



Migrants in Europe's age of austerity

Report of the EAPN Task Force on Migration

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1.Introduction

The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) recognises the extreme hardship experienced by migrants in many European Union (EU) countries. Concerned by the deterioration in the living conditions and rights of people throughout the EU, it saw that in this age of austerity migrants have too often become the scapegoats for some of the ills of the countries in which they find themselves.

Members in several countries report that migrants are living in poor conditions and suffering attacks. In addition, migrants are being denied the rights of other citizens.

Members feel that the EAPN needs to more actively monitor the situation of migrants and develop a strategy to build solidarity and common understanding on the link between migration and poverty. There is an urgent need to develop a structured way of working towards this.

To this end, a Task Force was set up by the EU Inclusion Strategies Group in 2013. This report draws together initial findings from its Task Force members in Italy, Portugal, Cyprus, Denmark and the UK as well as those from two EU organisations – the Platform for Co-Operation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) and the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA). Throughout, the report aims to highlight the most significant and pertinent findings – migrants' problems are similar in many countries.

The draft was written by Nazek Ramadan (UK) with the support of Mauro Striano and Kadri Soova (PICUM), and Vincent Caron and Sian Jones (EAPN secretariat).

Objectives

This initial report aims to:

- Explore the impact on migrants of: the economic and financial crisis and subsequent austerity measures; the increase in far right groups; growing hostility towards migrants; and the increasingly restrictive immigration and social policies in the EU. All of these factors have implications for EAPN's work.
- Raise awareness among EAPN's members through a rights-based approach; promote a better understanding of the current situation.

It is primarily envisaged as an internal document to support EAPN capacity building, exchange and agenda-setting.

Setting the EU Context

Migration is a reality in all EU member states – both internally from within the EU and into the EU from non-EU countries. According to Eurostat, on 1 January 2013 the foreign population of the EU-27 (people residing in an EU-27 Member State with citizenship of a non-member country) was 20.4 million while the foreign-born population was 33.5 million.¹

However, the EU status of migrants is complex. Across Europe, there are a number of generally recognised categories of migrants, each with their related legislation. The EU has strongly separated the status of EU migrants, who are initially not counted as migrants due to EU pillars of free movement. Non EU migrants are categorised as:

- People seeking asylum
- Refugees
- People married to EU nationals
- Family of 'third country nationals'
- Third Country Nationals
- Undocumented migrants
- In addition to these, in some countries, such as the UK, international students are also classified as migrants

(See chapter 8 for assessment of EU and national policy)

Migrants can help build a competitive and sustainable EU economy.

At EU level, migrants' positive role in the economy has been increasingly recognised, through the Stockholm Programme in the 90s, the Tampere Programme (1999) and the Hague Programme (2005). This was followed by the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (2005), and the Policy Plan on Legal Migration (2007) building on which the European Commission proposed a number of directives regulating working conditions for immigrants. More recently, migrants' contribution to the EU economy has been recognized in the Europe 2020 Strategy² and Stockholm Programme (2010)³, which set out, as a clear political objective, the effective integration of migrants.

Over the past ten years, European migration and integration policies have focused on **access to the labour market** as one of the most important indicators of the level of integration of non-EU migrants into European member states. However, full and lasting integration in the labour market is dependent on the **quality and conditions of employment for migrants as well as their access to social rights and services** such as healthcare, housing and education. Internal EU migration has increased as more countries have joined the union, and as the economic crisis has hit the South and the East hardest. This has been marked in the countries such as the UK and Ireland, but also Germany, Denmark, Netherlands and France, that did not impose restrictions initially. It has increased in all countries as accession rules ended. The EU started to legislate on migration only recently and shares competence with member states in this domain. Member States can establish quotas of third country nationals who can enter their territories but currently not as far as EU mobile citizens are concerned.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics

² Conclusions of the European Council, 25/26 March 2010, EUCO 7/10, CO EUR 4, CONCL 1.

³ The Stockholm Programme - An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens, OJ 2010/C 115/01.

Although priority has been given to labour migration as a means to address European labour market needs, the **fight against exploitation and strengthening the protection of migrants' rights are only partially taken into account**. EU legislation that aims to fight poverty and social exclusion of migrants is still far from granting the guarantees necessary to prevent migrants from becoming destitute. This is mainly due to the lack of provision for migrants who are undocumented or economically inactive. Nor is there a safety net that would guarantee migrants who have lost their job or resident status to access the services available to citizens in the same situation.

Building an inclusive approach to migration

The immigration policies applied by EU member states, focus on conditions of entry, residence and employment for non-EU nationals, more than migrants' integration.

Migrants' unequal living and working conditions increase their risk of poverty and social exclusion. What is needed is an **integrated, holistic and cross-sectoral** approach to migration. One way to achieve this is to **strengthen the link between social inclusion and anti-poverty strategies and migration policies**. As has been already noted, migrants' inclusion very much depends on their access to social security and housing, health, employment and education. **Migrants need to be included in the mainstream of policy-making** in all these interlinked services.

Three key pillars to fostering this integration of migrants are: inclusive labour markets, adequate minimum income and access to quality services (Integrated Active Inclusion). Powerful tools to steer pan-European policy include: Europe 2020⁴, especially the European Platform against Poverty as well as the Social Investment Package particularly with the Active Inclusion Recommendation; and the European Semester, also through the European Business Network for Corporate Social Responsibility and the National Reform Programmes.

⁴<http://www.eapn.eu/images/stories/docs/EAPN-position-papers-and-reports/2014-eapn-toolkit-stakeholder-involvement.pdf>

2. The impact of the crisis - the rise of poverty and hunger

According to the EC Social Situation Monitor, migrants tend to face a higher risk of poverty than the host population, but there are differences between EU migrants and third country nationals. The at-risk-of-poverty rate of the host population varies from 8% to 22% across the EU, while that of migrants whose origins are in the EU ranges from 8% to 34%. However, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for migrants with a non-EU origin exceeds 40% in a number of countries, including Spain, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Finland with Greece and Belgium having the highest rates at 47%.⁵

“The employment rate (based on self-declared economic status among those of working age) of non-EU migrants tends to be lower than that of the local population in most countries. In 14 of the 28 countries, however, non-EU migrants have higher employment levels than the local population. This is especially true of Cyprus, Italy and Portugal. This highlights the importance of the type of job that migrants tend to do and the kind of employment they have, as factors underlying their tendency to be more at risk of poverty than others in the community. The share of employed people among EU migrants is, in a number of cases, smaller than among non-EU migrants.”⁶

United Kingdom: in the country as a whole, the charities Oxfam and Church Action on Poverty estimate that more than 500,000 people in the UK are now reliant on food parcels and that one in six parents has gone without food to feed their family.⁷ This crisis has hit particularly hard at groups such as migrants, and especially asylum seekers, whose level of support is low⁸ and for a number of years has not increased in line with inflation.

Cyprus has suffered unprecedented upheaval due to the crisis. As well as unemployment at 17%, Cypriots have experienced cuts in income, working benefits and social benefits in both the public and private sectors. Amid reports of large numbers of schoolchildren going without breakfast, charities, churches and NGOs have stepped in to establish ‘social supermarkets’ to distribute food and other necessities to those in need – both locals and migrants. ‘Social clinics’ similarly provide healthcare for those excluded from it. A recent research study indicates that 5.7% of the total population is receiving help from those supermarkets; the greatest percentage of the receivers (62%) is between the ages of 36-45 years old that lost their jobs and have children under the age of 18 years⁹. The increase in bus fares and the extra cost of registration at the public health services due to the austerity measures are negatively affecting vulnerable groups in society such as migrants. Immigration policies are now even tighter than any time before in relation to work permits and deportation. Fewer and fewer migrants are being employed in sectors of the economy such as the construction industry.

The following table indicates the percentages of people living in Cyprus under the risk of poverty or social exclusion according to their country of birth¹⁰ until 2011.

