant women may experience and to recognize these women as agents. This de facto treatment of migrant women as victims undermines the efforts to protect and assist them in their attempts to overcome their vulnerability to violence and give them the tools to become autonomous and empowered. Instead trafficking policies reinforce the securitization of migration, the control of borders and foster different forms of illegality.

Gender, illegality and precarity

The findings of the Ge.M.IC. case studies in particular in Greece, Cyprus and Romania manifest how vulnerability to gender violence becomes inextricably connected to migrant illegality and precarity. More specifically, the illegality of migrant movements that entail a constant risk of deportability constitutes a structural condition that constructs migrants in general as vulnerable to gender violence. This vulnerability is lived in the form of temporary residence permits and partial recognition of political and social rights that force migrants into precarious working and living conditions. In this respect, Ge.M.IC. research has demonstrated that the problem lies mainly with the development of the informal feminized sectors of care, domestic, cleaning and sex work rather than with the enforced crossings of borders by migrant women .

Finally, the Ge.M.IC. fieldwork has shown that instead of protecting and empowering migrant women, anti-trafficking policies in Southeast Europe reinforce migrant women’s victimization without offering the means for effective empowerment. Formal initiatives to deal with gender violence and migration usually push towards more anti-trafficking policies, leaving questions of precarity and illegality outside. Migrant women’s informal networks, such as in the case of African domestic workers in Greece and Philipinnos in Cyprus, on the contrary, offer alternative grassroots escapes for migrant women victims of violence.

3.6. Mixed and transnational families: The family as national stronghold and/or transnational network⁸

The Thematic Study “Mixed and transnational families” (WP9) was carried out in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. The research included semi-structured interviews and focus groups with ethnically mixed families (including local husbands married to foreign wives, and vice versa) in all three countries, where both spouses were

⁸ **Synthesis Report** Georgeta Nazarska and Marko Hajdinjak, 2010, *Thematic Report «Mixed and Transnational Families»* and **Case studies:** Georgeta Nazarska and Marko Hajdinjak, 2010, «Mixed and Transnational Families: Bulgaria», «Mixed and Transnational Families: Greece», Dilek Cindoglu and Saime Ozcurumez, Maria Stratigaki, 2010, «Mixed and Transnational Families: Turkey» available at <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=17>

interviewed separately; and interviews and focus groups with a migrant spouse of transnational families, either living abroad or at home. A total of 55 interviews and 7 focus groups were conducted. Respondents came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, mostly the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe but also Africa and the Middle East, and from different religious affiliations, such as Christian, Muslim and atheist.

Important differences emerge with respect to the power relations and gender dynamics in mixed and transnational families respectively, and the social pressures exerted on either. While spouses in transnational families exhibit a higher degree of autonomy and self-direction, in spite of the challenges posed by migration, spouses in mixed families appear to be significantly imposed upon by local family negative reactions, and expectations to conform to normative cultural standards. Gender plays a significant role in the structuring of power relations in mixed families and in the degree of choice allowed, especially as concerns children's naming practices, language and religious affiliation.

a. Transnational families

The study of transnational families became a focus for migration scholars in the 1990s, since it became obvious that family circumstances - often lack of financial resources or difficult family relations - played an important role in decisions to migrate, as well as in organizing migration projects. Post-1989 migration to Europe is characterized by larger numbers of women from third countries undertaking migration projects on their own, often leaving families (spouses and/or children) behind, thus organizing their lives in and across multiple locations. Using the concept of trans-nationalism migration scholars studied migration "as a multi-sited social space, which is simultaneously experienced by communities across borders" and analysed migrants' experiences "through the prism of multiple attachments and their simultaneous positioning in several social (and territorial) locations" (WP9, p.11). The family is a basic transnational unit. Members of transnational families maintain transborder kinship relations to sustain livelihoods that span two or more states. Remittances play an important role for the survival and progress of the family 'back home', but family networks abroad are equally valuable for planning migration projects. "The concept of transnationalism has influenced not only the new reading of migration and migrant communities, but has also changed a perspective on the traditional understanding of families - from families based on co-residency at the same place to ones that are spatially dispersed and fragmented" (WP7, p.12).

The Ge.M.IC. research appears to confirm studies of transnational families, especially with regards to women migrant's agency and their central role as family providers and decision makers, even at a distance. This new condition of parenting-at-a-distance constitutes in itself a significant change in normative, and ideal, conceptualizations of the family as a closed and co-habiting unit. The implications of transnational family livelihoods for the structuring and performance of affective, cultural and economic ties need further, and in fact transgenerational, study. However, it is relevant to consider, given the strong symbolic importance of the family in legitimizing and reproducing the assumed naturalness of the nation-state form (as an extended family to which all native

subjects belong), how transnational lives and commitments disrupt and challenge, at a personal level, ethnocentric or nationalist ideologies of belonging.

Living with the dream of return

Of course, the experience of family separation and distance is not an uncomplicated, or carefree, one. In fact, two kinds of tensions arise. On the one hand, both women and men migrant spouses describe their experience of separation as a painful and distressing one because they “live a very solitary and isolated life” (WP9, p. 29), dedicated to work and saving money to send to their family and children back ‘home’. Remittances are invested in sustaining the family, but also in providing for children’s education and building a family home to which they hope to retire. In fact, the goal of a future better life for themselves and their children is quoted as the single most important reason for enduring the deprivations and hardships of migrant life. In this sense, their choice to migrate and live apart from their family is represented as a sacrifice. Living with the dream of return, transnational migrants consider their residence in the host country temporary and do not feel the need to integrate more fully.

Challenging ideal motherhood

On the other hand, as research in sending countries indicates, migrant women’s physical absence from the family is publicly criticized as ‘bad mothering’. In this sense, while transnational livelihoods do indeed allow women to take up more ‘male’ roles as providers and decision makers, and entertain more choices for themselves and their children, this is also met with ambivalence in their home societies, and they are often considered social transgressors, much more so in fact than their male counterparts. From a macrosocial perspective the exodus of migrant women is represented as ‘care drain’, “the global transfer of care work from poor to rich countries, and the consequent transfer of emotional resources, which has exceptionally negative effects on the children left behind” (WP9, p.12). From a subjective perspective migrant women mention feelings of guilt towards family members, especially the children, left behind. At the same time, they seek to redefine their choice to migrate as ‘good mothering’, since they provide important economic support and opportunities for their children. Moreover, grandparents left behind also take on an active role in the children’s upbringing, grandmothers acting as ‘substitute mothers’. In this sense, even though prompted by economic hardship and lack of material resources, and involving significant social and psychological cost, transnational migration can also be seen to mobilize and reactivate emotional and relational resources for transnational migrant families.

Gender-emancipation

The above findings of the Ge.M.IC. research project highlight the complexities and tensions involved in migrants’ subjective experience of transnational livelihoods. Transnational family life is at once enabling, sustained through “durable practices of maintenance and reproduction of family ties, which are kept alive despite the great distances and prolonged separations” (WP9, p.12), and distressing, conditioned by circumstances of isolation and duress as well as internalized and external social control. In fact, ‘transnational mothers’ come under more stress than trans-national fathers (WP9, p. 12). Nevertheless, the

choice to indeed take on these challenges also indicates that the present and expected gains weigh more in migrants' decisions than the hardships endured. This last point, seemingly trivial, is significant in so far as it allows us to reframe migrants not as victims but as active agents. Indeed, Ge.M.IC. research on transnational families confirms the argument that migration is in fact a catalyst for gender-emancipating processes, and in particular, a force of empowerment for women spouses and mothers, both for those who leave and for those who remain behind.

