OPENING SESSION:

- Statement by Ms Luisella Pavan-Woolfe (Director "Horizontal and International Issues", Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission)

- Statement by Ms Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir (Deputy Secretary-General, OECD)

First session: FEATURES OF WOMAN'S MIGRATION

- "Feminisation of international migration" by Laura Oso Casas (University of La Coruna, Spain) and Jean-Pierre Garson (OECD)

- "Migrant women in OECD countries: participation rate and employment situation" by Jean-Christophe Dumont, Mario Isoppo and Thomas Liebig (OECD)

  1) "The participation of immigrant women in the labour market: A double handicap despite the progress made"
  2) "Labour market integration of immigrant women: overview and recent trends"
  3) "Labour market outcomes of migrant women in OECD countries: overview and determinants"

Round Table: MIGRANT WOMEN: THEIR ROLE IN THE LABOUR MARKET?

- "Immigrant women in Italy" by Jonathan Chaloff (Asylum Research Group, Sistema Interventi Decentrati Migrazioni, Italy)

- "Women migrants: Facing less labour protection & labour market legal opportunities than men" by Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin (ILO)

Second session: THE RANGE OF WAYS IN WHICH MIGRANT WOMEN INTEGRATE INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

Round Table: MIGRANT WOMEN OF THE SAME COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND THEIR DIFFERENT WAYS OF INTEGRATING

- "Turkish migrant women's labour force participation: An overview" by Ahmet İçduygu (Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey)
Round Table: Skilled Migrant Women Involved in Enterprise Creation

- "Migrant women's entrepreneurship: Experience and best practices" by Angeline Low (University of Technology, Sydney, Australia)

Round Table: Migrant Women's Role in Relation to the Future Needs of the Labour Market

- "Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies" by Dragana Avramov (Population and Social Policy Consultants, Brussels)

- "Migrant women's role in relation to the future needs of the labour market" by Georges Lemaitre (OECD)

Third session: Policies and Programmes for Migrant Women's Labour Market Integration: Outcomes and Prospects

Round Table: Policies and Programmes for Migrant Women's Labour Market Integration

- "Migrant women into work: What is working?" by Alexandra Heron (Consultant, OECD)

- "Immigrant women on the Swedish labour market – Past and present situation" by Wuokko Knocke (National Institute for Working Life, Stockholm)

Closing Session

- Summary of discussions

- Conclusions by Berglind Ásgeirdóttir (Deputy Secretary-General, OECD)
OECD and European Commission seminar
Migrant Women and the Labour Market: Diversity and Challenges

Brussels, September 26th 2005

Luisella Pavan-Woolfe
Director "Horizontal and International Issues"
Directorate General "Employment, Social Affairs, Equal Opportunities", European Commission
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly happy to open this conference today. The themes that we will be dealing with – migrant women and the labour market - are an important part of our cooperation with the OECD. They are also high on the EU's agenda, from a gender equality perspective.

Before I begin, I would like to welcome Ms Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir, Deputy Secretary-General and her team and thank them for the excellent joint preparation of the seminar.

As Director of International Issues in DG Employment, I am happy to say that our cooperation with the OECD is very fruitful. Today's event adds a new dimension to our work. The theme of immigrant women is a very challenging one. For these reasons, I look forward to our exchange of views over the next two days. This will be the first attempt, on this scale, to analyse and look at policy responses to address the situation of immigrant women.

Immigration and the integration of migrant women into the labour markets of the EU Member States is a priority for
the European Commission. Our 2005 report on equality between women and men, presented to the European Council in March, demonstrates the increased attention we pay to the social and economic needs of immigrant women. We emphasize the need to promote their employment in the Member States' labour markets. We recognise the important role they play in the integration process. The Commission also stresses the need to guarantee and respect the fundamental rights of immigrant women.

We are now in the second year of the largest expansion the EU has ever experienced. Our population has grown from 370 million to 450 million. We are also facing the effects of demographic ageing within our societies. If these are not addressed these will have negative consequences upon competitiveness and employment, and, ultimately, our living standards. Economic migration is not the panacea, but it is becoming, day by day, more necessary if we are to achieve long-term prosperity and reduce the adverse structural effects of ageing.

We have also recently renewed our commitment to achieving sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, through what is
known as the revised Lisbon strategy. In terms of employment, our priorities for action, as established in the new set of Employment Guidelines, are:

- to attract more people into employment;
- to increase adaptability of our workers to the needs of labour markets;
- and to invest more in human capital and skills development.

In this context, making a success of an active and inclusive immigration policy is vital. Our success depends on the sustainable management of immigration flows and on more effective integration policies.

We all know that successful integration requires an holistic approach which encompasses not only access to the labour market, but also, education and language skills, housing and urban issues, health and social services, social and access to a cultural environment and civic and political rights. But today we want to focus upon integration into the labour market, which is a key component of integration and is still an area on which much progress is needed, especially when women are concerned.
The employment rate of immigrant women remains considerably lower, by 16.9 p.p., than that of EU national women (according to 2003 data), while this difference is somewhat smaller, 11.0 p.p. for men. Highly qualified immigrant women are particularly disadvantaged, as their employment rate is 23.2 pp lower than that of highly qualified EU national women. The gap is again smaller for highly qualified men, at 13 p.p. difference. This shows that there is a large well of untapped qualifications. To reduce these gaps, we need to pursue active policies.

Immigrant women often work in low-paid industries and occupations, such as cleaning and care, without being given the chance to fully utilise their labour potential. And they are often disadvantaged because of lower wages. In 2000, women in the EU on average had 16% lower pay than EU men, but migrant women earned an additional 10% less than EU women. This gap was lower for men, at only 4% difference.

We must pursue policies that mobilise all groups to join the labour market. In doing so, we must pay greater attention to involving immigrant women, but we also need to involve highly qualified women. We need to pay more attention to increase the employment of women in all age
brackets, to close the gender pay-gap and to improve the reconciliation of work and family life for both women and men. We also need more research and statistics on the integration of immigrant women, as they form significant proportions of migrant communities, primarily due to family reunification arrangements.

The Commission through the European Social Fund supports equal opportunities for all in accessing the labour market. The Community initiative EQUAL is also involved in a number of trans-national projects, some of which specifically target immigrant women and help them to enter the labour market. Other pilot projects promote innovative approaches to integrate migrant women and men, to exchange best practices and experience. We will hear more on this in the course of this conference.

The most recent development concerns putting in place a framework for a common agenda for integration, with the establishment of 11 Common Basic Principles for Integration to guide Member States in their relevant policy. The Commission's Communication was published at the beginning of this month, and covers all key dimensions of integration: employment, social inclusion, basic rights, and culture. Particular emphasis has been placed on
promoting the employment of immigrant women, and on ensuring minimum restrictions on their access to the labour market.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission is committed to delivering better results. We are committed to ensuring that there are mechanisms in the Member States for immigrant women and men to facilitate their access to and integration into our labour markets. Here, gender equality is a key aspect. This is crucial to combat the multiple discrimination that immigrant women often face.

There is clearly a lot for us to discuss over the next two days, and I look forward to a fruitful debate with our partners from the OECD. Let me thank those who initiated this event, and those who will contribute their expertise to the panels. I look forward to the outcome of our debate and exchange of views with great interest. It is particularly relevant to the European Commission current work.

Thank you for your attention.
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

OPENING REMARKS
by
Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir
Deputy Secretary-General, OECD
I want to welcome you all to this two-day seminar jointly organised by the OECD and the European Commission, with the purpose of examining how migrant women in OECD countries are faring, focusing on their position in the labour market. Although discussion of the feminization of migration flows has been going on for some years, this has largely taken place in the absence of a systematic examination of the available data on the phenomenon. Hence, the first objective of this seminar is to improve our understanding of the feminisation of migration flows and the principal features of female migration. A second objective is to examine and evaluate policies and programmes aimed at facilitating the labour market integration of migrant women, including measures to overcome barriers to their integration into the labour market and the host society.

This will lead us to analyse the many ways by which migrant women of the same nationality and in different host countries integrate into the labour market in different regions of the OECD; this will also include a focus on skilled migrant women who face larger gaps in employment and occupational attainment than their native-born counterparts in some countries. It is interesting to note that in Canada, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom, the share of immigrant women with a tertiary level of education among all immigrant women is higher compared to their native-born counterparts. The role of migrant women in fostering entrepreneurship will be also analysed. In a longer perspective, we will debate the role that migrant women can play in meeting the future needs of the labour market.

The fact that migrant women do not, by and large, participate in the labour market to the same extent as either migrant men or women nationals illustrates the “double disadvantage” which they face: they participate less than men, but also less than their national counterparts in the labour market, implying that they bear the burdens of gender and immigrants. This is mirrored in evidence suggesting that for many immigrant women the integration process has worked less well than for their counterparts. It is vital to explore the reasons for this and to find possible solutions to promote better integration.

Host countries have good reasons to invest in better integration. Promoting inclusive labour market strategies enhances gender equity and social cohesion. It is also an economic necessity at a time of looming labour shortages and declining birth rates in most OECD countries. For
individual women, employment can provide them with financial independence and often is the means of supporting other family members in the countries of origin via remittances. Indeed, more women migrate independently and as main income earners instead of following male relatives. It is also a route for avoiding poverty for themselves and their children in the not-so infrequent case of marriage breakdown, as well as enabling them to provide more adequately for their old age.