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1050&intPageId=1914&langId=en>

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1050&intPageId=1914&langId=en>

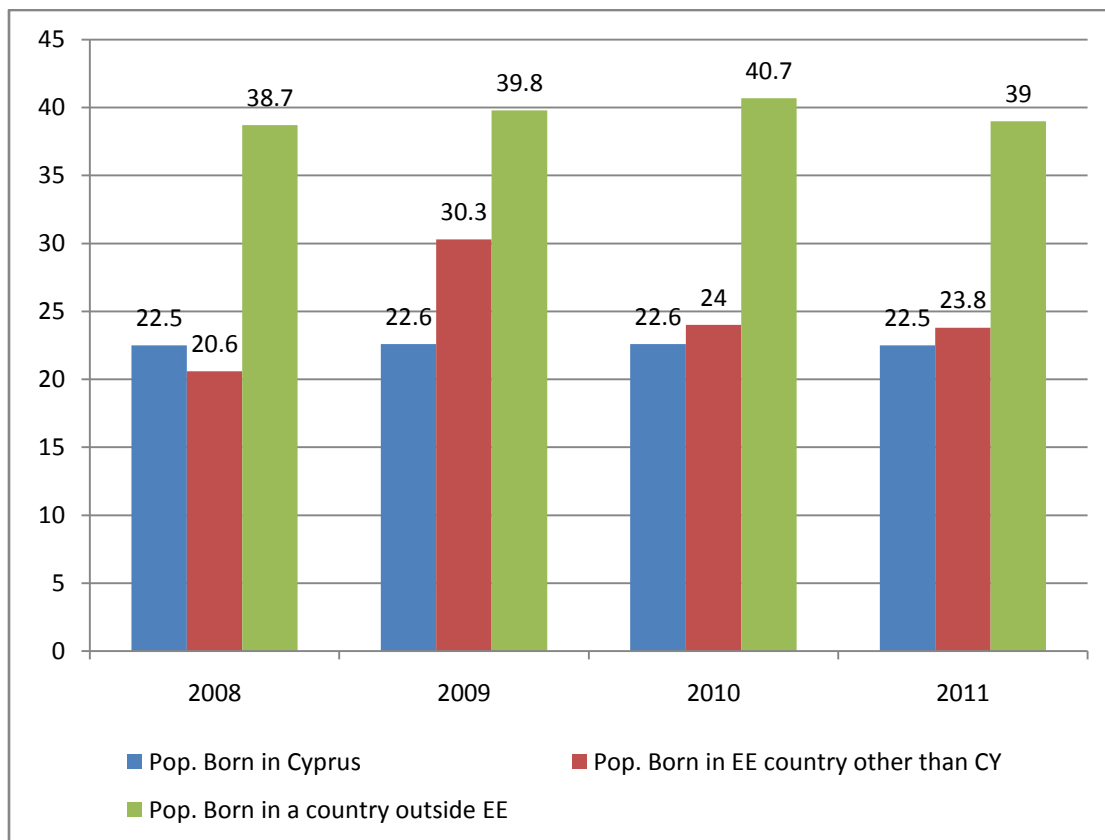
⁷ <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/our-work/poverty-in-the-uk/food-poverty>

⁸ <http://www.irr.org.uk/news/a-cashless-society-the-other-side-of-the-coin/>

⁹⁹ Ntora Christodoulou (2013), Ereuna Sokgiathnanexeiasthn Kypro, Philepheros, 16 December 2013, Available at:

<http://www.philenews.com/el-gr/koinonia-eidiseis/160/176279/erevna-sok-gia-tin-anecheia-stin-kypro>

¹⁰ Survey on Income and Living Conditions of Households 2008-2011. Statistical Services of Cyprus, General Social Statistics, Series II, Issue 5, p. 8.



In **Portugal** a significant proportion of the migrant population, especially from outside the EU, is experiencing poverty and social exclusion. In 2012, almost 40% of migrants aged 20-64 were at risk of poverty and social exclusion – with non-EU migrants somewhat more at risk (43.6%) than migrants from the EU (23.8%). By comparison, the figure for the same age group in the national population in general was 25%.¹¹

Migrant communities also suffer higher levels of severe material deprivation. While such deprivation affected less than a tenth (7.7%) of Portuguese aged 20-64 in 2013, more than a quarter (25.8%) of the population born outside the EU were thus afflicted.

One of the causes of poverty and social exclusion in Portugal is inequality and low wages. A tenth (9.6%) of the working population in Portugal aged 20-64 experiences poverty, but the figure doubles for those not born in Portugal (18.6% for EU migrants and 22.2% for non-EU migrants).¹²

The economic crisis in Portugal is affecting both the national and migrant population. However, the concentration of the migrant population in economic activities such as in the food and beverage sector (12.6%), real estate and construction sector (12%) and retail trade (11.8%), increases their vulnerability to unemployment. General unemployment was 15.6% in 2012, but for migrants it was 26.5%. Figures from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for the same year differ slightly, with unemployment among those not born in Portugal running at 19.4% and that of the native-born population at 16.1%.

Not only are migrants in Portugal more likely to lose their jobs, they are also more at risk of long-term unemployment. This has been growing since 2008; by 2012 about 10% of migrant workers were suffering long-term unemployment. On the other hand, in many of the migrants' countries of origin, especially in some EU Central/Eastern European countries, living and working conditions are

¹¹ Eurostat

¹² Eurostat

improving and salaries are rising which means many migrants are choosing to return to their countries of origin.

In **Denmark**, people experiencing poverty have been hit the hardest by the economic crisis. According to the OECD, the gap between rich and poor increased by more in the first three years of the crisis (to 2010) than it had in the previous 12 years.

3.Changing face of employment

While the EU may legislate on entry and residence for non-EU nationals for purposes of employment, study or family reunification, member states retain the right to determine the how many should be admitted to seek work.

In **Italy**the government has cut the number of work visas for migrants and so fewer people are migrating to Italy. On the other hand, there are no entry limits for highly qualified workers or for those who do not fall into a specific quota, such as nurses and other medical staff.

In 2012, the foreign workers regularly employed were approximately 2,3 million, 62% employed in the tertiary sector, mainly in low-skills low-paid jobs. The unemployment rate among foreigners has increased by two percentage points in the last year (14.1%, equal to 382 thousand people), exceeding by 4 points the unemployment rate of Italians. The employment rate (60.6%) is higher than that of Italians (56.4%) but it decreased by almost 2 points.

Of the two and one half million of regularly surveyed immigrants working in Italy, more than seven hundred thousand are employed by Italian families for household and care chores; many are agricultural labourers, seasonal or on permanent basis, many work in the small-medium enterprises in the North or North-East, many are artisans and merchants.

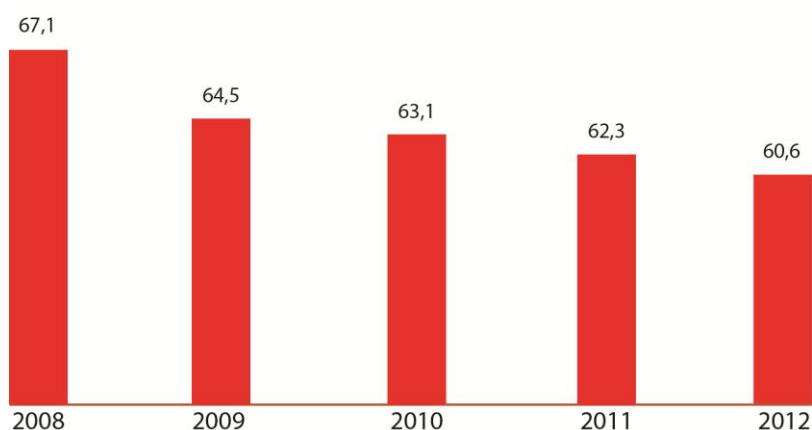
While the majority arrive through regular channels, those migrants who arrive with temporary visas, mostly for tourism, start looking for a job but, entering the labour market at the time of crisis, is very hard and, at times, they get into the clutches of the black labour market and unscrupulous “businessmen” who practically enslave them for salaries of a few euro, not even enough for mere survival. But the will to come out of such degrading conditions is very strong, proof of this being the great number of migrants that applied for the last “regularization” of 2012.

Employers submitted 135,000 requests for regularisation, about half as many as were submitted in 2009, but still a very high number. This gives an idea of how much undeclared work is being performed by undocumented immigrants. In the past year,there has been an increase in migrants leaving Italy, mostly due to the effects of the economic crisis, low pay and lack of work, combined with low safety net.

CASE STUDY – FROM ITALY

In Rosarno, in **Italy**, riots led by migrants in January 2010 drew attention to the plight of seasonal workers housed in unhealthy conditions. About 2,500 African seasonal workers, most of whom were legal migrants, were sleeping in tented encampments and abandoned warehouses that lacked even basic sanitation. These people provided essential labour in agriculture, picking fruits and vegetables for a wage of about 20 euros a day. Since then the EU adopted a directive on minimum conditions for seasonal workers.