b. Mixed families

As far as mixed families are concerned, a less studied topic in migration research, Ge.M.IC. highlights the continuous cultural pressures to which they, especially the foreign partner, are subjected, as well as the racism they encounter on a daily basis. Research on cross-ethnic or cross-cultural families, mainly in the context of societies with established ethnic minorities and diasporas, has drawn attention to the ambiguous position of mixed families either as "indicators of high integration, or engines of social change" (WP9, p.11), in other words mixed families face considerable resistance within and outside the immediate family that force foreign spouses to assimilate to dominant cultural expectations, but, at the same time, mixed families also forge new social ties that entail religious, ethnic and racial mixing, previously unacceptable. "Group identification, group sanctions, social and cultural distances between various groups, openness of a given society to cultural heterogeneity all play an important role in encouraging or discouraging intermarriages" (WP9, p.11). As research in family sociology has shown, ethnic/racial endogamy and social/educational homogamy tend to be the norm. "Segregation, geographical isolation, separation based on differences in education and income, ethnic/national/religious animosities on group and individual level, and language and cultural differences are named as the most important factors contributing to high homogamy rates in a particular society" (WP9, p.10). In particular, the racial line appears to be the hardest to cross given that it represents unassimilable difference, whereas religious and linguistic heterogeneity can be accommodated, usually through the foreign spouse's adaptation to the local family culture. Gender and education play an important role in the negotiation of power relations within the family. Foreign women are in a weaker position to negotiate their religious or ethnic/linguistic difference, and usually adapt to dominant religious and linguistic practices, especially as regards children's upbringing. On the other hand, native women gain a stronger position in the family vis-à-vis their foreign husbands because of their ethnic/cultural supremacy and their financial and professional security, thereby often achieving a redistribution of traditional gender roles. At the same time, as some studies suggest, intermarriage does not necessarily lead to loss of ethnic or cultural identity, but, on the contrary, such unions facilitate mutual acculturation through accommodation strategies deployed by both spouses, leading to a process of acculturation rather than assimilation. Research in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey broadly confirms the assimilationist tendency described above. In spite of some personal gains reported by spouses, such as expansion of worldview, overcoming of stereotypes and development of tolerance and respect, as well as enriching of children's cultural and linguistic resources, couples tend to represent their experience of mixed marriage as a continuous challenge fraught with tensions and disappointments due to lack of wider family support and acceptance, as well

as communication problems between spouses. Moreover, as most of the interviews suggest, mixed couples and their children experience higher incidences of public racism in school and in the neighborhood, but also in the family itself, leading to the adoption of 'invisibility' strategies, such as changing children's names, or erasing external signs of linguistic and religious difference.

Racism

Racism is a common experience and complaint of foreign spouses. It involves not only public expressions of racism directed against family members in the neighborhood or in school, but also more intimate expressions of discrimination or rejection that come from the family itself, which resists accepting the foreign spouse as equal and worthy member. Indeed, most cases of familial racism are considered to involve racial, class, and educational status and prejudice. Thus, it is reported, that black African spouses are very much shunned in Bulgaria, or, that families with higher socio-economic status appear to be more tolerant of foreign family members (WP9, p.15). Gender, age and social identity also play a role in family members' reactions. Immigrant families, especially mothers, are more favourable to mixed marriages, whereas native families, especially fathers, generally disapprove, are even hostile. Mothers are the first to break the deadlock and resume relations, thereby confirming their traditional role as 'peacemakers' (WP9, p. 15). Given the above, as argued in the report, mixed families can successfully integrate only if supported by a favourable micro-social milieu. Local friends, in fact, play a crucial role in creating a supportive social environment (WP9, p.16).

Gender-hierarchies and practices of accommodation

Mixed marriages present occasions for the disruption and reversal of traditional gender hierarchies. While native, male partners do indeed retain their traditional position of dominance in the family, in the cases where native women marry foreign men, the tables are turned, and it is the women who have more power in the family. Linked to this is the fact that migrant men spouses, in contrast to migrant women spouses, tend to find work that is below their level of qualification and experience more discrimination in the labour market. Often therefore, they seek the associations of their compatriots to socialize. For migrant women, however, life is more centered on the family, and often restricted to the home, where they inadvertently become invisible, in order to avoid not only institutional and public discrimination but also family reactions. Therefore, it could be argued, that migrant women shoulder most of the burden in mixed marriages.

Mixed marriages appear to present a threat to traditional cultural order and norms. Because of common negative reactions, most mixed families adopt strategies for minimizing what might be considered undue social disruption. For example, most mixed marriages in Bulgaria and Turkey are civil marriages (partners profess different religions, family opposition or low religiosity as reasons), except for Greece where one half are church marriages because of the centrality of the Orthodox religion and the importance of the Church for Greek national identity (p. 17). Choosing a church marriage in Greece can also be seen as a strategy for securing greater family acceptance and higher social status. In

this sense, church marriages formally reproduce culturally sanctioned religious institutions, but at the same time empty them of their spiritual meaning.

Marriage and/or citizenship

In the context of migration, it is useful to consider the practice of intermarriage as an integration strategy, through which foreign men and women may secure legal status in host countries. Regardless of the possible advantages for securing residence rights through marriage, Ge.M.I.C. research suggests that actively pursuing citizenship rights is not a common priority of foreign spouses. In all three countries, obtaining citizenship through marriage is a lengthy and cumbersome process with several legal obstacles and strict monitoring for fraud (WP9, p. 17). In some cases, such as Africans in Bulgaria, there are in fact special restrictions. In general, applying or obtaining legal citizenship is mostly sought by those immigrants who want to get permanent employment and have been long-term residents. Practically, this applies mostly to foreign men. Foreign women who remain mostly in the household, e.g. in Turkey and Greece, are more prone to assimilation and do not undertake the time-consuming process of obtaining citizenship. Also, male immigrants in Greece and female immigrants in Turkey do not want to get citizenship because of strong national loyalty (WP9, p.16-17). Based on the above, it is possible to argue that marriage does indeed represent an informal and personal integration strategy, utilizing traditional family institutions, in contrast to the pursuit of a more public and collective political mobilization for migrants' rights of inclusion in countries of residence. However, this practice may come at a high price. At the same time, because of the exceptional challenges to personal and familial relations that mixed marriages seem to present, it becomes clear that it is indeed at the intimate and affective level that resistance to socio-cultural change and socio-cultural mixing is organized, and where it needs to be overcome, in the first place.

4. Cross-cutting concepts

Using migration as a paradigmatic lens, we move from static, ethnocentric representations of migration as differentiated between host, sending and transit countries, to a dynamic, processual and scalar understanding, and we shift the debate from managing the 'problem' of migration to addressing socio-cultural change in relation to: Transnationalism; Precarity; Multiculturalism; Citizenship and Gender.

4.1. Transnationalism

Transnationalism as a theoretical and methodological approach that seeks to understand contemporary processes of mobility, a constitutive condition of life in the 21st century, with multiple effects that can by- or surpass, and certainly challenge, the sovereignty and competence of the nation-state, has already accumulated a certain history in the social sciences starting from the pioneering work of migration scholars in the 1990s (Basch, Glick-Schiller, Szanton Blanc 1992, 1994; Vertovec and Cohen 1999). Fundamental to this approach is the recognition that "economic, political, and socio-cultural processes and practices are linked to and configured by the logics of more than one nation-state, and are characterized by the constant crossing of borders" (Suarez 2007:1).

The study of migration offers a privileged vantage point from which to consider and understand transnational processes, as well as the limitations of the nation-state as a political and administrative unit and a methodological perspective. "Analysis of transnational migration, diasporas and more fluid, transnational citizenships are 'central to critiques of the bounded and static categories of nation, ethnicity, community and state present in much social science' and (political) political theory, as John Urry recently pointed out." (Friese and Mezzadra 2010: 304).