How can this be promoted? In several of the documents prepared for the seminar, I have noted (without surprise) the frequent references to the fact that the work force participation of migrant women declines once they have children and during the early child-rearing years. This is comparable to what one observes for many women nationals, but the situation is more pronounced for migrants. Thus, the issues considered in examining the reconciliation of work and family life are especially relevant here. I would like to mention in this context the OECD reports on Babies and Bosses and the activities related to family-friendly policies, which include options for reform to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

I hope that this seminar will be able to make practical recommendations to tackle the problems many migrant women face in seeking to get a firm foothold in the host-country labour market. Examples of such practical measures are the offer of host-country language classes or start-up finance for businesses. I would like also to mention that for the first time ever, the UNESCO and the OECD are jointly developing a set of guidelines to ensure relevance and quality provision in cross-border higher education in both developed and developing countries.

It is equally important that this seminar contribute to addressing concerns with respect to the development of migration and labour market policies in the host countries, taking into account the specific situation of women, for example as domestic labour: with right and coherent policy measures, migrant women could represent an opportunity for more productive and competitive labour markets.

I am looking forward to lively discussions over the next two days. I would particularly like to thank the European Commission for their warm welcome and excellent co-operation with the OECD in the preparation of the seminar.
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

THE FEMINISATION OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION
Laura Oso Casas and Jean-Pierre Garson
THE FEMINISATION OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

by

Laura Oso Casas and Jean-Pierre Garson

Introduction

1. For a long time, the typical migrant was viewed as male and, until three decades ago, female migration was generally overlooked. Since the middle of the 1970s, there has been a growing interest in women’s immigration, first with the increase in family reunification, especially in Europe, and from the 1980s until today, the growing recruitment of migrant women for labour market needs, especially in services. This paper will first examine the four main phases in the development of studies on immigrant women, through a classification of the literature on the feminisation of migration. The paper will then address the question: do recent data on immigrant women indicate a trend towards the feminisation of migration?

A. The development of studies on migrant women

2. In the first period, up to the mid-1970s there is almost a complete absence of studies on female migration. Research has repeatedly shown that the reason why immigrant women have been largely overlooked in the literature is due to the predominance of the model of the patriarchal family. This model sees women as dependent on men, the principal breadwinner and head of the household (Morokvasic, 1984a). Up to the late 1960s, because of the fact that immigrant women were not predominant in the labour force, the image of women as being economically inactive prevails in the academic discourse of various fields of study, including economics, sociology and history (Borderias and Carrasco, 1984), thereby influencing migration theories. The analyses of these theories, either from the point of view of rational decisions of individuals (the neo-classical perspective), or from the perspective of the macro-structural factors behind migration (the structural approach), coincide in highlighting the role of the migrant male as a source of labour - a worker and an economic actor - and choose to overlook the role played by women. The latter are relegated to the private space of the home, and their economic contribution to society is largely ignored (Oso and Catarino, 1996).

3. Work on statistics was a further contributing factor to the seemingly invisible nature of female migration, as for many years the data sources available for the study of population flows did not include gender-based breakdowns (Zlotnik, 2003). In addition, the economic activities of immigrant women tended to favour their being underestimated in official data, as they worked mainly in the informal economy: domestic service, personal care, prostitution, etc.

4. The second period begins in 1973-74 with the closure of European borders to new immigrant workers, and the predominance of family reunification in migration flows. Following the implementation in Europe of restrictive immigration policies, women dominated entry flows, although they continued to be in the minority in terms of the stock of immigrants (Zlotnik, 1995). Studies appeared which
highlighted the growing female presence amongst the foreign-born population, and the first references to the feminisation of immigration in Europe began to appear in academic and political circles (Lebon, 1979). Nevertheless, certain authors did not consider this feminisation to be a sudden phenomenon, but instead the result of a gradual progression (Golub, Morokvasic, Quiminal, 1997). Women already outnumbered men in certain ethnic groups prior to the border closures (Morokvasic, 1984). An example of this is Spanish emigration to France (especially to Paris) during the 1960s, which was made up of large numbers of women emigrating alone in the migration process, taking up jobs as domestic workers or concierges (Oso, 2004). The discourse on the feminisation of migration in Europe may therefore be explained not merely by a real increase in the number of women in population flows, but also by an acceptance of the concept of the female immigrant. There is a growing awareness that immigration is far from being a temporary phenomenon, but instead involves family groups settling in the receiving country, which of course include women: the female immigrant therefore makes her appearance, albeit mainly restricted to the woman in family reunification, rather than as an economic and social actor (Golub, Morokvasic, Quiminal, 1997; Morokvasic, 1984).

5. **From the 1980s onwards, the active role played by the female migrant begins to emerge.** Several publications appear which draw attention to the underestimation of the numbers of migrant women: the classic reference is Morokvasic, *Birds of Passage are also Women* (1984a). This growing awareness of immigrant woman is partly attributable to a more open analytical approach in the field of social studies that allows the economic contribution of women to be brought to the foreground. As a result, new perspectives appear that refer to macro and micro-determinant factors when describing and explaining migration processes (Massey, *et al*., 1987).

6. The broader theoretical approach to the analysis of networks as a factor behind migration now extends to the role of women in migration. A further factor that favours the increased visibility of female immigration is that migration is no longer considered to be the result of an individual decision, but rather is best viewed as an integral part of family and community strategies (Stark, 1984). In addition; the “household” as a unit of analysis in the study of population flows was growing in importance (Grasmuck S., Pessar, 1991; Hondangneu-Sotelo, 1991). In short, there is a shift from the individual perspective, to the household and the community as the driving forces behind geographical movements. This means that the woman is no longer seen merely as a dependant, but as a key decision maker in the migration process.

7. There is a growing awareness that migration does not have the same effect and impact on men as on women and that, by focusing on the male migrant only, we fail to fully understand the complexities involved. The question of gender begins to represent a factor for consideration in the analysis of migration movements. Far from the woman in family reunification being dependent on the male migrant, studies appeared which examined the question of gender and migration, and which highlighted the active, rather than the passive, role played by women as actors within the migration process. Since then, two major issues have dominated research into this question: What factors determine female immigration? What impact does the migration process have on the status of immigrant women?

8. **The role of immigrant women from the 1990s.** The feminisation of migration is now international, as revealed in a recent United Nations report (2005). Certain authors have even gone so far as to define the feminisation of migration as one of the five characteristics that define the current *Age of Migration* (Castles and Miller, 1998). However, the following question may be posed: Does the

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2 From the 1960s onwards, new theoretical approaches began to appear that highlighted the problems involved in domestic work, such as the *New Family Economy* (Borderías and Carrasco, 1984) or Delphy’s belief that in addition to economical production, there is an additional type of production, domestic service within the family, and which is responsible for the biological and social reproduction of the group (Delphy, 1970).
feminisation of international migration actually exist, or are we merely dealing with the feminisation of the migration discourse, as occurred in Europe during the mid-seventies, and a wider acceptance of female migration?

9. Certain authors have opted to explain the feminisation of international migration as the result of the recomposition of capital on a worldwide scale. As Sassen points out, industrial delocalisation has brought about a fall in the need for foreign labour in the North’s industrial activities, as production processes are increasingly being transferred to southern countries. The appearance of duty-free zones has caused an increase in female migration flows in developing countries, particularly in Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean. In the North, the growing involvement of immigrant women in paid work is mainly the result of an increase in the demand for labour in unskilled and poorly paid jobs in the service sectors in immigrant-receiving countries. Domestic service, hotels and restaurants and personal care are all sectors that have large recourse to foreign labour and the development of exclusively female migration flows (Sassen, 1993). Immigrant women work in those jobs that are abandoned by the receiving country nationals.

10. We are therefore witnessing an international South/North transfer of reproductive work, a process that runs parallel with the transfer of productive activities on a global scale (Truong Thanh-Dam, 1996). Some authors use the term “servants of globalisation” to refer to those women who emigrate in order to work in domestic service, within the framework of the international division of reproductive work (Salazar, 2001). Other researchers refer to “global chains of affection” in order to explain the way in which in a global situation, women replace one another in those tasks traditionally associated with personal care and affection: the receiving country women are replaced by the immigrant women, whose place in turn is filled by other women who take charge of her children in her country of origin (grandmothers, sister, etc.) (Hochschild, 2000).

11. The literature also speaks of “Global Women” when referring to nannies, nurses, maids and sex workers within the framework of the new economy (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). In turn, Sassen discusses the South/North female migration flows to work in the informal economy within a framework which she refers to as the “counter-geographies of globalisation”. She considers that these channels generate major economic resources that are very often under-valued (Sassen, 2003). The importance of the transnational perspective when analysing female immigration today has also been highlighted by a number of researchers (Morokvasic et al., 2003). The studies have revealed the two dimensions of the role played by immigrant women in the economies of both their sending and their receiving societies: an active role on the labour market, sending remittances, becoming heads of household, etc. Certain academic and political circles would seem to have established a link between the feminisation of migration, the active role of women as economic and development agents, and empowerment. It is important to note that even though immigrant women participate in the economies of their countries of origin and destination, by sending large remittances and maintaining transnational households, this role as social and economic agents does not necessarily imply an increase in their status (empowerment).