EMPLOYMENT RATE OF IMMIGRANTS AGED 15-64 2008-2012 (source ISTAT)



In Denmark, the authorities have informed ECRI that the number of employed immigrants from non-Western countries aged 16-64 has increased from 44% in 2001 to 54% in 2009. They have also indicated that the employment rate among immigrant women of non-Western background increased from 36.5% in 2001 to 48.8% in 2009 and that the gap in employment rates for 16-29 year old descendants of non-Western origin and persons of Danish origin in the same age group was reduced by almost five percent from 2001 to 2009. However, there was still an employment gap of 10% for this group in employment. (13)

According to MIPEX Denmark does more than most European countries to promote newcomers' labour market mobility, combining equal access (as in most labour migration countries) and new targeted measures (as in older immigration countries). Permanent residents, family members and green card holders can immediately access all sectors – private, public, and self-employment – a flexibility enjoyed by all new arrivals to ES and PT as well as NL and US. (14)

The Danish institute for Human Rights says in its status from May 2012, that ethnic minorities have a weaker participation rate in the labour market than the rest of society, even though in recent years the ethnic minority employment rate has increased, until the financial crisis set in. at the same time, studies have shown that the Danish labour market is segregated, with ethnic minorities strongly over-represented in positions that do not require higher education and under-represented in senior management and middle- and high-level white-collar positions. (15)

In Portugal, the Portuguese Labour Code provides for an equal access to labour market and it is forbidden any kind of (direct or indirect) discrimination based on nationality, ethnicity, and territory of origin, language or race. Thus, immigrant workers and their familiar have equal legal opportunities

¹³ ECRI p. 24

¹⁴ <http://www.mipex.eu/denmark>

¹⁵ DIHR p. 28

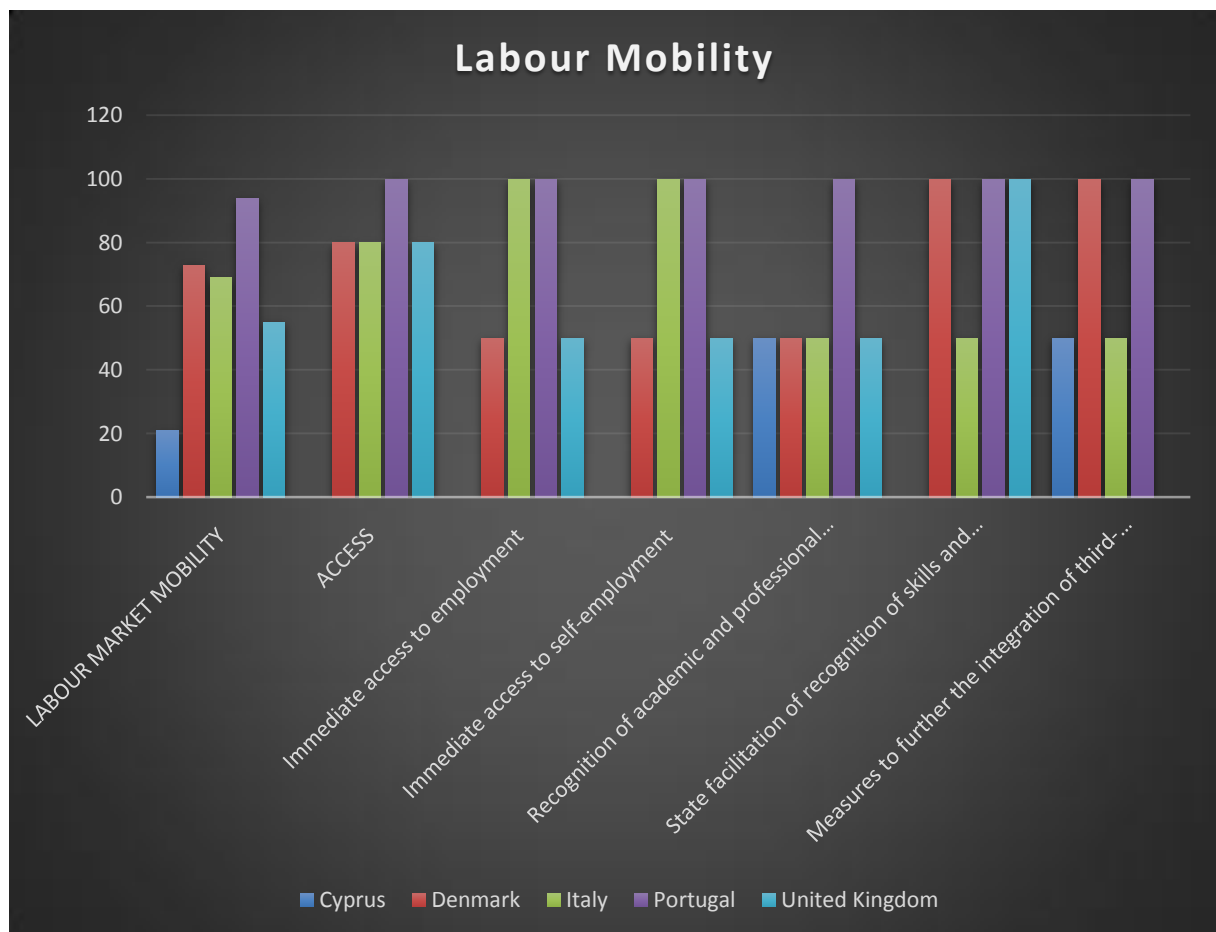
to change jobs and careers, serve the public or start a business. Since 2007, the Portuguese law guarantee all foreign residents easier and equal opportunities to get their qualifications recognised, although the costs associated with the translation of the certificates continues to be an obstacle in the recognition of these qualifications.

In the case of labour discrimination and exploitation, the foreigners can have access to the National Immigrant Support Centre's Legal Aid for Immigrants Offices where they can acknowledge their rights and learn the steps and the agencies that can support them. Despite all these initiatives, in reality, migrant workers are more vulnerable, leading to high levels of exploitation, lower wages, more precarious labour relations and working conditions, wage arrears, dependence on labour entities that improperly retain their passports or who charge one or two salaries to make an employment contract.

In the **United Kingdom** there has been increased mistreatment and exploitation of workers by some employers. The employers are exploiting the lack of available jobs out there and the desperation of workers to hold on to their jobs. Some employers are expecting their staff to work harder, longer and unsociable hours and are treating their workers with disrespect (shouting at them, insulting them with verbal abuse, etc). Many workers are keeping their heads down for fear of loss of income. If you speak out against the treatment, you are at risk of losing your job. Employers are also using the crisis to pay the lowest income possible and sometime binding employees to '0' hour contracts (a contract in which an employer does not guarantee the employee a fixed number of hours per week. Rather, the employee is expected to be on-call and receive salary only for hours worked) so it is making it harder for poorer families to come out of poverty.

Unemployment at 7.4% is below the European average, but is rising despite falling real wages, the most "flexible" labour market in Europe and a significant fall in net migration. Youth unemployment in August 2014 was 16.6% and the.

The below graph shows Migrants' labour mobility across Cyprus, Denmark, Italy, Portugal and United Kingdom. (Source MIPEX)



4. Shrinking access to social services (housing, health, education, social benefits)

Across Europe, migrants are particularly exposed to overcrowding, poor facilities and unhealthy living conditions. Restrictive migration and social policies often lead to permanent exclusion from essential services such as healthcare, housing and education, social protection and benefits as well as the removal of important protections and safeguards while at work.

With no legal access to the labour market or right to social assistance, undocumented migrants face an extremely precarious situation making them highly vulnerable to destitution. While conditions for undocumented migrants differ among EU member states, **there is a general trend to link access to core social rights with immigration control mechanisms in an attempt to expel undocumented migrants from EU territory and deter others from arriving.**

Migration, residence status and access to essential services

Residence status has emerged as an important way in which migrants are excluded. The EU approach to integration is limited to non-EU nationals who reside legally in EU countries. While every EU member state is bound to international standards of economic, social and cultural rights for all on its territory, significant differences apply to migrants on grounds of their residence status.

In 2009, about 80% of non-EU nationals who had long-term resident status lived in four member states: Estonia (187,400); Austria (166,600); Czech Republic (49,200) and Italy (45,200). In France and Germany, only 2,000 non-EU nationals had acquired long-term residence permits in each country.