Together with the emphasis of the agentic aspects of migration involving migrants' desires, expectations and practices of survival that shape their individual trajectories and experiences of movement and relocation, transnationalism also considers the enforcement of borders and institutional regimes of containment and control, at state or supra-state level, that circumscribe mobility for some people, often at the high cost of death or incarceration in the 'no man's land' of detention centers and drawn out asylum seeking procedures. In this sense, transnationalism entails looking at migration from an actor's as well as from an institutional perspective. Clearly, from an institutional perspective the importance of nation-states in regulating mobility, labour and citizenship has not diminished, even as state jurisdiction over territory and population is to some extent circumscribed by the overarching role of supra-national agencies such as those established by the EU (e.g. Frontex). Nor has the symbolic and affective purchase of national identity and Western cultural supremacy decreased, as the resurgence of various nationalisms and the entrenchment of new cultural and religious racisms across Europe illustrates. At the same time, from an actor's perspective, informal practices of mobility and

settlement, involving the production of extensive transnational social networks and, often, complex navigations of (il)legality, and mobilizations for the demand of rights on the basis of presence rather than legal status, by those who are not formally recognized as citizens, highlight the effective limits of bounded and exclusionary conceptions of entitlement. The apparent inadequacy of current migration policies, commonly formulated around the protection of the nation-state from the 'threat' of migration, not only in addressing new forms of injustice, inequality and exclusion that raise potentially explosive social conflicts, but also in instituting new citizenship rights that encompass the demands occasioned by increased mobility and multiple belongings, calls for a fundamental rethinking of political membership in terms of more open, plural and flexible forms of inclusion and participation. As Agamben contends, "the novelty of our times consists in the fact that an increasing number of people are not representable within the confinements of the nation-state and despite their marginality become a central figure in contemporary political constellations." (Agamben 2000: 24, 25).

Migrants are constituted as actors through mobility, dis- and relocation. Obviously, transnational livelihoods entail both a sense of empowerment and an experience of dislocation, insecurity, even exclusion and persecution. Indeed, and despite the structural characteristics of labour and/or undocumented migration, the experience and circumstances of migration and geographic (and social) mobility are not common to all, nor are they uniform across different target countries. Indeed, as gendered studies of migration elaborate, important intersecting differences of gender, ethnicity, race, colour, religion, age, status and socio-economic resources impact the migration trajectories of different social actors, as do varying national policies and socio-economic conditions, making it methodologically and politically necessary to pluralize the concept of transnational livelihoods as transnationalisms (Salih 2003).

Inevitably, migration constitutes Europe, as well as individual nation-states, as an open, plural, hybrid, and dense transnational social space manifesting different tensions and trends within, between and across nation-states. It is therefore necessary to move from static ethnocentric representations of migration as a 'problem' afflicting receiving, sending or transit societies, to a situated and dynamic understanding of migration as socio-cultural change produced through ongoing social, economic, political, cultural, religious, linguistic, personal and collective interactions over multiple scales and borders. Remaining attached to the nation-state perspective is limiting and ineffective, both in terms of social research and in terms of policy making. The nation-state perspective is inadequate to encompass the dynamic of change instantiated through migration and will always find itself 'one step behind', trying to contain and control what is in constant flux, will always be in the defensive and therefore - even if momentarily dominant - eventually, always unavoidably, unsuccessful. In fact, and contrary to hegemonic notions about integration and social cohesion fixed to a bounded conception of the nation-state, it is migrants' subjectivities, subjectifications, as well as their transnational social practices, that should become important elements for successful migration policy that embraces social change.

The significance of *scale*: Studies of migration as a transnational - rather than a unidirectional and unidimensional - phenomenon bring awareness to the

simultaneous manifestation of multiple scales of belonging and connectivity that decenter the exclusivity of the nation-state as the primary syntactic unit of social life, at least from a migrants' perspective. Migrants, materially and affectively, organize their lives between country or place of origin and residence (sometimes in fact between several consecutive countries of residence, and between geographically dispersed family members), tending both to old and new affiliations, engaging in what could be called practices of 'co-presence' that collapse spatio-temporal distance, often through use of new communication technologies. In this sense, migration itself can be seen as a creator or modifier of geographic, social and temporal scale. Whether in the local context of the city neighborhood, or in the intimate context of the family, or even in the virtual context of the internet, the presence of migrants as residents, labourers, family members and users, and the extensive networks they form and rely on, change the socio-cultural dynamics of place and identity. For this reason, the city, the family and the internet, emerge as key fields (or scales) for studying transnational interactions and practices of mutual accommodation and/or conflict between different populations, languages, socio-cultural identities, socio-economic and legal inequalities.

In Ge.M.IC., the transnational dimensions of migration and intercultural interactions have been studied from the city and family perspective and are featured more prominently in the thematic studies 'Urban Spaces and Social Movements' (WP7) and 'Mixed and Transnational Families' (WP9). Findings from the two thematic studies elaborate how transnational relations shape the personal lives of migrants, as well as the local contexts in which they work and reside. Following, we will highlight key findings from both studies.

The thematic study "Urban Spaces and Social Movements" (WP7) looks at transnationalism from the *neighborhood* perspective. The neighborhood, and by extension the city, emerges as a space of politics, work and commercial enterprise, and is rendered more 'open', dynamic and conflictual, and thereby also empowering. As previously argued, migrants' settlement revitalizes ageing neighborhoods. The housing market grows, public spaces are used more intensively, and local trade is boosted through migrant entrepreneurship, producing what effectively amounts to a 'low-cost' gentrification. Migrants' transnational social and financial interactions render the neighborhood a node of the global economy, albeit an informal and not institutionalized one. In this sense, migrants become a resource for urban development, rather than a burden. Moreover, migrants' practices of use and sharing of public space, and their mobilizations for the 'right to belong', render the neighborhood as a site of ongoing negotiation of the politics of democratic participation and inclusion. Migrants' visibility and their every-day interactions with the native population become catalysts for building relationships of reciprocity. To this effect, the aspect of time becomes critical, since it is their settled presence over time that enables the development of familiarity and trust.

Migrants express a 'desire of the city', they associate the experience of migration with an immersion in urban life and value the opportunities this offers. Even though in many cases they may not possess legal status that secures formal entitlement of rights, they, nevertheless, feel they 'belong' to the neighborhood and actively pursue their inclusion in its spaces and activities. Migrant belonging

outlines a doubled presence that is characterized by many ambiguities and tensions, since migrants find themselves poised between 'waiting for the day of return' and 'making a new home' in the destination country. In this sense, it is a kind of presence that also indicates or implies an absence.

The thematic study "Mixed and transnational families" (WP9) on the other hand looks at transnationalism from the family perspective, allowing us to trace the effects of migration on changing family relations as well as migrants' *subjective experience* of transnationalism, which is complex and riddled with tensions. While migrant mobility does indeed offer new opportunities for social and economic advancement, and in this sense produces a sense of agency and, for women migrants especially, may also represent an act of independence and empowerment, it is also accompanied by feelings of loneliness, nostalgia for the homeland, oppression in the new family, and, often, rejection.

Migration becomes a catalyst for new ways of articulating family relationships that span across two or more countries, thereby redefining the family form from a social unit necessarily based on common residence to the family as a transnational network. Women migrants become key figures in supporting the family as 'breadwinners' and securing both the reproduction of the family and its social advancement, either through investing in children's education or in a better family house. Women who remain 'at home' also gain more power as key decision-makers, in the absence of their husbands. Such re-arrangements of family relations also require and enable the renegotiation of gender roles between spouses and between generations. Women become head of the family, grandparents acquire more active caretaking roles as surrogate parents for the children left behind. Importantly, women migrants also challenge and redefine, through their practices and discourse, normative constructions of motherhood as requiring continued physical presence. They performatively enact the possibility of sustaining relations of intimacy and care even at a distance, often over long periods of time.

At the same time, the study of mixed families shows that the family can also represent a social context of identity that remains resistant to difference and change, becoming a buttress of national culture and national identity, by demanding compliance to dominant cultural and gender norms, including religious and linguistic choices. In this sense, the role of the *institution* of the family as an ideological apparatus of the nation-state is confirmed. Importantly, it is precisely through the workings of intimacy, and the emotional pressures imposed on family members, that the biopolitical role of the family as a means of social control is performed and legitimized. By highlighting and interpreting commonalities and contradictions between different family forms and different kinds of intimacy, migration research can indeed shed light on how the family as a social relation is implicated in national histories and histories of nationalism but also plays a part in changing them.