12. It is very interesting to note that during the seminar a session will be devoted to Skilled Migrant Women Involved in Enterprise Creation. Whilst certain studies reveal that migration does indeed bring with it an increase in women’s status, it is equally true that others clearly show that immigrant women may suffer a drop in their status, as they are forced to work in precarious jobs or lose control over the remittances, etc.

13. In recent years there is increasing interest in studying the role of woman in migration in certain parts of the world. The efforts of research to bring the concept of female immigrants into the open and to expose the role of women as economic and social actors has led to a possible perception of the feminisation of migration. Is the feminisation of the discourse on immigration supported by the data?
B. The magnitude of the feminisation of migration

14. The second part of this document is an attempt to evaluate the magnitude of the feminisation of migration through a review of recent trends in international migration. In order to do this, some indicators were established based on: statistics published by the Population Division of the United Nations (UN); the OECD database on migration; and data from the labour force survey of OECD member countries. These indicators can be classified as follows:

- Those that were established based on the stock of foreigners or immigrants living in OECD countries. These allow an evaluation of the share of foreign or immigrant women in the total foreign or immigrant population; the same has been done for the labour force. It is also possible to compare immigrant women with the native-born women of the receiving country. The emphasis also can be put on the nationalities of immigrants, which allows us to verify if this feminisation is more or less present according to the nationality of the immigrant.

- Those which use the same data, to identify recent migrant arrivals by comparing the evolution of the stocks of immigrants over the last ten years. In so doing, it is easier to understand the growing feminisation of migration in a number of OECD countries. As concerns the labour force, it is possible to identify the sectors that during the ten last years have attracted the highest share of the immigrant women, and to compare this with that of women nationals of the receiving country.

- Those that concern the inflows by category. In this paper, the emphasis is placed on family migration (accompanying family, family reunification or family formation) and, to a lesser extent, on migration for employment.

15. The trends which emerge in this first series of indicators are briefly described. More detailed explanations can be found in other documents prepared for this seminar, notably on the participation rate of immigrant women (Participation des femmes immigrées sur le marché du travail : un double handicap en dépit des progrès by Jean-Christophe Dumont and Marion Isoppo, Room Document 2), or on their integration into the labour market (Labour Market Integration of Immigrant Women: Overview and Recent Trends by Jean-Christophe Dumont and Thomas Liebig, Room Document 3).

16. This first approach could in the future be supplemented by a more in-depth analysis of the data on flows, for example by analysing the trends in migrant flows for humanitarian reasons, and not only for family reasons, as well as migration for employment. With regard to the latter, it would be useful to analyse by gender the data on new resident and/or work permits delivered to immigrants. In the countries that have recently carried out an amnesty programme for foreigners in an irregular situation, like Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, the data could be provided by nationality and gender of the beneficiaries.

1. The evolution of the share of women in the immigrant population

17. On the basis of the information provided in the report of the UN Population Division (United Nations, 2002, International Migration Report 2002) and estimates of the number of immigrant women (foreign-born), it is possible to map the evolution in the share of immigrant women in the total of immigrants by region of residence between 1960 and 2000 (Table 1). There has been a slight upward over 40 years in most but not all regions of the world. The strongest growth took place in sub-Saharan Africa, in Oceania and in Latin America. In the same period, this proportion diminished in North Africa, as well as in South Asia. According to more recent data from Labour Force Surveys in OECD countries, the proportion of immigrant women in the total foreign-born population in 2004 is higher than that of immigrant men in most of the member countries.
Table 1. Percentage of immigrant women among the total number of international migrants: principal regions, 1960-2000

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<td>Total</td>
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<td>Most developed regions</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50.8</td>
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<td>Less developed regions</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>46.3</td>
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<td>44.7</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
<td>48.5</td>
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<td>51.7</td>
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<td>North America</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>51.0</td>
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<td>Oceania</td>
<td>44.4</td>
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<td>North Africa</td>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>40.6</td>
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<td>South Asia</td>
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<td>East and South East Asia</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>47.6</td>
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<td>Western Asia</td>
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<td>Caribbean</td>
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<td>Latin America</td>
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18. Table 2 presents the data available in the OECD database of the proportion of women in the total foreign population for several OECD countries, as well as the proportion of foreign-born women in 2004 in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. In 2003, the last year for which information is available, it was in Japan that the proportion of foreign women within the total foreign population was highest. In Canada and New Zealand, the share of immigrant women is close to 52%. Among the European OECD countries, the share of women in the total foreign population exceeds that of men in the United Kingdom, Hungary, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden. For the decade 1993-2003, it is in Germany that feminisation seems the strongest, even though the share of women still remains lower than men in the total foreign population. In other countries like Portugal, this share tended to diminish strongly, or to stabilise, in the case of Belgium, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom.

Table 2. Percentage of women in the total foreign population

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<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>47.6</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of immigrant women in the foreign-born population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1993</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: OECD Database on Migration.
19. A quick glance at the number of foreign-born women in the total foreign-born labour force shows that, in general, they are less represented than immigrant men (Table 3). In addition, the share of women in the foreign labour force is systematically less that of women (of all nationalities) in labour force, except in Canada and the United Kingdom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of women in the total labour force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of immigrant women in the foreign-born labour force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: OECD Database on Migration

20. In Austria, Denmark, Belgium, Spain, France and Switzerland, the share of foreign women in the foreign labour force has noticeably increased during the last decade. This is true also for the percentage of women born abroad in the immigrant labour force in Australia and Canada. In the other countries (Table 3), there is a slight decrease, or stabilisation.

2. The feminisation of recent migration flows

21. The share of women in the immigrant population was already high in 1994, and they predominated in most of the OECD member countries (Table 4).
Table 4.  **Percentage of women in the immigrant population, in some OECD countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


22. An analysis of the proportion of immigrant women who in 2004 had lived for five years or less in several OECD member countries, indicates feminisation of recent inflows, most particularly in Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Greece and Canada (Chart 1). Comparing the share of the women among immigrant arrivals for less than ten years in 1994 and in 2004 (Table 5), there is a noticeable increase in 2004 in comparison with 1994, which confirms the growing feminisation of inflows. In Austria, for example, in 2004, women represent 56% of recent arrivals, against 48% in 1994. The right-hand side of Table 5 shows the share of immigrant women and men who have arrived since ten years or less in the total population of immigrants in 2004. In Spain, for example, 86% of immigrant women arrived during the last ten years, against 74% in Italy and 58% in Greece. This underlines once again the trend towards feminisation of recent migration flows in some OECD countries.

![Chart 1. Percentage of women immigrants living for 5 years or less in some OECD countries, 2004](chart1)

Table 5: Indicators of the recent feminisation of migration flows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of women among immigrants arrived for 10 years or less</th>
<th>% of persons/arrivals 10 years or less among total immigrants, 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1994 W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech republic</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Data for Germany are for 1992 and for Austria, Finland and Sweden, they are for 1995.

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat)

23. With regard to the stock of immigrants by nationality, another possible indicator of the feminisation of migration, it can be seen that in 2004, for example, the proportion of foreign women of Indian origin largely exceeds that of men in the United Kingdom and Austria. The same is true of women of Moroccan origin in Switzerland, of women from the Philippines in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Greece, Italy, the United States and Austria. Among persons of Turkish origin, women predominate in Greece, the United Kingdom and Italy. In Spain, in 2004, the share of the women originating from several Latin American countries and the Philippines in the foreign population largely outnumbers that of men (Table 6).
Looking at the permanent or long-term immigration flows by principal entry categories (Chart 2), it can be seen that the family migration flows (accompanying families, family reunification and family formation) predominate in certain OECD countries (United States, France, Canada, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland). The increasing importance during the three last decades of family migration doubtless contributed to the increase in the share of the women in migration flows to OECD countries. In 2003, two-thirds of the migrants who entered Canada, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom under the category of family reunification were women. The number of women in the permanent entries to the United States has increased progressively for nearly 20 years, passing from 50% in 1986 to 55% in 2004. This phenomenon does not concern only family migration. Canada, for example, received in 2003 almost as many of women as men in the framework of the recruitment programme for qualified workers. It can also be observed that a growing number of women entered the United Kingdom under the category of migration for employment. In 1995, about a quarter of the new work permits granted to the immigrants were granted to women compared to more than a third in 2004.

Table 6. Percentage of foreign women in OECD countries among the total immigrants of certain countries of origin, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparing the distribution of the foreign woman labour force by sector with woman nationals, it can be seen that domestic services, healthcare and social services, as well as hotel and restaurant and, to a lesser extent, education, during the last decade, received a growing percentage of women in the foreign labour force. This growth widely exceeds the trend for women nationals (Table 7). In Spain, for example, in 1994, 27% of foreign women were employed in the domestic services sector against almost 7% for women nationals. Ten years later, more that one-third of foreign women were employed in domestic services, against 4.6% for nationals. The gap between foreign and nationals increased considerably during this period. This tendency is confirmed also in Greece, Italy and France. The increase in immigrant women in the domestic services sector is due in part to the growing need for domestic services (including child care), following the increasing participation of women nationals in the labour force. It is also a result of the growing need for assistance to the elderly, due to the ageing populations in most OECD countries. In the United Kingdom, in 2004, in comparison with 1994, it can be noted nevertheless that foreign women proportionally work less in domestic services (the same is true for women nationals). Compared to the former, the gap is comparatively small between these two components of the female labour force.
26. In the healthcare and social services sectors, the share of the foreign women in employment, compared with the total foreign women employed, has strongly increased between 1994 and 2004, but this increase concerns also women nationals. Referring, for example, to the stocks of foreign women employed in 2004 in this sector, it can be seen that in the United Kingdom, a quarter of them work in the sector, compared to only a fifth for nationals. This tendency reveals the growing needs for workers, as well as the strong concentration of women in the sector. An analysis of new work permits granted in the healthcare sector in the United Kingdom reveals that close to 30,000 permits were granted to foreign women in 2004 (against 900 in 1995), while for men the number rose to 12,000 (Kofman, Raghuram and Merefield, Gender Migrations. Towards Gender Sensitive Policies in the UK, IPPR, London, May 2005).