Non-EU nationals' access to housing, healthcare and social security assistance varies greatly between member states. For instance, in **Lithuania**, migrants receive rights to housing and social security assistance after five years of authorised residence; in **Slovenia**, only migrant workers enjoy full healthcare and social assistance; in **Austria**, access to housing and social security assistance depends on the length of residence and is governed by the laws of the respective federal states.¹⁶

CHALLENGES TO ACCESSING HEALTH CARE – FROM CYPRUS

In **Cyprus** - Migrants do not have access to the full range of health services, often failing to have access to important check-ups such as mammograms. Language barriers mean they have difficulty communicating with medical staff and getting information about the Cypriot health system. They are also often unable to afford the cost of treatment.

In **Cyprus**, the economic crisis has brought about changes in welfare allowances for asylum seekers, recognised victims of trafficking and people with international protection. Some allowances have been decreased or revoked altogether and these groups experience long delays in receiving their money. Allowances for Cypriots have been cut as a result of austerity measures and asylum seekers receive only half of these reduced allowances.

In **Portugal**, as well as having lower wages, a higher risk of long-term unemployment and a higher vulnerability to precarious employment, migrants often receive low unemployment benefits or none at all. This also increases the risk of poverty and hunger. Migrants have already had difficulties renewing their residence permits due to the lack of means of subsistence. Until 2009, migrants had to be earning the equivalent of the national minimum wage (450€) to do this. In 2009, the

¹⁶ Second annual report on migration and integration

government revised the legal minimum income that migrants needed to stay in Portugal to 50% of the national minimum wage. The social security system is structured in two schemes: contributory and non-contributory. The access to the social benefits of contributory schemes depends on the registration and contribution to the schemes (i.e. unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, maternity/paternity benefits, invalidity benefits, old age pension). In the non-contributory schemes the access may depend on the length of residence (i.e. minimum income system) or on the nationalities (i.e. social pensions).

GOOD PRACTICE – FROM PORTUGAL

In 2004, Portugal created a model of support in 2004 for the integration of immigrants based on One-Stop-Shops – the National Immigrant Support Centres (CNAI). Based in the three big cities with a high concentration of immigrants (Lisbon, Porto and Faro), its services are available to all immigrants no matter what their legal status.

Under the one roof, the shops offer a wide range of governmental and support services: Border Control Service, Labour Inspectorate, Social Security office, Regional Health Administration, Regional Directorate of Education and Central Registry Office.

Portugal also promotes support offices for family reunification, legal advice and employment, with services available in several languages to help to build trust in government services. Here undocumented migrants can find out about residence permits, take steps to regularise their situation and find out about their rights to health, education, social protection and so on. The CNAI are run by the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI, I.P.).

In **Italy**, Only 7 regions out of 20 have ratified an agreement to give migrants equal access to healthcare. Because of the absence of clear guidelines, healthcare is patchy for the children of migrants who do not have a residence permit. However, in recent years there has been some progress on welfare rights. Migrants can now receive family, disability and housing benefits, as well as a cash benefit ('bonus bebè') on giving birth.

Such disparate laws and policies at national level are contrary to the EU's objectives to develop a Common Immigration Policy. However, EU measures to address discrimination against migrants are often counterproductive because they limit migrants' access to housing, healthcare and social assistance by tying these benefits to residence status.

Children born to migrants in **Italy**, who grow up and are educated in the country, are invited to apply for a residence permit when they reach the age of 18. President Napolitano has said it is 'an absurdity, true madness' that the fundamental right of citizenship is not granted to children born and raised in Italy. Among improvements to migrants' rights are access to jobs in the public sector and to the liberal professions.

STEVE'S STORY – FROM THE UK

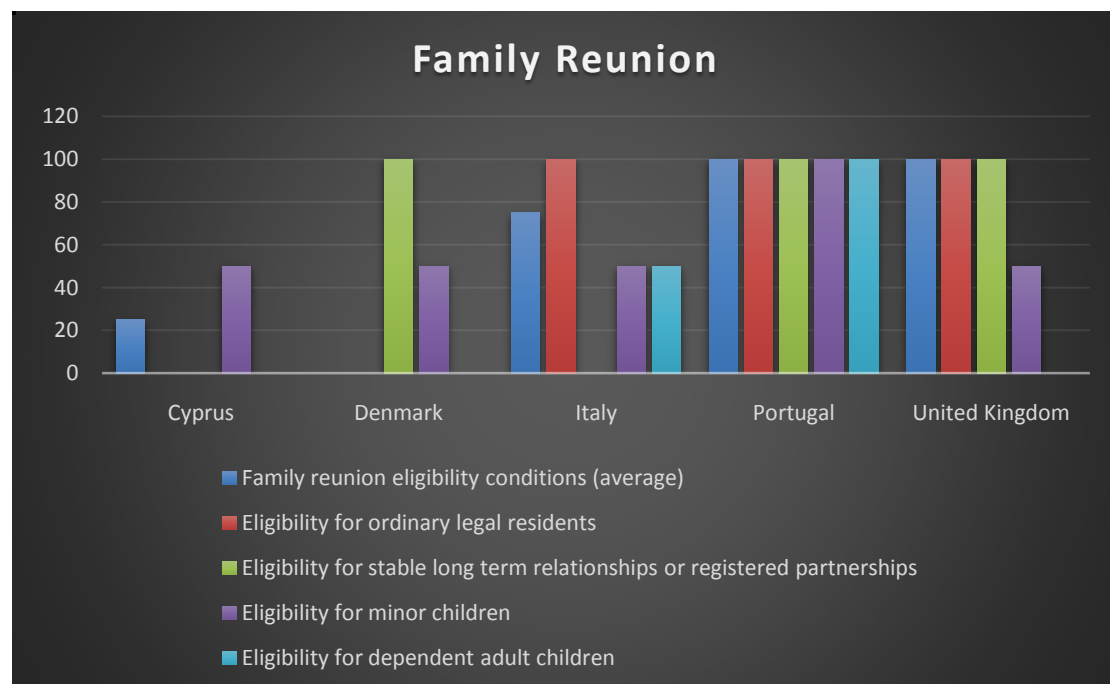
“ I am a migrant, a single man in my 40's. I work as a care assistant for the elderly. I do not have a fixed hours' contract; due to the nature of my work, my working hours change weekly. I am paid £8.50 (€9.94) per hour.

I am looking very hard for a second job as I cannot afford to go out, buy clothing or rent my own place.

My current average monthly salary is £612 (€716). I am not entitled for any social assistance except for housing benefit, which I do not claim. I simply cannot afford to. I rented a flat for a short period of time. The rent was £197.46 (€231.03) per week, of which I received £84.90 (€99.33) in housing benefit. I was expected to pay £113 (€132.21) per week to cover the difference. This amount would eat up around £490 from my £612 (€716) salary per month. This would leave me with £122 (€142.74) to live on and pay for everything from food to bills, travel, hygiene, telephone (including calling my family abroad), etc. This is why I left the flat and moved in with a friend where we share everything. It is sad for me as a grown up man not to be able to afford my own place, no matter how small it is. I don't have family in this country to fall back on.

The lack of job security is causing me lots of stress, especially in this financial environment. I am worried constantly about losing my job. If this happens I will have to go back to claiming Job Seekers Allowance, which is a very tough, stressful and disorientating process and experience.

5.Challenges to family reunification



Data from MIPEX 2010

A key concern for many migrants is the right to bring their families to their new country. This is called 'family reunification'. In several EU countries governments have made it harder for migrants to bring their families to live with them (setting high income thresholds, language requirements, etc), leading to a negative impact on migrants' family lives.

The 2003 EU directive on family reunification has in practice tied many migrants to abusive relationships, increased their chances of becoming undocumented and can stop migrants accessing essential services such as health, education, housing and workplace protection¹⁷. The directive is interpreted in different ways in different countries.

Denmark

Having had one of the strictest requirements in Europe, the new Danish government, formed in October 2011, changed the family reunification policy: reducing the application fee and replacing the points system with a new set of rules in May 2012. Foreign nationals can now obtain a residence permit if their spouse, co-habitant, or registered partner is already legally residing in Denmark. The new rules state that both the applicant and the spouse must be at least 24 years old and that the applicant must pass a Danish language test within six months of receiving a residence permit.¹⁸ Nevertheless these changes have not eliminated discrimination in family reunification.

In the UK, new and more complex rules on family migration were introduced in July 2012. Now sponsoring adults (any person with British Citizenship or full residency rights who wants to bring their spouse/partner/parents to settle with them in the UK) need a very high income and the overwhelming trend is for more restrictive conditions with the explicit policy of reducing net migration. There is a significant gap between way that immigration law is meant to work, and its operation in practice¹⁹.