Furthermore, gender, migration and religion was one of the thematic areas where transnational practices were observed by Ge.M.IC. researchers. In all of the case studies examined, local religious institutions functioned as nodes in transnational religious networks. This was particularly the case with Islamic institutions in Rome, where Muslim migrant women became mobilized not only at the local

level, but also at the transnational level connecting to other Islamic communities across the Italian borders. In addition, hybrid religious practices by individuals observed in Greece and Bulgaria manifested the strong transnational links and attachments between home and host societies in the Balkan area, such as the common practice of lighting of candles in miracle Albanian churches by Albanian migrant women residing in Greece through telephone calls to relatives at home. The mingling of local and transnational levels in religious practices has a strong impact on the ways in which migrant attachments and identities are formed beyond the confines of the nation state, but also demonstrate how interconnected receiving and sending locales are in the everyday life of migrants.

These transnational identities were also studied in the context of the National Identity and the Media work package, where it was noted that migrant characters in film often transcend the pre-established cartographies of nation and state providing alternative, cross border moving selves, which are symbolic of migrant autonomy and agency. "It seems that accepting imposed geographical and mental frontiers presupposes giving in to pre-established identity patterns, which deny the dynamism of self-building. One recommended alternative is assuming the status of being constantly on the move, as suggested by the character of Marko in the 2009 FYROM film *Cash and Marry*, which "demonstrates the transnational workings on identity formation and exemplifies the diasporic existential aesthetics, as the working which opens identity to cultural influences and mobilizes it as an on-going process of (self)making instead of holding it as a thing or invariable essence." (WP4 National Case Study – FYROM, 2010: 13). In effect, filmic narrative represents transnational movements and practices as being an escape from the pre-determined hierarchies of nation, race class and gender, while transnational identities challenge the pre-established borders and limits that normally prevent movement.

4.2. Precarity

One of the most important Ge.M.IC. findings is that the relation between gender and migration in Southeast Europe is embedded in social conditions of precarity. Precariousness became in the 1990s an "umbrella concept" that describes a variety of contradictory social situations ranging from part-time work that allows employees to choose when and where to work to uncertain, insecure, informal and temporary forms of employment stripped of labour rights and coupled with sharp reductions of wages, social benefits and services (Fantone 2007, p. 87). Although it has been criticized as a novelty term that occasionally assumes a totalizing pluralist space of exploitation blurring social and gender inequalities (Mitropoulos 2006), it has been proposed (especially under the term precarity) as theoretical and activist critique of neo-liberal post-fordist politics that place migrant movements and gender inequalities at the centre of social dynamics (Fantone 2007, Mattoni and Doerr 2007, *Precarias a la Deriva date?*, Coppola et al 2007). These contradictory situations are also present in Ge.M.IC. research: while migration in Southeast Europe may be linked to uncertainty and insecurity, it is also a condition of movement, opportunity and empowerment for migrants who cross borders. One has to think only of the various narratives of migrant women and men collected throughout the three year research of the Ge.M.IC.

project to get an idea of the different ways in which work and everyday life arrangements and trajectories become uncertain, insecure and temporary.

Research conducted in Ge.M.IC. to explore the theme of gender, migration and intercultural violence has examined the interconnectedness between vulnerability to violence and precarity. In particular migrant women facing the risk of deportability (De Genova) or unemployment without any protective mechanisms are forced to accept degrading conditions of work and are transformed into objects extremely vulnerable to different forms of violence in both private and public spaces. The every-day lives of migrant - mainly women but also men- working in informal or semi-formal feminized and undervalued sectors as sex workers, domestic workers, carers and cleaners are thus fashioned by “a micropolitics of fear” (Precarias a la derriwa, 2006 p. 11). While these micropolitics may “transverse all of society” feeding upon “a climate of instability and fear” (p. 11), their negative impact becomes much more intense in the context of these particular combinations of work and migration. The temporary, low paid and insecure work conditions experienced by migrants in these sectors are further exasperated by illegality and the threat of being deported that functions as a tool of “blackmailing” that forces migrant women and men to accept and depend upon relations of “forced precarity” (Fantone 2007, p.) It is worth noting that, as the Ge.M.IC. policy analysis notes, the persistent gender neutrality of official EU and national policies on migration and the complicit inability of both government and NGO institutions to deal with the question of gender violence outside the context of trafficking cultivates the booming of precarious migrant work and violence in the domestic, sex, care and cleaning sectors.

Furthermore, questions of gender normalization are intertwined with vulnerability to violence generated in conditions of precarity (see Butler 2009). Migrants are targeted by violent acts precisely because they escape the normalizing frame not because they are naturally weak and easy to exploit. As many of the narratives collected in the context of the Ge.M.IC. research on violence show, many migrant women who have fallen victims of violence are neither the stereotypical subjugated women of male patriarchy, nor the dependable and weak objects of exploitation of transnational networks. Rather they are transnational subjects who in most cases have migrated independently of male partners or spouses taking autonomous decisions against the forms of gender domination that reduce them to subject positions of vulnerability. In other words, many of these feminized migrations were realized in order to escape gender inequalities rather than as a result of them. In effect, it is the fact that certain gender roles are performed in ways that become unacceptable, impossible to comprehend and read within the context of existing gender hierarchies that renders these migrant lives subject to violence. The case of Konstantina Kuneva, a Bulgarian single mother, cleaner and labour activist who was attacked with vitriolic acid in Athens constitutes an example of how performing roles which are difficult or even impossible to comprehend within a normalizing framework (in this case that of the female and migrant labour union activist) trigger violence. Another example is that of the transgender FYROM migrants who perform roles not normally attached to male or female norms within specific ethnic groups becoming thus the objects of transcultural violence. It is thus that precarity becomes linked to gender performativity: “The performativity of gender has everything to do with

who counts as a life, who can be read or understood as a living being, and who lives, or tries to live, on the far side of established modes of intelligibility” (Butler, 2003, p. iv)

However, “precarity” in Ge.M.IC. is not only analyzed as a negative term but also as a site of opportunity and potential. In effect precarity also involves practices of movement, change and transformation that are in many cases translated into freedom from the existing national, ethnic and gendered borders. In the work package on national identity and the media, there were several films analyzed in which precarity was represented as a generalized condition of escape for women migrants from gender inequalities in both the host and the sending societies. In effect there are many migrant women characters in film who manage to re-claim autonomous space and to renegotiate the normalizing roles of the mother, the wife, or the lover. More generally, the precarity of migrant trajectories gives at least in the idealized setting of art house Balkan cinema the space for questioning conceptualizations of women and men in nationalist narratives. In effect, the creation of alternative migrant subjectivities in Balkan film parallels the construction of mostly ironic visual icons by precarious movements which question the orthodox gendered victimization of workers by challenging the orthodoxy of gender hierarchies in neo liberal capitalism (Mattoni and Doerr 2007).

As the work package on “urban spaces and social movements” reports, migrants’ lives are dedicated to work. In migrant’s own words, “we are here to work”. More often than not, their work is determined by conditions of exploitation and randomness. Precariousness is the standard rather than an exception. However, as the Italian case-study argues, migrants’ political mobilizations for their rights, especially those of illegal migrants, transform this condition of precariousness from a problem into a right. Their demands as precarious labourers who, because of their indeterminate legal status cannot be included in the national work-force, institute a de facto new subject position for claiming rights which is not conditioned on formal citizenship status.

4.3. Citizenship practices

Citizenship is one of the central concepts that cross-cuts Ge.M.IC. research findings in different thematic areas. Following Isin and Woods’ definition, we understand citizenship as “*both* a set of practices (cultural, symbolic and economic) and a bundle of rights and duties (civil, political, and social)” (p. 4). In this context, the legal and sociological aspects of citizenship are discussed as “mutually constitutive”, enabling different forms of membership and identity in different historical periods and social spaces. One of the main findings of GeMIC thematic research is that in contemporary Southeast Europe, while legal citizenship continues to be mostly territorially and nationally bounded, at the local level new forms of unbounded citizenship based on transnational cultural, symbolic and economic practices are emerging.