27. In the hotel and restaurant sector, that employed an important share of the foreign female workforce between 1994 and 2004, experiences differed according to countries. In Greece, there was a strong increase in the presence of foreign women, far more than women nationals. This tendency is less evident in Germany. In the United Kingdom and France, both foreign and national women in the sector tended to diminish.

Table 7. Employment of women by nationality in some economic activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Activities</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>10.3</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and restaurant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat).
28. It is interesting to note that foreign women employed in 2004 in science and technology sectors, for example in research and development or in data processing, represent only a very weak percentage of the total employment of foreign women. The same is true for women nationals. In the United Kingdom, for the same year, the relative percentage of women nationals, was less than that of foreign women (0.8% against 1.5%). In 2004, foreign women employed in education in relation to the total foreign women employed, has increased slightly in the last ten years in Belgium, Germany and France. In Spain and Italy and, to a lesser extent, in the United Kingdom, between 1994 and 2004, the share of the foreign female work force employed in education compared to total foreign women in the work force, strongly diminished, while the trend is the opposite for women nationals in the United Kingdom.

29. The presence of foreign women remains relatively important in the retail sector (for example, in Belgium, 12.6% of the total foreign women employed, and more than 10% in the United Kingdom and Luxembourg). Nevertheless, between 1994 and 2004, there is a relative decrease in their presence in this sector, notably in Italy and Belgium.

Conclusion

30. Over the last decade, according to the available data, there has been a slight upward trend in the feminisation of migration flows to OECD member countries. This tendency seems more evident for some nationalities, sectors or occupations. The increasing attention paid to the place and the role of the women in migration goes hand-in-hand with the prevalence of family reunification flows or accompanying families, the growing presence of immigrant women in the labour force in domestic services and healthcare, for example. On the other hand, certain emigration countries have particularly concentrated their efforts to develop training schemes, in order to respond to the international labour market needs. It is thus timely to deepen the analysis of the feminisation of migration and to go beyond the conceptual approaches which have for a long time under-estimated the central role of the women in migration movements. In this respect, the Brussels Seminar, which focuses on immigrant women and the labour market, is a first important step towards this objective.


Catarino Ch. & Morokvasic M. (2005), "Femmes, Genre, Migration et Mobilités", *REMI, Femmes, Genre, Migration et Mobilités*, Volume 21, n°1, pp. 7-27.


MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

THE PARTICIPATION OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET: A DOUBLE HANDICAP DESPITE THE PROGRESS MADE

Jean-Christophe Dumont (OECD) and Mario Isoppo (OECD Consultant)
THE PARTICIPATION OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET: A DOUBLE HANDICAP DESPITE THE PROGRESS MADE

Jean-Christophe Dumont (OECD) Marion Isoppo (OECD Consultant)

SUMMARY

Despite the progress made with regard to women’s access to employment in the majority of OECD countries, immigrant and foreign women do have constant difficulty in entering the labour market. They participate proportionally less in the labour market than do their male counterparts and female nationals. In other words, they suffer from a twofold handicap as regards access to the labour market, which seems to be mainly due to forms of behaviour specific to foreign women and employers rather than to unfavourable individual characteristics.

Young foreign women and those with small children have participation rates which are appreciably lower than those of female nationals. Also, while education and an extended period of residence do make it easier for foreign women to enter the labour market, neither of these two variables is a sufficient condition to guarantee that they catch up. There were significant improvements in the participation rates of foreign women in the majority of OECD countries between 1993 and 2003, but in some cases female nationals made even more progress, thus widening the gap in terms of labour market entry.
Introduction

1. Despite the progress recorded as regards women’s access to employment in the majority of OECD countries, which is attributable mainly to the increase in the female participation rate (OECD, 2002), immigrant and foreign women are it would seem having persisting difficulty in entering the labour market. Yet, with the prospect of population ageing in the OECD countries, it is crucially important to mobilise all the human resources available, and especially women. The feminisation of migration flows, coinciding with an increase in the share of women amongst first-generation migrants – including for work purposes (Zlotnik, 2003), makes it all the more important to examine the conditions governing the entry of foreign women into the labour market.

2. In as much as it reflects a decision to enter the labour market, the participation rate is a vital indicator and one on which this study proposes to focus. After a first part which briefly describes the conditions governing the entry of foreign women into the labour market in the OECD countries, and which particularly stresses the difficulties that foreign women are up against vis-à-vis other women and foreign-born men and nationals, a second section seeks to assess the influence of individual characteristics. The third and fourth sections go on to describe recent developments and emphasize the progress made and also the gaps still to be filled.

Main findings

- Foreign women participate proportionally less in the labour market than do their male counterparts and female nationals, and this is indicative of the twofold handicap they face as regards entering the labour market. This finding is corroborated, *ceteris paribus*, by an Oaxaca-Blinder-type decomposition (1973) which shows that the individual characteristics observed (level of education, age, marital status and family structure) account for a small proportion – more limited than in the case of female nationals – of the difference between the participation rate of foreign women and that of their male counterparts (likewise vis-à-vis all persons of working age). So the impact of discrimination and/or the behavioural characteristics of foreign women cannot be overlooked when seeking to explain their entry into the labour market.

- Education improves the chances of foreign women entering the labour market, but appreciably less than in the case of female nationals. In other words, the gap between foreign women and nationals tends to widen as a function of the level of education. In the case of foreign women born abroad, this could suggest the existence of problems to do with the recognition of qualifications or, more generally, making the most of their human capital because, for example, of language difficulties.

- Young foreign women and those with small children have lower participation rates, reflecting their greater difficulty in reconciling working life and family life. After the age of 55, however, the nationality-based discrepancy tends to narrow or even be reversed in some countries.

- Increasing the length of stay tends to partly, though not completely, offset the initial handicap facing foreign women vis-à-vis nationals in their attempts to enter the labour market. In some countries, on the other hand, length of residence does not make for any improvement. There are

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1 For a more general analysis of foreign labour market participation, see OECD (2005).
also big differences according to nationality, women from the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia having the lowest participation rates.

- A detailed analysis of trends in the participation rates of foreign women between 1993 and 2003 highlights the progress made in the majority of OECD countries over the last decade, though in some cases female nationals have progressed even more, thus widening the gap in terms of labour market entry.

**The participation of foreign women continues to suffer from a twofold handicap**

3. The participation rates of foreign women are particularly high in Portugal, Spain, Canada, Norway and Switzerland where they are in excess of 65%, whereas in Denmark and Belgium they are close to 45% (see Figure 1a). In most countries, however, it is apparent that (i) foreign women participate less in the labour market than their male counterparts and (ii) less also than female nationals. In this sense, therefore, it is possible to talk about a double handicap facing foreign women in their efforts to enter the labour market in the majority of host countries.

4. As Figure 1a shows, the participation rates of foreign women are lower than for foreign men in all the OECD countries considered (i.e. the dots representing foreign men are below the first bisecting line). The difference is especially big in Greece, where 90% of foreign men are in the labour force, compared with only 58% of foreign women. The difference also exceeds 25 percentage points in Belgium, France and Germany and is around 20 points in a lot of Member countries. It is lower, however, in Canada and certain Nordic countries, especially Sweden where it is below 10 percentage points.

5. Except in Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain, the male-female disparity is systematically greater for foreigners than for nationals. This is illustrated in Figure 1 by the fact that the dots corresponding to foreigners are on the whole further from the first bisecting line than are those corresponding to nationals.

6. In other words, not only are foreign women less well integrated in the labour market than their male counterparts, they are also less well integrated compared to the latter than are female nationals compared to male nationals. This finding may be due in part to the fact that men are over-represented...
amongst first-generation migrants for employment purposes, whereas women make up the bulk of
migration flows for family reunion purposes. This difference in respect of entry conditions is likely to
have a medium to long-term impact on the labour market and is, in any event, a factor specific to some
foreign women but not to female nationals.

7. In relative terms (i.e. the gender difference observed for foreigners compared to that observed for
nationals), this finding is particularly marked in the Nordic countries where there is little gender inequality
as regards labour market entry. In Finland, for example, the male-female disparity is almost four times
higher among foreigners than among Finns. In absolute terms (i.e. the size of the gender difference for
nationals and for foreigners), it is in France, the United States and Germany that the difference with
nationals is the biggest – in excess of 13 percentage points.

8. In the same way, it is possible to compare the situation of foreign women with that of female
nationals (see Figure 1b). Except in the countries of southern Europe (Spain, Greece and Portugal) and
Luxembourg, the participation rates of foreign women are always lower than those of female nationals,
with differences close to or in excess of 15 percentage points in some cases (Denmark, the Netherlands,
France, Germany and Sweden).