JACK'S STORY – FROM THE UK

Jack is a 57 year old migrant from Georgia who has been living in the UK for over 10 years. His asylum claim and battle to get legal documentation to live in the UK took up to 8 years. Fearing detention and destitution when his first application for asylum was refused, his wife and 3 month old baby son returned to their original country he could not. 3 years ago he was granted permission to stay in the UK, but this did not mean that he now had the right to family life.

He has been looking for work since then with no luck. The Family Migration Rules meant that Jack needed to earn up to £21,000 to enjoy this right. Not having been allowed to work while waiting for a decision on his status, left a damaging gap in his work experience and CV. This combined with his age makes it almost impossible for him to find work in this difficult financial time. He feels he has no hope of being reunited with his family again.

(source: Migrant Voice member).

¹⁷ PICUM, "Strategies to End Double Violence Against Undocumented Migrant Women: Promoting Rights and Ensuring Justice", PICUM 2012, available at: <http://picum.org/en/publications/reports/>

¹⁸ OECD 2013, p. 246

¹⁹ <http://www.airecentre.org/pages/family-reunification-a-barrier-or-a-facilitator-of-integration-.html>

6. Growing negative rhetoric

Across many EU member states, the way migrants and migration are spoken about in the public sphere, whether by politicians, members of the public or in the media coverage is often very negative and imbalanced. Migrants are presented as a problem and a cause for concern, a drain on its resources, threat to the culture etc., while their own voices are rarely heard. This often has a negative impact on the relations between the host community and migrants, and on migrants' own sense of belonging.



Perceptions of migrants in the media

In **Cyprus** the crisis has led to increasingly negative attitudes about migrants; they are perceived as a burden on the Cypriot economy and blamed for high unemployment rates. In general, migrants in the media are voiceless. There is no public discourse about ethnic diversity.

The media often use unfriendly and xenophobic language when reporting migrant issues and concentrate on negative incidents, such as migrants taking part in illegal activities. Far from contributing to a dialogue about issues of concern, such reports inflame the situation causing friction, fear and insecurity in Cypriot society.

Undocumented migrants, in particular, are portrayed almost as criminals and associated with 'evils' such as prostitution, drugs and the rise of crime. Pandering to some politicians' views of asylum seekers, the media portray them as living luxuriously off 'fat benefit cheques'.

Even more seriously, certain TV programmes on both public and private channels host representatives of the far right, racist and neo-Nazi parties, allowing them to promote their negative views of migration and helping them to become entrenched in the political system. All this contributes to a very negative view in the general public about migrants in general and non-EU nationals in particular.

In Denmark some media have continued to portray minority groups, in particular Muslims and Roma in a negative light. The negativity of public and political discourse has had a disproportionately adverse effect on migrants in a number of important areas of policy.²⁰

Some media report the ethnic background of a suspected criminal when this is not necessary, whilst criminal offences committed by Danes against migrants are underplayed.

Migrants say that they are being denied opportunities to express themselves in the media while no exception is taken to those, including academics, who express racist views. In practice, no action is taken against those who incite racial hatred in the media. Media rhetoric has therefore affected the majority population's perception of migrant groups with whom they otherwise have little day-to-day interaction.²¹

Some positive steps have been taken in **Portugal** to combat racism in the media with training for media professionals. A 2007 law prevents TV programmes from inciting hatred on racial, religious or political grounds, or based on colour, ethnic or national origin, sex or sexual orientation. Another positive step is the Commission for Equality and Combating Racial Discrimination (CICDR) recommendation that journalists should avoid references to nationality, ethnicity, religion or immigration status in news from official sources, including security forces, police and media, whenever it is not relevant. Media and the police are following these guidelines.

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There is still some way to go to improve the media perception of migrants in **Portugal**. A 2006-2007 study compared a sensationalist daily newspaper and a daily newspaper of record. The sensationalist newspaper printed more stories about crime (69% of their news about migrants) while the newspaper of record concentrated more on social and political discussion on immigration and ethnicity (44% of stories about migrants). However, when their reporting of different migrant groups was analysed, both newspapers were found to publish a disproportionate number of stories about Brazilian women in relation to prostitution (43% in the sensationalist newspaper and 40% in the other newspaper). This linking of Brazilian women to prostitution contributed to widespread, inaccurate picture of this group within Portuguese society, stigmatising them and leading to discrimination.

UK media often inflate or speculate about the numbers of asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants. For instance 31% of headlines and 53% of text about asylum across all newspapers has negative connotations.²² Unsurprisingly, there are sharp differences in attitudes to migration between different newspaper readerships. Tabloid readers are much more likely to see immigration as a problem perhaps because so many articles in the tabloid media express this view. In 2002, for example, 25% of Daily Mail and 24% of Daily Express articles were about asylum.

There is also the issue of 'whose voice is heard', with migrant organisations and migrants themselves seldom heard - unlike the opinions of politicians and anti-migrant groups.

As a result, some of the coverage of migration is lacking in nuance, one-sided, skewed or disproportionate to the actual issues discussed. A report showing the positive contribution of migrants to the UK economy is much less likely to be published than headlines about the fear of 'benefit tourism', regardless of actual facts and research findings.

²⁰ ECRI p. 8

²¹ ECRI <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Denmark/DNK-CBC-IV-2012-025-ENG.pdf> p. 8 and 28

²² <http://www.opendemocracy.net/transformation/chitra-nagarajan/how-politicians-and-media-made-us-hate-immigrants>

This negative coverage in parts of the media has a great impact on the lives of individual migrants, who feel misrepresented at best, and at worst, that this kind of coverage is leading to verbal abuse, heightened community tensions, and even physical attacks. However, many migrants are reluctant to complain about inaccurate or prejudiced reporting. The view of the media as 'hostile to migrants' also makes more migrants reluctant to give their views to the media.

The concern about the media reporting is echoed in many reports. The 2012 report following the Leveson Inquiry into UK press standards found that *'When assessed as a whole, the evidence of discriminatory, sensational or unbalanced reporting in relation to ethnic minorities, immigrants and/or asylum seekers, is concerning.'*

While some parts of the press report responsibly, the Leveson report found: *'there are enough examples of careless or reckless reporting to conclude that discriminatory, sensational or unbalanced reporting in relation to ethnic minorities, immigrants and/or asylum seekers is a feature of journalistic practice in parts of the press, rather than an aberration.'*²³

The report also found examples of inaccurate reporting and found that it seems certain parts of the press sometimes prioritise the political stance of the title over the accuracy of the story. As a consequence, some of the media coverage concerning migrants, asylum seekers and ethnic minorities is pejorative, prejudicial and highly discriminatory.²⁴

Local media are more likely to report more positively on migration because their articles are focused more on local community relations.

However, 'illegal' is the word most commonly used across all types of newspaper according to a report by the Migration Observatory based on a comprehensive analysis of more than 40 million words used to describe immigration and migrants in British national newspapers over the past three years.²⁵

Both migrants and asylum seekers are associated with the criminal world ('criminal', 'illegal') but also with terrorism, especially in case of Muslims ('terrorism', 'sham', 'suspected', especially in tabloid media). Moreover, migrants tend to be negatively identified not only with their religions, but also with economic problems ('unemployment', 'jobs', 'benefits'). Some of the words used vary greatly between different paper types.²⁶

Asylum seekers are most commonly described as 'failed', though refugees are described more positively with language focused on conflict and fleeing and on refugees' nationalities.²⁷

An increasing islamophobic tendency has been registered: Islam is usually generalised and homogenised ('Muslim world') but at the same time conceptualised as 'conflictual' and 'extremist'²⁸

There is a focus on migrants coming from Eastern Europe: they are usually associated with the EU, its institution and concerns about 'freedom of movement'. Romanians and Bulgarians, especially, are accused of exploiting social benefits.

²³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270941/0780_ii.pdf and <https://www.ein.org.uk/news/leveson-report-finds-sensational-or-unbalanced-reporting-relation-immigrants-and-asylum-seekers>

²⁴ <http://www.article19.org/data/files/pdfs/publications/refugees-what-s-the-story-.pdf>

²⁵ <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/reports/migration-news> and <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/data-and-resources/charts/create/public-opinion/attitudes-media-use>

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ <https://www.ein.org.uk/news/leveson-report-finds-sensational-or-unbalanced-reporting-relation-immigrants-and-asylum-seekers>

Negative rhetoric by politicians and church leaders

The latest European election results, with large gains for the far right and anti-immigrant parties showed how toxic the discourse on migration has become in the political sphere. In Italy, the economic crisis is weakening democracy as well as the economy. Immigration is often viewed as a sign of poverty and many of the political parties take advantage of this issue to manipulate public opinion, often resulting in creating real social conflict.