With regards to legal citizenship, Southeast Europe tends to gradually follow the more general trends in post-war Europe towards the “de-ethnicization” and broadening of post-national rights with the introduction of *jus solis*, dual citizenship and minority rights. (Soysal, 1996) These changes directly impact on

gender relations. (Dobrowolsky and Tastsoglou, 2006). At the same time, however, Southeast Europe – as one of the main entry points for illegal migrants to the common Schengen area constitutes the paradigmatic site for the securitization of migration and the implementation of the European border regime. Paradoxically the inclusion of migrants in the South European polity is not realized through post-national legal citizenship rights, but is implemented through informal mechanisms of illegality and the granting of temporary rights through ad hoc regularization procedures. In other words it is mostly the conditional and temporary inclusion of migrants rather than their complete exclusion that constitutes the normalizing principle of migration policies.

In effect, citizenship in Southeast Europe encompasses a vast spectrum of social practices and legal statuses that includes the granting of temporary and ad hoc rights to certain migrants, but also the tolerance of some completely “illegal” ones. Refugees, migrants with residence permits, asylum seekers, or migrants without papers all constitute subjects who may be selectively included into the national community and acquire specific rights only on a temporary basis. These categories are neither fixed nor permanent. In fact, migrant lives in Southeast Europe are characterized mainly by shifts and changes from illegal to legal, from asylum seeker to economic migrant, from the residence permit to the “lack of papers” and vice versa (see Policy analysis report). These shifts always loom over the granting of legal status or formal rights, making legality a temporary condition that depends entirely on unforeseen and perpetual changes in policy measures, administrative procedures, social and economic circumstances and personal itineraries. In that sense formal citizenship practices are intertwined with precarious work and living conditions.

As De Genova argues, illegality becomes a positive disciplinary mechanism that normalizes migrant lives as inferior and unworthy of a more stable, lasting or even permanent recognition of rights. The “risk of deportability” effectively conditions all citizenship rights as temporary and insecure perpetually situating migrants in a limbo of precarity.

“Every “illegalization” implies the possibility of its own rectification. Once we recognize that undocumented migrations are constituted in order not to physically exclude them but instead, to socially include them under imposed conditions of enforced and protracted vulnerability, it is not difficult to fathom how migrants’ endurance of many years of “illegality” can serve as a disciplinary apprenticeship in the subordination of their labour, after which it becomes no longer necessary to prolong the undocumented condition. Furthermore, every “legalization” has an inherently episodic and strictly partial character that never eliminates the field of “illegality” but rather, in concert with the amassing of immense quantities of data for scrutiny by the authorities, simply refines and reconstitutes that field for the ineligible who will remain undocumented along with all subsequent “illegal” arrivals”. (DeGenova, 2002, p. 429.)

The implementation of various policies on the regulation of the lives of migrants (which broadly correspond to policies and administrative procedures and regulations on refugees and asylum, legal and illegal immigration and citizenship)

produces precarity as a dominant condition in the every-day lives of migrants. Unresolved, temporary, conditional and uncertain legal status or its absence conditions the transition from the place of origin to the place of destination into a continuum of insecurity and illegality. According to the Ge.M.IC. research on migrant representations in South European cinema, this continuum has been documented in contemporary film making on migration. "The most obviously recurrent image is that of migrants striving to make a better living, even if that means to break the law, with the hope that, one day, they would gain legal status and become legal residents/citizens of the host country" (WP4, p. 22). The "mirage" of a developed, affluent and secure Europe dissolves once migrants face the different practices through which non-citizenship policies are implemented, including police brutality and violence and social isolation. In this context migration ceases to signify an escape from insecurity and the place of destination becomes equally, if not more, insecure than the place of origin (Isin and Wood, 1999, p. 51).

This condition of illegality and the permanent threat of deportability impacts directly on migrant bodies making them vulnerable to gender violence. As explained above, the identity of the victims is attached to the bodies of migrant women and men "without papers". Illegality is internalized as a source of insecurity that is used, in turn, by the administration, police and employers in order to force migrant women and men to become docile and accept degrading living and working conditions. In the research conducted in Ge.M.IC. on gender, migration and intercultural violence there are several narratives of migrant women being physically or psychologically "imprisoned" in degrading work environments and in relations of exploitation within formal and informal employment arrangements (see country reports Cyprus, Greece, Romania). Although most of these women have migrated autonomously becoming independent with regards to the male dominated structures in their places of origin, they are forced into positions of vulnerability mostly because of their non-existent and insecure legal status. Especially the narratives of Pilipino migrant domestic workers in Cyprus and return domestic workers in Romania manifest how women escaping economic deprivation at home become eventually entrapped into forms of labour exploitation nurtured by the permanent threat of deportability that endangers both those with temporary but formal citizenship rights and those without any formal citizenship rights. This finding leads to the conclusion that gender violence is mostly enabled in the field of illegality and precariousness of migrant lives, which become sexualized, rather than in the field of transnational male dominated trafficking networks. To put it in other words, it is mostly the partial, insecure, conditional and temporary character of European and state policies of formal citizenship that nurture the conditions for the exercise of gender violence.

More broadly formal citizenship policies enable a number of gender strategies that allow migrants to overcome the illegal status imposed on them. Mixed marriage may constitute such a strategy deployed by migrant men and women in order to overcome the conditions of precarity and uncertainty that their temporary, uncertain or illegal status may signify. Migrants make use of the fact that European migration law and policy prioritize the heterosexual family as the locus for the granting of post-national rights. This is manifest in the granting of special rights such as residence permit to the foreign wives/mothers

husbands/fathers in mixed marriages. It is also manifest in the family reunification “exception” that allows the “dependable members” of the family to join their relatives legally. Even policies regulating intercultural interaction look at marriage and the family as the main vehicle for integration. While these provisions obviously perform a function of normalization of heterosexual gender norms, marriage and the family become the sites where legal rights are being claimed through a negotiation of gender relations. As the Ge.M.IC. thematic study on mixed families argues, acquiring formal rights through marriage often involves the reinforcement of gendered and ethnicized inequalities and hierarchies.

Citizenship, however, also constitutes a set of cultural, symbolic, social and political practices. Despite their diversity, such practices can be grouped together as “acts of citizenship” to use Isin and Nielsen’s term, that create dialogical social relations and subject positions of self and other.

“To investigate acts of citizenship is to draw attention to acts that may not be considered as political and demonstrate that their enactment does indeed instantiate constituents (which may mean being part of a whole as well as being a member of a constituency). The enactment of citizenship is paradoxical because it is dialogical. The moment of the enactment of citizenship, which instantiates constituents also instantiates other subjects from whom the subject of claim is differentiated, So an enactment inevitably creates a scene where there are selves and others defined in a relation to each other”. (Isin and Nielsen, p. 18)

In Southeast Europe, acts of citizenship become mostly enacted within the context of ad hoc legalizations and precarity. In that sense, it is the absence of or the precarity of legal status that instantiates citizenship. Acts of citizenship that take place outside the field of legal rights but establish citizenship rights, obligations and entitlements that may be fluid and temporary but nonetheless constitute a field of social subjectivities become mostly manifest in public. An example is the political acts of the non status migrants who claim regularization (Nyers 1998)). Although these acts may be directly addressing the state claiming the establishment of formal rights, they constitute moments when political subjectivities become possible. Thus, we have the paradox, of publicly acting citizenship while being a non citizen. However, as gender studies have argued the private is also political and in many ways the acts of citizenship studied in Ge.M.IC. were moments when the private and the public became tangled into each other producing everyday acts that transformed both the public and the private.

Brah’s term “diaspora space” is useful in this context in particular because she emphasizes the agentic and active role of migrant women in constructing for themselves citizenship entitlements. Diaspora space is a space of contestation of the territorial and cultural demarcations of citizenship while it is also ‘inhabited’ not only by those who have migrated and their descendants but equally by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous” (p. 208) An example of such a Diaspora space is the Centrocelle Mosque in Rome, studied in the religion work package, which has become a meeting place for women of different origins and social classes, engaging in a renegotiation of public space and rights. Contrary to the normalized perception of religious practices as private and a-political, the

practices performed by Muslim women in this Diaspora space both within and outside the mosque directly amount to practices of public citizenship.