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**Box 1: Reference population, foreign or immigrant women: a choice which is not always neutral as regards the results**

Where the European OECD countries are concerned, this study distinguishes between women of working
age on the basis of their nationality, but it would also have been possible to refer to immigrant women,
i.e. women born abroad, as is the case for Australia, Canada and the United States. Foreign women are
considered here to include all women born in the host country but not possessing the nationality thereof,
but the report excludes women born abroad but who have been naturalised or who were born abroad but
with the nationality. The two types of reference population, immigrant and foreign, are therefore
potentially different.

In Portugal, France and, to a lesser extent, Germany (in particular because of the *Aussiedler*), in view of
the number of female nationals born abroad returning home, more than half of immigrant women have
the nationality of the host country. The same observation can be made concerning Norway and Sweden
because it is relatively easy to obtain the nationality in question. In Switzerland, on the other hand,
approximately 70% of women born abroad are foreign. In some countries, such as Belgium, Germany
and Switzerland, over 10% of foreign women were born in the host country.

The conditions governing the entry into the labour market of immigrant and foreign women are not
necessarily the same. For example, while acquiring the relevant nationality does reflect improved
integration, a definition based on nationality can tend to give a negatively biased picture. On the other
hand, in countries where there are a lot of returning foreign-born nationals (i.e. repatriates), a definition
based on the place of birth may be more helpful. There again, with certain types of job remaining closed
to certain nationalities, a definition based on the place of birth is liable to mask some of the specific
difficulties that foreigners have in entering the labour market.

The participation rates of immigrant women are generally higher than those for foreign women, the
exceptions being Portugal, Switzerland and Spain. The difference is particularly marked in France,
where it is 6.5 percentage points, and also in Sweden and the Netherlands (4.6 and 4 percentages points,
respectively). In other countries, however, it is lower. In any event, the differences between female
participation rates depending on nationality or place of birth are of the same nature.
9. It would seem, at all events, that entry into the labour market for foreign women is not necessarily linked to the factors that prevail for women in general. The Nordic countries such as Sweden and Denmark, for example, report very high participation rates for their female nationals, but much less positive results for foreign women. The reverse is true in certain southern European countries such as Spain and Portugal. The coefficient of correlation between the participation rates of foreign women and nationals is not even 0.2. Some non-active foreign women may in fact be discouraged workers, this certainly being what is suggested by the fact that unemployment among foreign women is systematically higher than in the case of female nationals\(^2\). Yet the differences found between host countries where foreign female unemployment is concerned would seem hard to explain in terms of the relative size of shares of discouraged workers. Figure 2 in fact emphasizes the lack of correlation (coefficient -0.07) between unemployment among foreign women and their participation rates.

\[\text{Figure 2. Participation and unemployment rates of foreign women, 2002-2003 average}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation rate</th>
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<td>BE</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>75</td>
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</table>

*Note*: Data for Australia, Canada and the United States refer to the foreign-born population. They refer to the 2001-2002 average for Canada. Data refer to the population aged 15 to 64. Unemployment rates refer to 2003.


10. Apart from the macroeconomic, institutional and tax determinants usually put forward to explain the conditions governing women’s entry into the labour market (Jaumotte, 2003), some of the determinants of the situation specific to foreign women may therefore be found in the socio-demographic characteristics of migrant women. This will be the subject of the following section.

**What is the situation of foreign women vis-à-vis the labour market? Are they at a disadvantage or discriminated against?**

11. Two types of factor are capable of affecting foreign female participation rates by comparison with those recorded for female nationals on one hand and their male counterparts on the other. The first set of factors are the traditional socio-demographic ones such as age, level of education and family situation,

\(\text{In some countries (Finland, France, Belgium)}\) unemployment among foreign women is more than 10 percentage points higher than among female nationals. In Austria, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, foreign female unemployment is at least two-and-a-half times higher than in the case of female nationals.
while the second are more directly linked to immigrant status (country of origin and length of stay). The impact of each of these factors is analysed one after the other, thereby illustrating the importance of objective, measurable determinants in explaining the situation of foreign women with regard to labour market access.

The importance of individual determinants in explaining the differences between foreign women and female nationals

12. While female participation rates increase in line with the level of education in all the OECD countries, it is also apparent that the differences across countries are smaller in the case of women graduating from university. These findings remain valid irrespective of the nationality factor. That said, whatever their level of education, foreign women are on the whole less well integrated in the labour market than female nationals (Table 1). The situation is different, however, in the southern European countries and in Austria at the lower and intermediate levels and, in the United States, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Luxembourg, at the lower level.

| Table 1. Labour force participation rate by educational level and share of women in each educational level (25-64 years old), by nationality status, 2002-2003 average |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                  | Lower secondary               | Tertiary         | Lower secondary  | Tertiary         |
|                                  | Foreign women | Natural women | Foreign women | Natural women | Foreign women | Natural women | Foreign women | Natural women | Foreign women | Natural women |
| Germany                          | 48.5                      | 50.9           | 60.2          | 71.4            | 62.2          | 64.3          | 51.5          | 57.7           | 53.5          | 63.5          | 54.2          |
| Austria                          | 57.1                      | 53.5           | 72.7          | 69.2            | 80.7          | 84.0          | 49.6          | 25.4           | 56.3          | 59.4           | 41.1          | 31.2          |
| Belgium                          | 29.8                      | 41             | 57.8          | 78.3            | 70.2          | 85.5          | 53.1          | 37.9           | 25.3          | 32.8           | 21.5          | 20.3          |
| Denmark                          | 28.4                      | 56.4           | 54.1          | 80.4            | 68.6          | 80.3          | 26.5          | 19.8           | 33.7          | 46.3           | 37.6          | 31.4          |
| Spain                            | 63.5                      | 42.7           | 71            | 68.2            | 70.5          | 84.1          | 41.7          | 9.9            | 31            | 36.5           | 25.5          | 34.2          |
| Finland                          | 49.6                      | 61.8           | 77.2          | 76.7            | 71.3          | 87.4          | 26.7          | 23.4           | 42.0          | 49.4           | 28            | 30.5          |
| France                           | 47.9                      | 57.6           | 62.6          | 75.5            | 66.6          | 84.5          | 36.7          | 36             | 18.8          | 39.2           | 11.2          | 24.8          |
| Greece                           | 63.6                      | 42             | 63.2          | 57.5            | 65.4          | 82.8          | 36.6          | 69.9           | 43.6          | 34.5           | 19.5          | 30.6          |
| Hungary                          | -                         | 35.3           | 60.4          | 67.1            | 58.6          | 80.3          | 21.5          | 31.6           | 55            | 51.4           | 21.5          | 18            |
| Ireland                          | 48.6                      | 40.1           | 54.8          | 67              | 69.1          | 85.1          | 21.4          | 37.4           | 26.3          | 71.2           | 56.3          | 25.4          |
| Luxembourg                       | 61.5                      | 36.4           | 61.6          | 58.3            | 71.1          | 81.4          | 40.4          | 23.4           | 18            | 15.3           | 16.5          | 12.5          |
| Norway                           | 48.7                      | 58.8           | 64.5          | 76.3            | 79.7          | 80.7          | 18.3          | 14             | 16.7          | 52.4           | 43            | 31.7          |
| Netherlands                      | 37.2                      | 49.1           | 57.6          | 74.3            | 70.2          | 84.2          | 46.6          | 35.7           | 33.4          | 42.1           | 24            | 22.3          |
| Portugal                         | 78.1                      | 80.7           | 87.2          | 83.7            | 88.7          | 95.2          | 56.3          | 77.8           | 26.4          | 108.9          | 13.2          | 11.7          |
| Czech Republic                   | 54.2                      | 50.3           | 66.4          | 72.4            | 72.5          | 81.4          | 31.4          | 15.7           | 55.7          | 71.6           | 16.4          | 30.3          |
| United Kingdom                   | 31.8                      | 54.1           | 73.7          | 78.5            | 80.6          | 86            | 32.2          | 39.8           | 23.1          | 51.8           | 44.7          | 26.4          |
| Sweden                           | 54.2                      | 44.7           | 65.6          | 82.6            | 77.0          | 85.5          | 24.9          | 16             | 43.3          | 51.8           | 32.6          | 30.4          |
| Switzerland                      | 75.5                      | 60.1           | 64.6          | 75.6            | 75.3          | 86.5          | 35.5          | 11             | 42.7          | 72.3           | 26.8          | 36.5          |
| United States                    | 52.1                      | 49.5           | 66.9          | 72.7            | 72.2          | 81.6          | 26.7          | 6.5            | 36.2          | 52.8           | 31.1          | 30.3          |
| Canada                           | 59.1                      | 51.9           | 68.9          | 75.3            | 75.5          | 85.5          | 37.1          | 35.1           | 35.1          | 60.3           | 28.8          | 25            |

Note: Data for Canada and the United States refer to the foreign-born and native-born population.


13. In the majority of countries, moreover, the gap between the participation rate for female nationals and that for foreign women tends to widen with the level of education. In some countries it is even the case that the participation rate of foreign women does not increase in line with the level of education.

14. In Germany, only 65.2% of foreign women with university qualifications have a job or are looking for one, which is some 19 percentage points short of the figure for female nationals. The disparity is also significant in Hungary, Denmark, France and Greece. In Hungary, Germany, Finland, Portugal and Spain, the participation rate among foreign female university graduates is lower than among foreign women who have gone through higher secondary education. So a university qualification does not seem sufficient to guarantee successful entry into the labour market, even if it does usually help.