Although there are some differences in **Portugal**, due to the Portuguese tradition and history of emigration, there is political consensus on the importance of migrants integrating in Portuguese society and on the country's responsibility towards them. International recognition of the positive evolution of immigration policies has also had an impact. Therefore, despite the economic crisis, parliamentary political parties do not use migrants as scapegoats. The government is more focused on the economic than the social aspects of immigration policy. In summer of 2013, the State Secretary of the Deputy Minister of Regional Development proposed a new agenda on immigration, promoting migrants as highly skilled entrepreneurs, investors, new pensioners or seniors and others who are 'one of the solutions to the crisis', and creating an agency focused on developing new migratory flows.

In **Denmark** between 2001 and 2011 the government was supported by the Danish People's Party (a Danish national-populist right-wing party), and some politicians, especially those from the Danish People's Party, made disparaging statements about groups of migrants in general and Muslims in particular whether migrants or settled, constantly portraying them in a negative light.

Some politicians have been brought to court, but in many instances people say that they have made complaints against politicians to no avail. These trends have produced a climate which has negatively affected specific areas of policy which impact directly on migrants.²⁹

There is concern that anti-immigrant rhetoric in the **UK** is increasing through a vicious cycle of the public responding to what they read in the media, including negative statements by politicians and policy makers, and the politicians saying their rhetoric is a response to the concerns of the public over immigration.

In **Cyprus**, the economic crisis makes things even worse as people unjustly scapegoat migrants. The media reflects political discourse on migration, police reporting on migrants, the reporting of the authorities that deal with migration, negative pronouncements about migration by the Church of Cyprus and society's views in general.

By contrast, in **Italy**, the Catholic Church fights for recognition for migrants and provides material and spiritual welfare.

Changing public perception

Although the economic crisis has led to many in the EU unfairly scapegoating migrants as taking scarce resources and jobs, the picture is not one of unrelieved gloom. The message that migrants can help restart the economy is beginning to be understood, though patchily. Perception however varies widely between countries.

The Portuguese perception of migration is broadly positive. Because the economic situation of migrants' countries of origin is improving while **Portugal** faces an economic crisis, and because some migrants are no longer seen as coming from poor countries, their image has improved.

Transatlantic Trends 2013 shows that 74% of people in Portugal say they are not worried about legal immigration. A similar number, 79%, feel that first-generation immigrants are integrating well into

²⁹ ECRI p. 29

Portuguese society and 82% have a positive perception of the integration of second-generation immigrants. A slim majority of Portuguese (53%) disagree with the statement that 'immigrants take jobs away from native-born Portuguese. To these respondents the biggest worry was illegal immigration (88%) and Portuguese emigration (88%).

However stereotypes about certain immigrants are widespread. Research shows that Portugal is a society that is formally anti-racist but one where racist attitudes persist³⁰. Subtle racism remains rooted in some parts of Portuguese society.

In **Britain**, The lack of correlation between the numbers of migrants and public concern shows that public understanding of the reality of migration is far from accurate. The public believes that 31% of the UK population was born abroad, while the real figure is 13%. In addition, there is little correlation between the number of migrants living in an area and the attitudes of its population to migrants and migration. While 70% think migration is a problem, just 20% see it as one in their local area, according to an Ipsos Mori poll from December 2013. Hostile media coverage is thought to be key in altering public attitudes and Britons who are less affluent have more prejudice towards migrants whereas wealthier Britons who have a higher level of education and experience of migration themselves are less likely to be prejudiced.

The rise of extreme-right parties

The rise of extreme-right parties in the EU and in Greece in particular after the economic crisis is significant and affects other countries. Many countries see their mainstream parties increasingly taking harsher views and making tougher policies on migration.

The extreme-right ELAM party in **Cyprus** achieved a five-fold increase in support between 2009 and 2011, although in percentage terms its support is still small. Additionally, some political parties host politicians with extreme views on migration. They use the rise in unemployment due to the crisis to spread the fear of the 'other'. These factors have also influenced the overall rise of extreme and far-right parties in other EU states.

Portugal has one ultra-nationalist political party – the National Renovator Party (PNR) - which is strongly against immigration: one of its main slogans is 'Portugal for the Portuguese'. Although PNR has never reached 0.5% of the vote in any election, and receives no election coverage in the media, it is gaining ground. However it is still a long way from winning a parliamentary seat or achieving the prominence of its counterparts in other European countries.

Some far right groups in the **UK** such as the English Defence League (EDL) and the British National Party (BNP) have in recent times gained more and more media coverage and so been given a platform for their views.

The British think-tank Demos has found that there is a rise in nationalist, racist and anti-immigration feelings among a large slice of young, unemployed, male population only evident on the internet, particularly on Facebook. Its research suggests that the correlation between the crisis and this new form of 'digital populism' is much stronger than that with 'traditional politics'. (Demos, 2011).

Although the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) is seen as a populist rather than a far-right political party, the Guardian newspaper has described it as a 'more moderate brand of radical right-wing politics'. Although UKIP supporters seem to be more moderate than far-right wing groups their main political agenda is the UK's exit from Europe and stricter immigration control. With the rise of UKIP and its appeal to part of their voter base, the Conservatives are talking more and more about restricting immigration. Other mainstream parties are following suit.

³⁰Baganha, Maria Ioannis e Marques, José Carlos (2001), "Tendências no sentido da formação de uma classe étnica", idem (orgs.) Imigração e Política o Caso Português. Lisboa: Fundação Luso-Americana, 68-70

The creation or leadership of a group which promotes racism or support for such a group and participation in its activities are still not forbidden in **Denmark**, and there are reports of white supremacist groups. The Danish People's party, while seen as a populist party with broad appeal, the party's founder Pia Kjaersgaard holds the view that Denmark is not a country where immigration is natural or welcome. In response to criticism from Sweden, she retorted: "If they want to turn Stockholm, Gothenburg or Malmö into a Scandinavian Beirut, with clan wars, honour killings and gang rapes, let them do it. We can always put a barrier on the Øresund Bridge."³¹

The rise of racism

Policies that limit rights, create destitution and foster social isolation, and fuel discrimination, disadvantage and segregation are significant barriers to integration for migrant groups, as well as making it more likely that they will be mistreated. There is evidence that migrants across the EU are often subjected to racism or xenophobia³².

The public campaigns developed for the right-wing anti-migrant parties, and in some cases mainstream parties, across Europe have used promotional materials accusing migrants directly of taking jobs and resources away from the host community in a time of austerity. The increased media exposure of far right and anti-immigrant parties and groups in Europe normalises the messages and has made it easier and more acceptable for individuals to express anti-migrant and racist views.

According to the European Social Survey on Racism, **Cyprus** has the greatest tendency towards racism of any of the participating European countries. The survey finds that Cypriots are unwilling to accept migrants from any cultural backgrounds other than European. There is also intolerance of diversity and homosexuality.³³ The report characterises Cypriots as xenophobic, self-centred, indifferent, passive and detached from serious issues and suffering from lack of trust. Several other studies³⁴ confirm these racist, discriminatory attitudes and the intolerance of Cypriots towards those they see as 'other'.

Despite the generally more tolerant attitudes towards migrants, subtle racist attitudes persist in **Portugal** and there is evidence that racist comments may be increasing on the internet. A July 2013 report by the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) found an increase in racist websites in recent years, targeting Roma and migrants in particular.

If racist violence is not a problem, discrimination is a reality and the justice system doesn't appear to defend victims as well as it should. Complaints of racial discrimination almost never result in a positive decision for the victim. This may lead to under-reporting. According to High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, of 89 complaints of racial discrimination in 2010, and 111 in 2011, only two were punished with fines.

³¹http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/05/26/far-right-europe-election_n_5391873.html

³² European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, "Migrants, minorities and housing: exclusion, discrimination and anti-discrimination in 15 Member States of the European Union", 2005

³³ European Social Survey (2011), *Thleoptikous kai Ratsistes, mas emfanizeiereuna*: Available at <http://www.politis-news.com/cgi-bin/hweb?-A=205521&-V=articles>

³⁴ Eurobarometer, Perception of Discrimination (2012), Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_393_fact_cy_en.pdf

[And also the Ombudsman's research on the attitudes of Cypriots towards people from different religious](#)

As well as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, Muslim and Jewish communities are also vulnerable to racism in **Denmark**.³⁵ The public attitude towards Roma is especially negative and they face harassment and discrimination. The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) says there is a lack

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In **Denmark**, the most persistent and obvious discrimination is found in the leisure industry, especially in nightclubs and discotheques. In 2006, the City Court of Copenhagen sentenced four doormen (from four different night clubs) for discrimination against young men of a non-Danish ethnic origin.