In effect migrant active citizenship practices transform spaces normalized as “private” and a-political into sites of (often silent) political struggle. One of these examples is the importance attached by many migrant women to pious dressing, such as veiling in Bulgaria and Italy or wearing the cross in Turkey. Being able to make piety visible in public contrary to the dominant religious or secular norms through dressing becomes the site of political struggle over public space which effectively produces rights and entitlements. Religion in the context of these micropolitics of dressing may be constituted (in particular in the case of Islam) as a source of feminist empowerment and solidarity across different generations and ethnicities of migrant women that goes far beyond the mere rights linked to formal religious rights and debates.

There are also several other examples of active citizenship explored in Ge.M.IC that show that migrant women’s and men’s active citizenship practices are mostly situated at the borderlines between private and public. Migrant practices expose the “private” character of exploitation and the conflicts and inequalities inherent in affective labour. An example that emerges from the Ge.M.IC. research findings is the creation of self-help networks by African women domestic workers in Athens and Nicosia. While most of them are still illegal, they manage to assist and protect each other against employers who exploit them and use violence against them in middle and upper class households. In particular in Nicosia, a network of Philipino domestic workers, most of whom are single mothers or support transnational families, have established structures managed almost entirely by women that replace the absence of formal financial support, day care and educational facilities (which are denied to them because of their illegal status). Taking care of the children through the establishment of these informal mechanisms of shared housing, care and motherhood, this migrant network creates active citizenship entitlements and rights that are not recognized in the legal citizenship context - constructing thus migrant citizens out of precarious workers and illegal migrants.

As the findings from the work package on urban spaces show, it is often illegal migrants who are most active in political mobilizations for securing rights based not on their legal status but on the fact that they are part of the city and the neighborhood, and they feel they belong there as much as native citizens. For them the city where they live and work is their new home and they wish to be fully included and recognized as members of this urban collective space. Therefore, the ‘right to the city’ represents an important starting point for migrants’ equal inclusion and a practice for claiming citizenship as members and users of the city and not as legal subjects.

4.4. The Critique of Multiculturalism

The European public sphere has been dominated for the past two decades by the discourse of *multicultural integration*, as a properly progressive, liberal Western model for managing migration as ‘difference’ (of ‘others’). Multiculturalism developed as a European response to the ‘non-melting of the US’ melting pot model of integration, based on the notion of the possibility of relatively conflict-

free coexistence of multiple ethnic communities, separated from each other in ethnic enclaves, within a homogeneous national majority culture, which would remain unchanged and unchallenged by the presence of ethnic others amongst it (Anthias, Yuval-Davis & Cain 1993).

However, multiculturalism does not account for the persistence of racism and the intersecting socio-economic, educational and institutional inequalities that shape the lives of all of Europe's others living within its borders. In fact the study of migration as a transnational phenomenon draws attention to the enhanced role of the border as a regime of government and population management (Balibar, 2010). We observe a multiplication of borders inside and outside the EU through which the state seeks to regulate migration flows and operationalize closures for labour and demographic purposes. Moreover, new apparatuses of governmentality are developed through the projection of state rule beyond sovereign national territory through the establishment of EU migration processing centers outside EU territory in neighbouring countries, or even overseas. At the same time, the institution of the border is characterized by intrinsic ambivalence. As the movements of migrants illustrate, borders both inhibit and allow passage, even if irregular, thereby creating new communication networks that mobilize the possibility of translation rather than war as a relational paradigm.

However, the multicultural model of integration does not address the issue of the multiplication of internal and external borders, which leads to the management of migration not only through external exclusion, but also through tiered inclusion that segregates migrants through multiple levels of internal exclusion, and instead assumes socio-cultural difference exists in a political vacuum. 'Culture' and 'diversity' have eclipsed 'race' and 'racism'. In fact, racism is treated as a matter of individual prejudice that can be treated through proper education and knowledge of different cultures. As the study of intercultural education asks, "does the preoccupation with others and others' difference constitute another raciology that is used to normalize borders and hierarchies?" (WP5, p.9). Or else, racial injustice becomes a technical problem to be managed. "What was racial politics becomes policy or therapy and then simply ceases to be political." (Gilroy 2005, p. 16-17). Multiculturalist treatment of racist conflict engenders a top-down approach enforced through the institution of legal measures and targeted programs the purpose of which is to enforce the acceptance of certain abstract principles such as gender equality and religious liberty. Coexistence and interaction are not understood as produced through every-day practices and political struggles but as expected outcomes of the successful implementation of policies. Arguing against this dominant trend to administrativize racial politics, Gilroy (2005) and Balibar (2004) contend that it is necessary to engage with issues of racism in a historical post-colonial perspective. The contribution of the colonial moment to the consolidation of European identity is crucial. It is through the project of colonization that Europe came to fashion itself as the centre of the world, of civilization, as a group of nations with common cultural values/identity. It is at the historical juncture of European colonial modernity that ideological apparatuses of self-projection and border protection are put into place, producing otherness and transforming strangers into Europe's enemies (Balibar and Bauman 2009). Based on this framework, multicultural integration is actually construed as a one-way process whereby the migrant or ethnic stranger will

adapt to and adopt the premises of the dominant (western) culture in order to become part of the society.

Multiculturalism as a socio-political premise for integration basically reflects the perspective of the nation-state, not transnationalism. Therefore, its interpretive value for migration studies is limited. The findings of the Ge.M.IC. research elaborate two aspects of the critique of multiculturalism. The first aspect regards the essentialist and racialized notions of culture and cultural interaction that underpin multicultural discourses and agendas. Critique of intercultural education, as an exemplary field for the application and failure of the multicultural integration model, highlights the construction and function of the notion of 'culture' not as a neutral foundation but rather inscribed within colonial histories of racism and ongoing racial and racialized hierarchies. In contrast, the study of urban spaces stresses the multiple interactions between the local and the global, rather than the national, effected through the transnational activities, ties, networks and family relations of migrants, and highlights processes of cultural hybridity and mixing as more relevant to the changing socio-cultural space of the city. The study of mixed families shifts the focus back to multiculturalism elaborating the assimilation processes which familial and national belonging impose. The same study, however, by drawing attention to the shifting and situated nature of self-identifications, as migrants' claims to national belonging or national 'otherness' change depending on social context, illustrates that from the point of view of the subject there is room to negotiate assimilation pressures.

The second aspect concerns the issue of systemic racism and the continued exertion of racist violence against migrants in institutional as well as every-day interactions. All thematic studies of the Ge.M.IC. project report racism against migrants. The study of media discusses the representations of racist violence in border crossings, as well as in stories of exploitation of migrant workers in the West. The study of intercultural education reports on the racialized construction of the migrant or ethnic 'other' in school, through discourses of gendered cultural difference, by teachers and students alike. The study of urban spaces points out that for migrants precarity is linked to issues of safety from racist violence in the neighborhood, and sometimes, the country of destination becomes more dangerous than the country of origin for them. The study of intercultural violence highlights precisely the multiple and intersecting relations of structural and intimate violence that impact women migrants' lives. Finally, the study of mixed and transnational families considers the exertion of violence not only in public but also in the intimate space of the family. As far as the experience of racism is concerned, we would argue that migrants' lives are saturated by it.

However, as the Ge.M.IC. studies also show, migrants can choose how they will respond to this experience. The study of religion as well as the study of mixed families points out that migrant parents often choose to baptize their children in the local religion in order to avoid their stigmatization in school. Far from indicating necessary religious conversion and loss of own identity, such practices can be seen as strategies of inclusion. The study of urban spaces also highlights the capacity of neighborhoods, through every-day interactions over time, to absorb and transform racist tensions, to manage conflicts locally and to allow migrants to establish a sense of belonging. In contrast, as the study of

intercultural education points out, top down policies of multicultural integration, such as those promoted in the context of intercultural education, not only fail but are also implicated in the reproduction of racialized discrimination. Based on the above findings, we argue that instituting opportunities for the development of local contexts facilitates intercultural interaction and can be more productive than top-down integration policies.

4.5. Gender

Returning to the discussion of gender, one of the basic questions posed by the GEMIC research has been about what we can understand about gender through the study of migration.