15. Foreign women tend to be over-represented at the top and bottom levels of education. In a number of European OECD countries, more than 40% of foreign women aged between 25 and 64 have not been through higher secondary education, and in France the figure is as high as 66.5%. In Ireland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Denmark, on the other hand, it is relatively speaking lower.
16. Assuming foreign women to have skill patterns comparable to those of female nationals and applying the participation rate corresponding to each level of education, it can be shown that differences in qualification patterns explain a substantial proportion of the differential observed between the participation rates of female nationals and foreigners. This is true, in particular, in Belgium, Germany and France, where the participation rates of foreign women increase by 4.6, 6.7 and 8.2 points, respectively, on the basis of this calculation. In other words, the fact that in France foreign women are less well qualified than French women accounts for 8.2 points of the differential between the participation rate of the latter (64% in 2002-2003) and that of foreign women (49.6% in 2002-2003). In Germany, too, the level of education of foreign women accounts for nearly half of the differential between the participation rates of German and foreign women. In the new immigration countries, where foreign women tend to be better qualified than female nationals, especially in Ireland (-5.9 points), Portugal (-2.4 points), Hungary (-1.5 points), Spain (-1.4 points) and Greece (-0.4 points), the reverse is true.

17. Female participation rates depending on age are on the whole rather different from those found for men. In some countries, the maximum is reached in the early stages of working life (between 25 and 29), while in others it comes later on (towards 50). Sometimes, too, participation tends to stagnate somewhat between the ages of 30 and 55 (OECD, 2002). The lines on the graph showing the age-related participation rates of foreign women tend to corroborate these broad findings, even if they also illustrate other specific factors (Figures 3).

18. Amongst foreign women, for example, participation rates grow more slowly between the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups (no doubt due the fact that foreign women spend less time in education) and fall less noticeably at the end of working life, which is indicative of the fact that they leave the labour market later (due to having to extend their participation, either because they entered the host country belatedly or because they are over-represented in disadvantaged households). The result is that, in a number of countries, the gap between female nationals and foreigners tends to narrow with advancing years. This is true, for example, after the age of 55 in Belgium and France and at an earlier stage (i.e. before the “massive” exodus of female nationals from the labour market) in the United States, the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, Germany.
Figures 3. Age-participation profiles, foreign and national women, 2002-2003

Note: Data for the United States refer to the foreign-born and native-born populations.
19. Foreign women tend to be younger than those with the nationality of the host country inasmuch as they are over-represented amongst 20-40-year-olds and under-represented in older age groups. By checking the effect of the age structure, in the same way as the effect of education, it emerges that in many countries where the age structure is similar to that of female nationals, foreign women participate even less in the labour market. The differential increases, for example, by some 2 percentage points in Germany and Belgium and by 3 points in Switzerland.

20. Amongst the main determinants that account for differences in labour market participation based on gender and fluctuations in female participation rates based on age, the presence of children and, more generally, the family structure play a predominant role (OECD, 2001). Amongst foreign women aged between 25 and 50, participation rates decline to a certain degree with each new birth, the fall being bigger following the birth of the third child in the United Kingdom and Belgium and the second child in the Netherlands. The differential with female nationals widens, however, with the advent of maternity (more than doubling in the United Kingdom and Austria, for example) and is at its greatest after the second child in Austria, the Netherlands and France and after the third child, or more, in Belgium and the United States.

21. Figures 4 show also that children’s ages play an important role. In the countries considered, having a small child affects the participation rate of foreign women more than that of female nationals. This might suggest that access to child-minding services is more difficult for foreigners and/or that the cost involved raises their reservation wage above their hoped-for wage. In any event, it is apparent that foreign women certainly have more difficulty reconciling working and family life. However, this finding needs to be confirmed by introducing other factors - such as age and the level of education – which are liable to affect both the fertility rate and labour supply.

22. To look now at the effect of these demographic variables, “other things being equal”, via a logistical regression the detailed results of which are shown in annex. The level of education, age (as an indicator of professional experience), the age of the youngest child, marital status and the number of adults in the household are used to explain the probability of women aged between 15 and 64, either foreigners or nationals, having a job or looking for one (i.e. being economically active).

23. It should first of all be said that these estimates do not alter the main conclusions described above, and in particular the fact that having a higher education qualification has a positive impact on the labour market participation of foreign women, though not as marked as in the case of female nationals (i.e. the odds ratios are positive – higher for the “tertiary” level than for “higher secondary” and lower for
foreign women than for female nationals), and also the fact that older foreign women tend to participate relatively more in the labour market than female nationals (i.e. the odds ratios for younger age groups are lower for foreign women).

24. Other things being equal, having a child under the age of 3 (as opposed to not having a child) appreciably lowers the propensity for labour force participation in all countries and for both female nationals and foreign women (except in Portugal and Austria where female nationals are concerned). However, the impact is relatively greater for foreign women, as the preceding descriptive analysis suggested. This is less obviously the case for women whose youngest children are between 4 and 6. Except in Luxembourg, Germany and Ireland, the probability of these women participating in the labour market is much the same as for women with no children.

25. Family structure and marital status also affect the propensity to participate in the labour market, but the effect would seem to be less marked for foreign women than for female nationals. Other things being equal, the fact that the family consists of one, two or three adults does not significantly change the probability of labour market participation. Likewise, in most European countries (except for Spain, Ireland and, to a lesser extent, Belgium), marital status does not have much of an impact where foreign women are concerned whereas, in the case of natives, being married usually has a significant negative impact on labour market participation. The above finding, which was arrived at by checking the main individual characteristics of foreign women, rather runs counter to the generally accepted argument that people who enter a country under the family reunion heading tend, other things being equal, to have more difficulty entering the labour market.

**Findings which are strongly influenced by the country of origin and the length of stay…**

26. If it is assumed that the skills acquired by immigrant workers in their counties of origin are only partly transferable to the host country, it follows that extending the length of stay should help in acquiring the human and social capital specific to the society of the host country and thus make for improved integration, especially on the labour market.

27. In the absence of longitudinal data, the effect of the length of stay can be studied by comparing different waves of migration. Figure 5 shows how the participation rates of foreign women born abroad fluctuate depending on whether they have been in the country for less than five years, between six and ten years or more than ten years.

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3 In the case of Germany, the effect due to young children is the same for foreigners and nationals. In another sample (GSOEP, 1984-1995), Dustmann and Schmidt (2000) found that having a child of under 5 affected the participation rate of immigrant women less than that of women born in Germany, other things being equal. In the United States, Duleep and Sanders (1994) found when looking at labour supply in previous years, that the difference between immigrant women and nationals as regards the effect of children on participation rates decreased sharply (but less when the youngest child was aged under 1).

4 This finding is confirmed if the sample is confined to households made up of at least two adults.

5 It is important to note that interpreting the effects of length of stay on the basis of pseudo cohorts is liable to two types of bias: (i) the fact that different lengths of stay correspond to different waves of migration which may have their own distinct characteristics and which, in particular, had the benefit of specific conditions of integration and (ii) the fact that no account is taken of trips out of the country and naturalisations.

6 Taking the European OECD countries as a whole, over 80% of foreign women were born abroad.
28. In the majority of countries considered, the entry of foreign women into the labour market improves the longer they stay. In Sweden, Austria and France, for example, labour market participation increases by some 20 points in the case of foreign women resident for more than 10 years, compared to those in the country for less than 5 years, which very largely makes up the differential with female nationals. Likewise, progress is fairly marked in the case of Denmark, the United States and Germany (i.e. in excess of 15 percentage points).

29. This finding is not valid, however, in the countries of southern Europe and Ireland, or in the countries of central Europe where recent waves of migration have been very much targeted at the labour market. Much more surprisingly, nor is there any length-of-stay-related effect in Belgium, where labour market participation by foreign women in the country for over 10 years does not exceed 40%.

30. Inasmuch as it results in different types of behaviour or is indicative of a varying degree of transferability of competencies, the origin of immigrant women is liable to have an impact on immigrant

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7 In the new immigration countries, and also in the majority of Nordic countries, more than two-thirds of foreign women born abroad have been living in the host country for less than ten years. In Spain and Ireland, some 70% of foreign women immigrants have been living in the host country for less than five years. In France, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and the Czech Republic, on the other hand, the length of stay is over ten years in the case of most foreign women born abroad.

8 This finding is widely echoed in the literature. See, for example, Dustmann and Schmidt (2000) concerning the case of Germany, Dustmann, Fabbri, Preston and Wadsworth (2003) for the United Kingdom and Reimers (1985), Duleep and Sanders (1993) or Schoeni (1998) for the United States.

9 This finding is no doubt linked partly to the fact that, in Belgium, female participation rates decrease very rapidly with advancing years.
women’s performance on the labour market. Also, some types of job – in the civil service in particular – may be closed to certain nationalities.

31. Generally speaking, foreign women from Africa, and especially from the Maghreb and Asia, have lower participation rates than those from Latin America and the OECD countries (Figure 6). To some extent, these findings reflect the situation prevailing on the labour markets in the immigrants’ countries of origin (Antecol, 2000), even if the selectiveness of the migration process and the influence of the host country mean that foreign women are usually more active than those who did not emigrate.