Research found that 59% of young people from ethnic minorities aged 25-34 had been refused entry into a discotheque or a nightclub compared with only 18% of ethnic Danes. The same survey revealed that skin colour also played a role: the darker a person is, the harder it is to get into a club. i.e. this means that the discrimination is greater against non-whites, and more towards migrants from outside the EU. While 44% of persons from the former Yugoslavia were refused entry, the figure rose to 54% for Turks and 79% for Somalis.

As a result, there was an awareness-raising campaign on nightlife discrimination and an initiative to raise discotheque doormen's awareness of racial discrimination issues.

(Source: Ecri)

of knowledge of the law on hate crime motivated by race or ethnic origin. The police lack training and fail to register hate crimes or investigate them properly.³⁶ The ECRI echoes this and says that as a result, the low number of hate crimes reported does not provide an accurate picture. There are no official statistics on racial discrimination at work but there are anecdotal reports of discriminatory job advertisements and prejudice against Muslims, Central and Eastern European workers.

Racism in the **UK** is on the rise. Migrants are not treated as badly as they were some decades ago when signs stating 'No Blacks, No Irish' were unashamedly posted in public places. However, in modern times there has been little respite for migrants who are under suspicion and face reminders of British hostility in the form of 'Go Home' vans sent out by the Home Office to tell undocumented migrants to leave the country.

Ethnic minorities living in the UK were four times more likely to have suffered from racism in 2012 than they were before the last general election. In 2013, more than 1,400 children and young people contacted Childline for counselling specific to racism - an increase of 69% over the previous year. This underlines a wider problem with xenophobia in the classroom. Migrant children are labelled as 'freshies' at school and this playground racism has a strong correlation with the rise in political hostility to immigration.

Racist actions have mostly affected areas with very small, homogeneous communities. North Wales Constabulary recorded 80 racist incidents in 2000; last year the figure rose to 337, meaning that 4% of the area's ethnic minority experienced some form of racial discrimination. There is a growing concern that very little is being done to address such issues.

Institutionalised racism within the criminal justice system has long been debated and has had an impact on the lives of many ethnic minorities. During recent heavy-handed 'stop and search' raids by border control, immigration officers have been seen stopping only those members of the public who are non-white.

³⁵ Ecri p. 29 – 36

³⁶ ECRI p. 16

7. Challenging negative stereotypes and demonstrating migrant's added value

Despite the negative discourse and representation of migrants in the public domain and the media, migrants play a positive role in many aspects of the lives of the country they reside in. A key challenge is to find ways to make this visible.

Boosting the economy and GDP

The OECD has identified **Denmark** as one of 19 countries in which immigration had a positive overall fiscal impact, because immigrants from the wealthier EU countries are often better educated than Danes and find high-paying jobs - and thus pay higher taxes than the average Danish worker. The extra money spent and taxes paid by migrants outpace the public services they use and result in a net gain of over a billion kroner (134 million euros) a year for Denmark's economy, according to the OECD.

Similarly, in **Italy** migrants contribute some 1.4 billion euro to the national economy – this being the difference between expenditure on migrants and the revenues the state earns from them.

When migration is mainly the result of economic and social crisis in the country of origin, the return flows are a positive indicator of the positive return towards the countries of origin, this being the case of many citizens of Eastern Europe and China who return home after a period in Italy, owing to the positive economic growth rate of their countries of origin.

Helping to balance demographic trends

In **Denmark**, as in many EU countries, the population as a whole is growing older, and so the workforce is shrinking. It has been suggested that immigration could be a remedy for this, since migrants are normally young, and their fertility rates are normally higher than in their country of destiny, they can to some extent counteract the ageing of the population and increase the labour force. This holds true in many other EU countries, some of which have shrinking populations despite immigration.

The population of **Portugal**, for example, has begun to decline since the economic crisis: in 2012, the overall population decreased by some 55,000 people.

In the **United Kingdom**, the non-migrant population contains a higher proportion of older and middle aged people than the migrant population. Migrants to the UK are mostly young, with 80% aged between 18 and 34³⁷.

Promoting diversity and vibrant cultural life

In **Portugal**, music is an area where migrants' positive impact is very visible. Brazilian migrants helped to diversify the knowledge of the different Brazilian musical genres and singers/groups. Music and dance with a strong influence from African communities, such as Kizomba e Kuduro, is also popular, leading to the existence of dances school and dance lessons of this genre targeted for the national population. In terms of classical music, the strong participation of migrants in orchestras is widely recognised. There is also a migratory movement of Central and Eastern European migrants to the

³⁷ Institute for the Study of Labor (2011), *Welfare Participation by Immigrants in the UK*, available from: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp6144.pdf>

countryside to open/run music schools and/or teach music. These migrants are recognised as good professionals and bring new work methods and quality standards³⁸.

In the **United Kingdom**, some of the country's "cultural icons" are migrants. In the past, the psychiatrist Sigmund Freud left Austria in 1933 and the writer Henry James emigrated from the United States in 1876. More recently, the Man Booker Prize winner Kazuo Ishiguro arrived from Japan when he was 20 and the Olympic Park sculpture was designed by Anish Kapoor, an Indian-born artist³⁹.

In **Italy** in recent years, associations of immigrant communities are springing up more and more; they transmit their history and their culture, creating partnerships and networks especially in the context of social policies, which promote human rights, freedom in religious worship and equal opportunities.

A recent study shows that 46 % feels it is very positive that immigrants have made us learn about new foods, cultures and behaviours.⁴⁰

Improving national performance/capacity in sport

European countries'sporting success often depends on migrants, and football is a case in point. In **Portugal**, where football is the most popular sport, in 2012 more than half (53.8%) of professional footballers were migrants. The Portuguese league has the third highest percentage of non-Portuguese footballers in Europe, with only the English and the Cypriot leagues beating these figures.

In the **United Kingdom** migrants have made great contributions to sports. At the last Olympic games, of the 43 medals won by individuals, four gold and two silver medals were won by Team GB members born abroad. Of the 37 individual medals won by British-born athletes, at least nine medals (four golds, two silvers and three bronzes) were won by Team GB members with a parent or grandparent born outside Britain⁴¹.

8.Assessing integration policies

Growing contradictions in EU policies

Europe has invested in the integration of non-EU citizens in Europe: this commitment started in 1999 with the Tampere Programme and it has been renewed again with Europe 2020 Strategy. In July 2011 the Commission issued the European Agenda for the integration of non-EU migrants, where measures to increase economic, social, cultural and political participation were commenced, especially at the local level. The EU also provides several financial and other instruments to strengthen integration: the European Integration Fund, for example, financially subsidises Member States in integrating migrants in their societies, while the "Handbook on Integration", the "European Web Site on Integration" and the "European Integration Forum" are useful tools to collect information and good practices.

³⁸ Almeida, André (Coord) (2004), O Impacto da Imigração nas Sociedades da Europa, SEF, disponível em http://www.sef.pt/documentos/56/VersaoFinal_OImpactodaImigracaonasSociedadesdaEuropav1Port.pdf

³⁹ Christopher York, "Immigration A Bad Thing? Eleven Cultural Icons Britain Wouldn't Have Without It", The Huffington Post UK, 29/05/2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/05/29/immigration-uk-cultural-icons_n_3352601.html

⁴⁰ from a survey directed by Italians' Ismu (Initiatives and Studies on Multiethnicity)

⁴¹ British Future, "How Team GB reflects the making of modern Britain", 14/08/2012, <http://www.britishfuture.org/national-conversations/britain/how-team-gb-reflects-the-making-of-modern-britain/>

However, an assessment of EU and members states' integration policies indicates that it is increasingly immigration control and support for 'Fortress Europe', and not integration considerations, which more frequently define the conditions entry, residence and employment of non-EU migrants.