Gender as a dynamic social relation

Regarding gender as a dynamic social relation structured by different power inequalities linked to socio-economic status and racial and ethnic differences, the GEMIC project sought to understand how migration impacts traditional gender hierarchies and roles and stereotypical ideas about gender identities. The findings of the GEMIC project highlight following interesting points:

- Ethnic and cultural hierarchies can re-order gender hierarchies. As the study of mixed marriages shows, native women married to foreign men acquire more power in the family, because of their higher socio-cultural and professional status, and are in a better position to renegotiate gender roles in the family context.
- Migration is a source of agency for women rather than condition of victimhood. Women, through the experience of migration, gain power and independence and are able to negotiate new roles for themselves. The study of transnational families confirms that women migrants as 'breadwinners' challenge gender stereotypes both as to the role and position of the woman in the family, as well as in relation to normative ideas about motherhood. Moreover, in order to manage the difficulties of maintaining transnational livelihoods and of meeting the demands of their new environment, women develop strategies of survival and belonging that enhance their sense of agency and entitlement.
- Visibility and public presence enable inclusion and coexistence. As the study of urban spaces and social movements indicates, public visibility, access to and use of public space are important sources of women's empowerment and facilitate their inclusion in the new country. However, legal and socio-cultural restrictions, such as lack of papers or racist prejudice against Muslim women, generate conditions of unequal access and exclusion. Challenging these formal and informal borders, through every-day interactions in the neighborhood and the demand for rights, women migrants become agents of integration from below.
- Violence is multiple and systemic. As the study of intercultural violence illustrates, women in the context of migration find themselves forced to engage in illegal sex-work, are confined to the irregular labour market as precarious domestic workers or cleaners, and, finally, have to endure oppressive family situations as dependent members. Our findings show

that it is legal vulnerability, labour precarity, lack of rights and restrictive migration policies that produce conditions for violence and exploitation and not women's gender identity as such.

Gender as discourse

Gender represents not only a social relation but a discursive regime, or ideology, as well, in the sense that the category of gender, and the sexual, racial and cultural characteristics associated with it, is an integral part of how discourses and representations are constructed and used. As the Ge.M.IC. research shows, ideas about gender play an important role in how migration, identity, culture and difference are represented and negotiated in public discourse. More specifically, we observe the following:

- Articulation of the gender-race-nation nexus. As the study of media and national identity illustrates, narratives of migration construct the migrant as a racialized national 'other' through gendered discourses. Migrant men are represented through the image of aggressive masculinity, as dangerous criminals who threaten the nation-state; women migrants on the other hand are represented mainly through the image of passive femininity, as voiceless victims. Gender is used to attach specific social and sexual qualities to legal status and nationality, and becomes a signifier of cultural difference, and of cultural inferiority or superiority.
- Migrant Orientalism. Directly linked to the above is the mapping of representations of femininity and masculinity associated with migration onto images/ideas of the West and the East. In some cases, the feminized, victimized and sexualized migrant stands for the feminine, passive, hedonistic East which is juxtaposed to masculine, purposeful, rational West. In other cases, the migrant, as a masculine trespasser, enters and threatens the feminized West.
- Gender trouble. As the study of intercultural interactions in school shows, gender discourses are used to ascribe cultural and racial superiority or inferiority to different populations and to justify practices of discrimination or exclusion. For example, ideas about the inherent violence or certain non-Western ethno-cultural groups, and their natural incompatibility with European cultural norms and values, are constructed through reference to the status of women and gender relations in those groups. At the same time, performances of gender identity, by foreign students, which do not reproduce the above stereotypes and cause ambiguity and discomfort, render visible the normative articulations of gender-ethnicity-culture; members of different ethno-cultural groups are expected to act in certain ways that reflect how their group's identity is represented.

5. Policy recommendations

We are situated, historically and geopolitically, in a post-colonial, post-national and post-fordist Europe, where migration - as a constitutive feature of the European social space - highlights Europe's ideological and constitutional limitations and challenges. The intensification of institutional restrictions and closures, as well as continuous policy gaps, reveal inability to encompass and accommodate migration at nation-state level; migrants' claims to rights de facto challenge national sovereignty as the ideological/political foundation of citizenship rights. While migrants performatively engender the right to mobility and precarity, official policies are increasingly including selected categories of migrants as precarious workers denying them at the same time social rights and political participation. Post-national inclusion effectuated for example through ad hoc regularizations, becomes equally - if not more problematic than exclusion.

At the policy level there is tension between managing migration for labour and demographic purposes and moving towards a different citizenship model that encompasses mobility, multiple belongings, post-national identity. We propose a different political framework for formulating policy recommendations.

- The need for scalar policy development in the EU: from national harmonization to regional and topical policy frameworks that encompass socio-historical and economic diversity
- Mobility as a resource rather than a problem

5.1. General Policy Recommendations

5.1.1. Transnationalism

1. Enable the recognition of transnational rights including the right to move within and outside EU borders especially for transnational families.
2. Provide funding and support for the development of existing migrant transnational networks in particular through the usage of new technologies of communication (mobile phone, skype, twitter etc.)
3. Enhance migrant women's transnational networking through the development of institutions that disseminate information and coordinate such networks at the transnational level.

5.1.2. Citizenship

1. Facilitate the real exercise of a Civic Citizenship which guarantees the social, economical, political and cultural rights of all the residents in the

EU, without any discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, ethnic group, social class, sexual orientation, religion or nationality.

2. Homogenize the criteria for the participation of non-EU migrants in local, regional, state and communitarian elections in all the communitarian countries.
3. Recognize informal acts of citizenship, in particular migrant struggles and migrant political strategies as legitimate forms of claiming rights at the state level.

5.1.3. Precarity

1. Adopt policies at the EU level and legislation at the state level that ought to resolve the problems of undocumented migrant workers, especially female migrant workers, who usually work in informal sectors of care and domestic work.
2. Regularize the informal sectors of domestic and care work and provide incentives for employers to respect the labour rights of migrants working in their houses.
3. Introduce public policies at the regional and state level for altering negative social representations of migrants on the basis of her/his gender, ethnic/cultural/national group that could include the setting up of effective monitoring and combating discrimination at all levels: from work and employment, for education, social welfare and public life, law and juridical system. Also policy needs to be properly informed about the whole social experience and social position of male and female migrants.
4. Promote the need to improve the opportunities for female migrants at the regional and local level to pursue their labour market aspirations, including an increased recognition of skills and qualifications; providing increased access to forms of training and work-practice; helping women enter the labour market; and more comprehensively addressing questions of ethnic and gender discrimination.
5. Create and promote social services that allow migrant women and men to ensure a care network for their sons and daughters reunified at destination.

5.1.4. Critique of Multiculturalism

1. Adopt bottom-up intercultural policies that take into account practices of coexistence already occurring in local contexts, such as the neighborhood or the school, against top-down multicultural ethics.
2. Recognize different languages as part of the administrative and, particularly the educational, system.

3. Develop strategies that question top-down multiculturalist orthodoxies and promote and stimulate (mainly through increased funding directed towards transnational migrant communities, groups and individuals) informal networks of bottom-up intercultural interaction.

5.1.5. Gender

1. Promote gender mainstreaming in all migration policies at the EU, regional, state and local level.
2. Encourage policies, projects and funding schemes that promote intersectional solutions to migrant mobility and integration, not simply by adding women in, but by fully taking into account the intersections of gender, race, nation and class in social inequalities and discrimination.
3. Enhance the self-organization as well as full participation of female migrants in all gender mainstreaming institutions at the EU, national, regional and local level.

5.2. Policy Recommendations per Thematic Research Area (WP4-WP9)

5.2.1. WP4 National Identity and Media

1. Develop an EU networks and a funding scheme for the production and dissemination of European films on migration and gender (production funding, festivals, tv broadcasting, multi-language subtitled copies, on-line archive, which would encourage the dialogue between “host” and “sending” perspectives and actors and will promote intercultural exchanges.
2. Encourage and finance “accented” films, collaborative projects and European partnerships between directors, script-writers, producers, actors of “host” and “sending” societies in order to produce films with Europe wide coverage.
3. Promote intercultural values and positive perspectives of migration in Europe through the usage of fiction and documentary film from both destination and sending countries as an educative medium in particular at the school and university level.
4. Create digital networks of collaboration between journalists in “host” and “sending” societies both within and outside Europe, with particular emphasis on the connection of emigration and immigration places.
5. Create collaborative funding schemes, scholarships and an annual prize for migrant journalists and journalists specializing on gender and migration, in particular women.