32. These results are found in the case of almost all host countries, even if there can be big differences between countries for a given nationality. In France, for example, the participation rates of foreign women range from 64.2% for women born in the European Union to some 55% for sub-Saharan women and 36.6% for women from North Africa. In Belgium, women from the Maghreb and Turkey have extremely low participation rates (16.7 and 20%, respectively). In the Netherlands and Austria, nearly 40% of Turkish women have a job or are seeking one. These differences are partly due to the selectiveness of migration policies, to the dynamics of the labour market in the host countries and to the conditions governing naturalisation. They are also attributable to the match between manpower requirements in host countries and the characteristics peculiar to the foreign women in question.

33. For countries for which detailed data are available and meaningful, it is usually possible to see the beginnings of a catch-up process illustrated by a bigger increase in participation, in line with the length of stay, for those nationalities which have the most difficulty entering the labour market. This is the case, for example, of the Turks in Germany and Algerians in France. This phenomenon, which reflects a positive trend in the integration process, is not to be found in all countries, however, and especially

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Note: Average participation rate calculated in countries where data were significant. Data refer to the population aged 15 to 64. Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat, second semester 2002 and 2003).
Belgium. A more detailed analysis based on longitudinal data would be needed in order to interpret these trends correctly.

The double handicap in the light of Oaxaca-Blinder (1973)

34. In light of the preceding findings, it is interesting to seek to identify what share of the difference between the participation rates of foreign women and female nationals is attributable to individual characteristics. To do so, the method developed by Oaxaca (1973) and Blinder (1973) to calculate the determinants of male-female wage disparities is applied to an analysis of participation rates (see Box 1). This method assumes that wage differentials can be explained either by differing factor endowment or by differences in the return to the said factors.
Box 2: Application of the Oaxaca-Blinder method (1973)

The method seeks to explain the labour market participation differential between female nationals and foreigners by a difference in average probabilities calculated on the basis of a simple logit model: $\Delta P = \bar{P}_N - \bar{P}_E$. Index N refers to female nationals and E to foreign women. The reference population is that of female nationals.

The proportion of foreign women in the labour market can be estimated by:

$$\bar{P}_E = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N_E} \Phi(Z_{Ei}\hat{\gamma}_E + \hat{\gamma}_0)}{N_E}$$

- $\Phi()$ the distribution function of the logistic law defined by $\frac{1}{1+e^{-x}}$ for every real $x$
- $Z_{Ei}$ the explanatory variables vector (i.e. level of education, age, age of the youngest child, marital status and number of adults in the household)
- $\gamma$ the parameters measuring the impact of individual characteristics on labour market participation
- $\gamma_0$ the parameter associated with the constant
- $N_E$ the number of foreigners in the sample

It is important to note $P_{E1}^1$, the proportion of foreign women in the labour market whose factor remuneration is similar to that of female nationals:

$$P_{E1}^1 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N_E} \Phi(Z_{Ei}\hat{\gamma}_N + \hat{\gamma}_0)}{N_E}$$

The participation rate differential between foreign women and female nationals is then broken down as follows:

$$\Delta P = \bar{P}_N - \bar{P}_E = (\bar{P}_N - P_{E1}^1) + (P_{E1}^1 - \bar{P}_E)$$

Effect linked to characteristics  Effect linked to return to individual characteristics

The left-hand term represents the “part explained” by individual characteristics, while the right-hand term corresponds to the “unexplained part”. The latter corresponds to the differences in returns to individual characteristics, which can stem from the specific behaviour of foreign women vis-à-vis the labour market (compared to female nationals) or employers vis-à-vis foreign women.

35. The logistical regressions used explain, as previously, the probability of being actively employed depending on the level of education, age, the age of the youngest child, marital status and the number of adults in the household. On this basis, it is shown that, in the majority of countries studied where foreign women are less active than female nationals (i.e. France, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom), the differences in terms of individual characteristics explain part of the differential observed with female nationals (see Table 2). This is true more especially in Germany, where individual characteristics account for more than half of the differential.
Table 2. Oaxaca-Blinder analysis for foreign and national women in selected OECD European countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>$\bar{P}_N$ (%)</th>
<th>$\bar{P}_E$ (%)</th>
<th>$\bar{P}'_E$ (%)</th>
<th>$\Delta P = \bar{P}_N - \bar{P}_E$</th>
<th>Characteristic effect (%)</th>
<th>Output effect (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Austria</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>57.2</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>50.8</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>-5.8</td>
<td>-2.2</td>
<td>-3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>-11.0</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
<td>-6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
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<td>51.5</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>57.3</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-16.0</td>
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<td>48.5</td>
<td>-11.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>-12.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>52.0</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>71.0</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>58.8</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat, second semester 2003).

36. In France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, the differences in returns to individual characteristics (i.e. the unexplained part) predominate. The same may be said concerning Spain and Greece, where participation rates among foreign women are relatively high. In Greece, for example, nearly 60% of the difference in labour market participation compared to female nationals is accounted for by disparities in the returns to individual characteristics.

37. Because of their individual characteristics, foreign women should have much higher participation rates than female nationals in Ireland and Austria, but because of unfavourable returns to individual characteristics, this is not the case.

38. The above decomposition, as defined by Oaxaca-Blinder (1973), assumes that the reference group (female nationals, as it happens) are “neutral”, i.e. neither disadvantaged nor at an advantage in terms of labour market participation. This criticism was levelled by Neumark (1988) and Oaxaca and Ramson (1994, 1999) in particular. To avoid this problem, we assume a mixed non-discriminatory norm obtained by means of regressions on the total population. The findings are set out in Table 3.
Table 3. Oaxaca-Blinder analysis with mixed non-discriminatory norm for foreign and national women in selected OECD European countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Participation rate, all persons (%) (1)</th>
<th>Participation rate, foreign women (%) (2)</th>
<th>Participation rate, national women, estimated on basis of coefficients for all persons (%) (3)</th>
<th>Gross difference (1)-(2)</th>
<th>Characteristic effect (1)-(3)</th>
<th>Output effect (3)-(2)</th>
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<td>71.6</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>64.3</td>
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<td>22.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>22.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
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<td>65.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>68.3</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
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<td>75.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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<td>17.9</td>
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<td>61.2</td>
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<td>-0.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>76.7</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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</table>

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat, second semester 2003).

39. When returns are assumed to be identical, the participation differential between women and the total population narrows more for foreign women than for female nationals. In the Netherlands, for example, the catch-up is particularly spectacular, the labour market participation differential with the population as a whole decreasing by 25 points for foreign women as against 6.6 points for female nationals. The same sort of finding can be made in Germany, Belgium, France and the United Kingdom, even if participation rates for foreign women in these countries remain slightly lower than those of female nationals. In the Netherlands (and also Austria), assuming identical returns, the average probability of labour market participation by foreign women is not only greater than that of Dutch women, it is also greater than that of the population as a whole.

40. In the final analysis, in all of the countries considered, the differential in terms of labour market participation between foreign women and the population as a whole is accounted for mainly, or even completely, by differences in the returns to individual characteristics. The same is true for female nationals, but to a lesser degree. This is a finding which confirms, “other things being equal”, the twofold handicap vis-à-vis female nationals and men that foreign women have to contend with in accessing the labour market11.

41. Caution is needed, however, in interpreting this effect which could to some extent be attributable, depending on the host country and the nationalities considered, either to unobserved characteristics capable

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11 This finding is the same, but with a few differences (i.e. only for certain nationalities or certain levels of qualification), as regards immigrant women’s wages. See, for example, Husted et al. (2000), Shamsuddin (1998) and Beach and Worswick (1993).
of affecting the return to the explanatory variables involved (e.g. linguistic ability, quality of education, availability of equity capital), or to specific preferences in the trade-off between work and leisure or, again, to discrimination (statistical or pure) on the part of employers. The importance of the country of origin, which was mentioned earlier, suggests that there are behavioural specificities attaching to the labour supply of foreign women, but does not exclude the possibility of discriminatory practices on the labour market.

Trend in the labour market participation of foreign women: real but insufficient progress.

42. The labour market participation of foreign women has progressed over the last ten years in the majority of OECD countries (see Figure 7), the Netherlands (+12.8%), Spain (+14.6%) and Portugal (+18%) having posted spectacular increases in the participation rates of foreign women between 1993 and 2003. Austria, Denmark, Norway, Canada and Finland are exceptions, but these are countries where foreign women were best integrated at the start of the period, with participation rates which generally exceeded 60%.

43. Participation rates for foreign women have even, in some cases, increased more than for foreign men, this being true in particular in Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Belgium, Greece, Spain and the Netherlands. In the first 5 countries cited, this finding coincided in reality with a fall in the participations rates of foreign men between 1993 and 2003.

12 The scale of discrimination is confirmed in the relevant literature, at least where certain nationalities are concerned. See, for example, Moulin (2004) for France, Kee (1995) for the Netherlands, Nielsen et al. (2001) for Denmark and Neumark (1998) for the United States. See also Altonji and Blank (1999) for a summary.
44. There are two types of explanation for these recent trends. The first has to do with changes in the labour market situation in general and that of women in particular, while the second is linked to changes in the nature of migration flows.