Over the last ten years, European migration and integration policies have focused on access to the labour market as one of the most important indicators of the level of integration of non-EU migrants into European Member States. Nonetheless, the full and lasting integration into the labour market is evidently dependent on access to social rights and services, such as healthcare, housing, education, as well as adequate income support and social protection, and most significantly, the quality and conditions of employment provided. However, the unequal treatment applied to migrants with regards to living and working conditions places them at disproportionate risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Additionally, residence status has emerged as a factor of exclusion among migrants. The EU approach on integration is exclusively limited to non-EU legally residing nationals. While every EU member state is bound to international standards with regards to economic, social and cultural rights for all on their territory, significant differences apply to migrants on grounds of their residence status.

National policy trends

Across Europe there has been a trend in integration policies towards greater requirements placed on migrants, e.g. requiring migrants to attend language and orientation classes and to demonstrate a level of language proficiency before arrival.

The **United Kingdom** has to an extent followed this trend in requiring evidence of some language ability and knowledge of 'Life in the UK' before acquiring settlement or Citizenship, and most recently in requiring some family migrants to have a level of spoken English before coming to the UK. (Migration Observatory, Oxford University)

In **Cyprus**, due to the austerity measures, national funds for social research, which includes migration issues, have been extensively restricted. It seems, however, that the most obvious characteristic of the integration model in Cyprus is duality. Two separate integration models are running at the same time in different gears and speed having different objectives: one for EU nationals that share same or similar rights with Cypriots and one model for third country nationals with fewer rights.

There are some positive measures in **Italy**: proposals are being discussed in parliament to cut waiting time before migrants can apply for naturalisation – currently this is one of the longest in Europe. **Portugal** has made the greatest strides in integrating migrants and now ranks second in the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Mipex) behind only Sweden.

9. Challenges and Recommendations

This section represents some of the key challenges and recommendations proposed at different levels – national, EU, for EAPN and for media.

At national level

Cyprus

- There needs to be a dialogue to establish, regulate and implement a comprehensive model of migration. This should be guided by the principles of diversity, multiculturalism and social

solidarity. The government, political parties, trade unions, NGOs and migrants' associations should work together to implement this.

- Cyprus's migration employment policy specifically needs to be guided by the principle that migrants are human beings with equal human and labour rights.
- Legislation is needed to respond to contemporary challenges and demands of migration.
- Establish a new 'Action Plan' for integration of migrants to follow the previous plan that came to an end in 2012.
- Priority should be given to determining the legal status of migrants who have been resident in Cyprus a long time and have established social bonds on the island so that they can enjoy their fundamental human rights.

Denmark

- Support migrant children who do worse than Danish children in school.
- The Danish authorities should ensure that all children in Denmark are taught their mother-tongue irrespective of their country of origin, if there are enough migrants interested in this.
- Reduce barriers to family reunification through a fairer legislation and better process. Give priority to a wide-ranging reform of the spousal reunification rules to remove direct or indirect discrimination and rules that contradict their stated aims.

Italy

- Fight organised crime, which affects all Italians but particularly migrants experiencing poverty.
- Tackle the informal labour market, which enslaves migrants.
- Put in place a 'migration strategy', to ensure non-discriminatory policies, equal opportunities and respect for difference.
- Help migrants develop their potential, skills and know-how and to foster integration by helping migrants learn the Italian language and the culture, customs and laws of the country.
- Migrants held in 'Identification and Expulsion Centres' are being denied human rights: for example, they are forced to strip before being hosed down with disinfectant in mixed company in cold outdoor courtyards. This treatment of migrants is unacceptable. They have staged protests such as stitching their lips. These centres must be closed and replaced with places where migrants are free to come and go.
- Immigration law must change - especially in relation to 'illegal immigration' being considered a criminal offence. The law makes criminals out of people who are only looking for a better future. These innocent people end up in jail or are forced to go into hiding where they enter the black market and become easy prey for organised crime.
- Although a few efforts have been made to improve conditions for the Roma and Sinti, such piecemeal projects in camps do not solve the underlying situation. A determined effort is needed to improve their schooling, training, housing and employment.
- Citizenship should be granted to children born in Italy to foreign parents and who grow up in the country.
- Migrants should have the right to vote in local and regional elections.

Portugal

- Promote integration and create better jobs (not precarious or low-paid) for migrants.
- Although Portugal has made good progress with policies promoting the integration of migrants in recent decades, government needs to continue its efforts, despite austerity measures.
- During this period of austerity and economic crises, all the more effort needs to be made to prevent migrants who have residents' permits losing their status because they have lost their jobs or suffered a drop in income. Make sure that as many migrants as possible have residence permits and that the current economic crisis does not cause documented migrants to fall into an irregular situation.
- Since the government intends to create an agency to encourage well-qualified people to come to Portugal, it also needs to look at migrants already in the country who have such qualifications, yet have not been able to get jobs using them. It is important to understand who these well-qualified migrants are, the nature of their qualifications and to develop programmes to help them translate their degrees into qualifications acceptable in Portugal.

United Kingdom

- The family migration rules from 2012 has taken away the universal right to family life and linked to rights to level of income and divided thousands of families. Promote fairer and more humane policies.
- The UK should review and closely monitor the impact of the new immigration bill 2014 which is creating further barriers for migrants to access vital services and a fertile ground for discrimination and racism.
- To better support migrants, UK should develop a migrant and refugee integration strategy at a national level.
- The UK should vastly reduce the income requirement for family reunification and change the policies that divide families and instead keep family wellbeing at the heart of the policies.
- The UK should establish a national body with a wide range of stakeholders, including migrant communities themselves, to lead and inform on migrants' and refugees' integration strategy.
- Politicians should show leadership in establishing accurate and positive rhetoric around migration and stop scapegoating migrants.

Recommendations for the EU

- Member states that host migrants should respect their fundamental human rights and the EU must monitor their treatment.
- Share responsibility for asylum, migration, Roma, etc., more equally across Europe.
- Develop a set of indicators to warn/monitor the rise of racism at national and European level and make an annual report of the results to raise the awareness of the public and politicians.
- Create advocates for immigration, by training migrants and other volunteers to combat prejudice and raise awareness of the benefits migrants bring to their host countries.
- Member states bordering the southern coast of the Mediterranean must enter into agreements that they are all responsible for rescuing these people.
- Europe should commit itself to protecting the lives of people forced to make dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean in order to survive. Migrants escaping from wars need better protection, and must be rescued, not rejected at sea.

- We must stop labelling these people as ‘clandestine’ or ‘illegal’.

Recommendations for EAPN members, national networks and EOs

These are recommendations from the Task Force Members for their own and other EAPN national networks in order to build solidarity and ensure that migrants’ rights and issues are mainstreamed in their work and strategies.

All networks and organisations should:

- Have a representative from a migrant community on its board of trustees or management committee.
- Develop a statement of commitment to diversity and equality and implement it in its daily work.
- Take into account the impact on migrants of any poverty issue discussed on its agenda.
- Take action to raise public awareness of how migrants are also affected by the economic crisis and to build solidarity with them.
- Work to influence government, policy makers, public officials and the public by engaging in dialogue to change conditions for migrants.
- Campaign to raise awareness in the general public about the consequences of racism, xenophobia and discrimination on the personal lives of migrants and society as a whole.
- Provide training for member organisations in the rights of migrants, the consequences of the current problematic management of migration and the need for change. Also provide training to combat racism, inequality, xenophobia and discrimination.

Recommendations for EAPN Secretariat

- Monitor and collect evidence of how national networks have implemented these recommendations and any action national networks have taken on migration.
- Set up a migration working group to raise the issues affecting migrants among the networks and develop joint strategies and activities.

Recommendations for the Media

Media must take some responsibility for misconceptions in the public about migration, because of the number, tone, presentation and, above all, the angle of the migration stories they run. Coverage can affect political debate and ultimately decision-making. It can result in violent attacks on individuals and groups of people labelled “problems”, “spongers” or “trouble-makers”.

In this highly charged context, balanced, accurate reporting and editing becomes particularly important. Checking and analysing facts, digging out fresh and concealed information, careful use of language, headlines that do not exaggerate and go beyond what is justified by the story, appropriate photographs – all have a role to play.

- Be aware of responsibility especially in areas such as migration, which can be highly charged and contentious.
- Be careful about checking the facts about migration, and about the use of emotive, negative or inflammatory language, and are aware that a misleading headline or an inappropriately selected photo can harm individuals and groups.

- Media outlets should interview migrants for stories that affect them or are about them. Not giving space and airtime to their voices is unfair and therefore bad journalism.

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See EAPN publications and activities on www.eapn.eu



The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) is the largest European network of national, regional and local networks, involving anti-poverty NGOs and grassroots groups as well as European Organisations, active in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. It was established in 1990.

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