6. Create an online Europe-wide platform on migration and gender that would encourage and promote bottom-up on line journalism and reporting on migration, as well as the transnational dissemination of “accented” cultural products, such as film, video, dance, writing and sculpture.

5.2.2. WP5 Intercultural Education

1. Guarantee the right to education to all minors under the age of 18, regardless of their legal status.
2. Add in European school curricula teaching about the histories and trajectories of migrations and minorities and the histories of imperialism, race and racial thinking.
3. Introduce criteria and checks for European school disciplinary mechanisms, student divisions and classifications, exceptions and colorblind responses to learning.
4. Address the multiple localities of school conflict (in ethnic-cultural and gender divisions, socio-economic and legal status inequalities and sense of disempowerment within schools and schooling’s contribution to and influence by social and economic contexts) instead of attributing cultural and psychological characteristics to violence.
5. Develop systematic and ongoing forms of localized teacher training and promote common training schemes (exchanges, travel, on-line communication) with schools in sending and host societies.
6. Develop learning environments that allow non-native speakers to learn the language of instruction and, in parallel, to enroll as regular students in academic classes.
7. Teach the language of instruction as a Foreign/Other Language and expand the range of foreign languages which are taught in school and which are offered for credit to both migrants and non-migrants, minority and majority students.
8. Encourage student learning by teaching – peer tutoring and foster school-parent collaboration and neighborhood communication.

5.2.3. WP6 Religion

1. Guarantee the right to the effective exercise of the freedom of religion by facilitating the creation of spaces where the different religious groups can gather and pray.
2. Challenge the exceptionality of Islam thesis through the encouragement of the active participation of female representatives of European Islam and other minority religions in EU public debates and bodies.

3. Promote networking and collaboration between religious womens' organizations across faiths and cultures.
4. Encourage training and collaborative schemes amongst European religious institutions over hybrid religious practices and the new role of women in religion.
5. Address gender and religion in the official policies of intercultural interaction, in particular the social role and the emancipatory potential of religion and the importance of gender equality within religious communities.
6. Develop material and digital bridges between religious women of different faiths and secular women in order to promote their collaboration in feminist matters and women's empowerment.

5.2.4. WP7 Urban Spaces and Social Movements

1. Re-think the image of the resident in the new urban spaces: based on the data, statistics, and interviews it's evident that the migrants are not outsiders, but on the contrary the new citizens. The interviews highlight a high level of desire of the city and urban spaces of the migrants.
2. Promote, encourage, and enhance the paths of composition of diversities in contrast to the reduction of migrants and migration to a problem of security and public order.
3. Invest in the renovations of urban spaces that in public rhetoric are labelled as "difficult" or "unsafe", and are abandoned by the public administration. This is the result of the misunderstanding about the image of resident, and it produces real problems and competition among different kinds of population. Therefore, it is important to fund the spaces (park, squares, courts, social centers, etc.) that are places of aggregation, and new models of intercultural and transnational city.
4. Create at the regional and local level, public spaces (squares, playgrounds, sports, etc.), where immigrants and the 'native' population can have free access (no need to pay); such places could be the meeting-places where processes of mutual (material emotional etc) help, among migrants who have the same origins, among migrants of different nationalities and among natives and migrants start developing. In this sense they contribute to the effective integration of migrants and reduce (if not eliminate) the xenophobia of the locals.
5. Strengthen the initiatives of local residents, both migrants and 'natives', in order to set up and operate spaces of cultural and other activities which bring together different people at the local/neighborhood level.
6. Implement a migrant-sensitive housing policy at the regional and local level, including social housing, access to loans with favorable terms, and

temporary shelters for people in transit, seeking to move to another country.

7. Offer a greater flexibility in the opening hours of public Healthcare Centers in order to let the service adjust to workdays, especially those of migrant people.
8. Organize systems to manage the renting of apartments or houses, which guarantees migrant families' access to housing avoiding situations of discrimination at the local level.
9. Promote state policies of public subsidies for rents aimed at low-income families and individuals (retired, young, immigrant people) in order to avoid processes of gentrification in certain areas of the city and of degradation and overcrowding in others.
10. Take advantage of the associative networks already existing in neighborhoods to establish stronger bonds between the autochthonous and immigrant populations.

5.2.5. WP8 Intercultural Violence

1. Policies against gender violence should move their focus from trafficking and engage more actively with preventing and protecting female and male migrants from gender violence.
2. Policies against gender violence targeting migrants should address the extreme vulnerability of illegal and precarious migrants, in particular those working in domestic, sex and care work and promote ways to promote new forms of citizenship and labour rights.
3. The process of dealing with the trauma should be opened outside the enclosed space of the "shelter" and may include street work, information, and counselling centres in areas where there is a large concentration of migrants; to pursue programs of migrant women's empowerment that would include basic skills learning.
4. Public exposure of trauma should be disassociated with protection of victims of violence, which is made explicit in the case of trafficking in order to prevent the treatment of migrant women as "tools" in crime control and prevention of illegal border crossings associated with the notion of "trafficking".
5. EU and state law should disengage the process of recognition of migrant women as victims of violence from the police. This process should include efforts disassociate the public exposure of trauma of violence from the protection of victims.
6. Reference should be made in policies to migrant single mothers, their exemption from the law (employment equality law, children protection

law, maternity protection law, etc), which entails forms of precariousness that render their lives susceptible to different forms of violence.

7. Adopt policies that grant migrant workers the freedom of seeking employment in any work domain in the countries of their destination.
8. EU, state institutions, NGOs and international organizations should invest more in raising the awareness of gender equality and in particular *women's emancipation* in the Romani and the other cultural minority groups as the most effective means of prevention. A wider range of social and educational policies should be implemented especially in the rural area with an aim at improving life conditions and educational standards as well as to raise awareness of the unacceptable nature of gender discrimination and its negative consequences for the identity and integrity of women.
9. Provide support and funding of self-help networks of migrant women who already engage into the protection and emancipation of migrant women and men.
10. Policies should take into consideration the all encompassing aspect of the notion of gender and pay attention to men victims of trafficking and other forms of violence related to their migrant status. Particularly important is to finance and run projects that would address gender violence in relation to migrant masculinities and transgender identities.

5.2.6. WP9 Mixed and Transnational Families

Mixed families:

1. Amend existing state legislation to prevent gender inequalities and exploitation of migrant partners within mixed families
2. Create networks of support for migrant partners who wish to take divorce and escape mixed relations and marriages,, in particular with regards to children.
3. Encourage dialogue and partnership between state agencies and immigrant associations and organisations in matters of mixed marriages and partnerships; immigrants from mixed families should be motivated to play an active role in the formation and maintenance of such partnerships.
4. Encourage intercultural skills, education and training for personnel in state agencies working with immigrants and mixed families.
5. Guarantee the right to family living to non-EU immigrants, without restrictions of age, nationality, gender, sexual orientation or economic income.

Transnational families:

1. Encourage easier and cheaper short-term visas to transnational family members of immigrants so that they can visit them more frequently.
2. Amend immigration policies to facilitate parent-child reunification and remove legal obstacles that prolong family separation.
3. Seek partnership and assistance of immigrant associations, places of worship and other formal organisations where immigrants gather and enlist their help in reaching out to transnational parents and especially transnational mothers.
4. Establish help and support centres for transnational families with the awareness that many transnational mothers are very cautious in seeking assistance due to social prejudices and stigmatisation. Special attention should be given to the women who were potential victims of violence - either in their families or during their migration experience.
5. Prevent the double taxation of remittances sent by immigrants to their families.
6. Recognition of domestic care work, especially the inclusion of those employed in the domestic care work into the system of health and retirement insurance.

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