45. While the second argument accounts for part of the finding which is valid for the new immigration countries, mainly in southern and central Europe and Ireland, where the increase in employment-related immigration and the feminization of migration flows were a feature of the 1990s, it is no doubt less relevant for other countries where the share of new entrants in the total numbers is smaller. In France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria, and Germany, for example, at least 60% of foreign women born abroad have been living there for more than 10 years, as against 17% in Spain and 19% in Ireland.

46. The increased labour market participation of foreign women therefore needs more generally to be seen in the context of the trend in the employment of female nationals. It is in those countries where female employment in general has increased the most that the participation rates of foreign women have risen fastest. The linear correlation coefficient between the increase in foreign female participation rates and in those of nationals is 0.72.

47. Two types of explanation can be put forward, based on assumed substitutability or complementarity: i) like female nationals, foreign women have benefitted from new employment opportunities – in the service sector, for example; ii) by virtue of the proportion of domestic service jobs that they fill, foreign women make it easier for other women to enter the labour market.

48. In a number of European OECD countries, employment survey data tend to confirm the second assumption, without necessarily invalidating the first. In Germany, for example, the number of foreign women working in domestic service jobs rose by nearly 75% between 1993 and 2003 (from 9 600 to 16 700), while the number of female nationals employed in the same sector fell (-1%) and increased in the labour market as a whole (+6%). The phenomenon is still more remarkable in Spain and Greece where foreign female employment in domestic services was multiplied by eleven and 6, respectively (in 2003, some 96 400 jobs were occupied by foreign women in this sector in Spain, compared to 33 900 in Greece).

49. Figure 8 shows the narrowing of the gaps between the participation rates of nationals and foreign women between 1993 and 2003, and also the gap still remaining in 2003. Despite the progress made by foreign women, the gap vis-à-vis nationals has in fact widened in a number of countries. This is true especially in Germany, Ireland, Australia, Luxembourg and, to a lesser extent, Greece, the United Kingdom and Belgium. While there has been tangible progress in the latter countries, it is in no way sufficient to envisage a catch-up process. Even in countries where the gap narrowed between 1993 and 2003, like France, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United States and Switzerland, the rate of convergence is still very slow – the more so as the 1990s were notable for a rapid increase in employment in general.
Figure 8. Change in labour force participation gap of foreign women between 1993 and 2003 and remaining difference in 2003 compared to national women, percentage points

Note: Data for Australia and the United States refer to the foreign-born population and refer to the population aged 15 to 64 for all countries.

50. It may, however, be asked whether the participation rate noted for female nationals is a target that foreign women should be aiming for. In certain countries where women are generally under-represented on the labour market, the situation of men might prove to be a more appropriate reference. Then again, it may also be the case that actually defining a normative reference is not necessary, particularly if the differences in labour supply are attributable to specific preferences and if what is really important is equality of opportunity and measures to combat discrimination.

Conclusion

51. In the majority of OECD countries considered, foreign women participate in the labour market proportionately less than their male counterparts and female nationals. From this point of view, it is reasonable to talk about a double handicap affecting their access to the labour market. Women of certain nationalities, and especially those of African origin, have particularly low labour force participation rates.

52. Also, the role played by educational qualifications is of less importance for foreign women than it is for female nationals, while maternity, and especially having a small child, has a more marked impact. More fundamentally still, the importance of unobserved variables and behaviour appears vital to explaining the difficulties that immigrant women experience in seeking to enter the labour market. Increasing the length of stay sometimes has the effect of reducing these differences, but not systematically. The impact of discrimination and/or the role of specific behavioural factors cannot therefore be overlooked.
53. As the OECD Employment Outlook (OECD, 2002) observes: “A generous work-family reconciliation package is certainly indispensable, but it does not appear to be sufficient. ... Women with low earnings potential may face additional barriers, potentially including even more limited employment opportunities, unfavourable treatment by tax and benefit schemes, and low expectations as to the possibility and benefits of combining work and family”. Foreign women, and particularly those from developing countries, are potentially in this situation, including those with higher education qualifications. This finding illustrates the need for specific policies aimed at removing the obstacles that women can encounter in seeking to enter the labour market. And this applies to all obstacles, whatever they may be, and especially if they are discriminatory in nature.

54. In view of the magnitude of the differences found and the expected positive linkages, improving the labour market participation of foreign women is not only vital in terms of social equity, but is also essential for reasons of short and long-term economic efficiency. The trend in the participation of foreign women between 1993 and 2003 illustrates the scale of the progress made during those years, but also emphasizes what efforts are still needed if there is to be any real catch-up process. The possibility of a complementary improvement in labour market access for both foreign women and female nationals does show, however, that this is an objective that can be pursued to everybody’s advantage. These considerations apart, with populations ageing in the OECD countries, mobilizing all available human resources, female in particular, is becoming a crucial challenge for society as a whole.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


OCDE (2005); Trends in International Migration (Edition 2004).


Annex: Logistical regression analyses of the probability of labour force participation
### Austria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Civil status</th>
<th>Number of adults in household</th>
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<tr>
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25
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### Netherlands

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Children</th>
<th>Civil status</th>
<th>Number of adults in household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Higher secondary</td>
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<td>50-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.0766</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&lt;.0001</td>
<td>&lt;.0001</td>
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<th>Number of adults in household</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>50-64</td>
</tr>
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<td>&lt;.0001</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&lt;.0001</td>
<td>&lt;.0001</td>
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<th>Age</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Civil status</th>
<th>Number of adults in household</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>50-64</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.687</td>
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MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN: OVERVIEW AND RECENT TRENDS

Jean-Christophe Dumont and Thomas Liebig
OECD
LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN: OVERVIEW AND RECENT TRENDS

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Introduction

1. For a variety of reasons, the issue of the labour market integration of immigrant women is pertinent now. Firstly, women now account for more than half of the migrant stock in OECD countries. The post-war immigration until the oil crises of the early 1970s was somewhat male-dominated, particularly in Europe. The share of women in the immigrant population has grown since then, albeit only slightly (see Room Document No. 1 for a detailed discussion). Initially, the immigration of women was mainly for the purposes of family formation and reunification, but is now also becoming employment-oriented. The resulting “feminisation” of migration flows appears to be an ongoing trend. In almost all European OECD countries, women have accounted for more than 50 percent of the immigration flows since 1994. Secondly, the strong forward trend in native women’s participation and employment is one of the most profound labour market developments in the post-war period (OECD 2002a), reflecting inter alia changes in educational attainments, family patterns and gender perceptions, as well as more opportunities to combine paid work with raising children. Despite this progress, women’s access to the labour market and their employment rates still lags behind that of men (OECD 2003). This raises the question of whether immigrant women have experienced similar trends in labour force participation to their native counterparts, and also how their labour market experiences compare with those of immigrant males. Thirdly, with the coming rise in old-age dependency ratios, the mobilisation of all available labour resources becomes an economic and social imperative. In this context, immigrant labour will certainly play an important role. The coming retirement of the baby-boomers and the increase in life expectancy will likely enhance the need for further immigration in occupations where the presence of women is dominant (e.g. nursing).

2. Against this background, several questions are of particular interest. What is the overall situation of immigrant women in the labour market? How do they fare compared to native-born women? In which sectors and occupations are they present? Did they benefit from the continued progress in the labour market that has been observed for women? How are recent arrivals faring and has this changed over time?

3. This paper documents and analyses the persistent difficulties faced by immigrant women with respect to their labour market integration. The overall improvement in labour market conditions across the OECD over the past decade, particularly for women, has not been accompanied by a convergence of the outcomes of immigrant women towards those of their native-born counterparts. The observation that this divergence is most pronounced at the top end of the skills spectrum underlines some of the challenges ahead.

Key points

• The labour market integration of immigrant women generally lags behind that of their native counterparts. With the exceptions of Southern Europe, Ireland, Greece and some Central European
countries – where much recent immigration was employment-related, they have lower employment rates than the native-born.

- This gap is particularly pronounced for immigrant women from non-OECD countries, whose share of the immigrant working-age population has substantially increased over the past decade in most host countries.

- There is a strong link between the overall evolution of the labour market over the past decade and the growth in immigrant women’s employment rates. The latter was most pronounced in Spain, Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands, i.e. in countries where the employment rates of native women have also increased disproportionately.

- Immigrant women are generally clustered in less-skilled occupations and are often overqualified for the types of jobs which they hold. In general, qualified immigrant women face larger gaps in employment and occupational attainment vis-à-vis their native-born counterparts of a comparable skills level than do low-skilled immigrant women. Much of the growth in the employment rates of immigrant women over the decade was oriented towards low-skilled occupations, particularly in the Southern European countries.

- The gaps in the employment rates of recently arrived immigrant women compared to native women are considerably higher than for immigrant men.

- Over the past decade, the employment rates of female immigrants have, by and large, developed in parallel to those of the native-born. However, after controlling for structural differences such as age and education, immigrant women’s employment has tended to decline relative to that of native-born women in several countries (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom). Only in Sweden and France do immigrant women’s employment rates seem to have developed more favourably than those of the native-born. This trend may be explainable by the fact that changes in family patterns, gender perceptions and improved child-care facilities had a smaller impact on immigrant women than on the native-born, but competition with native-born women who have increasingly been entering the labour market could also play a role.

I. Overview of the labour market integration of immigrants

4. The labour market access of foreign-born women is characterised by a “double handicap”: They are not only at a disadvantage vis-à-vis foreign-born men, but also with respect to native-born women (Dumont and Isoppo 2005). Focusing on employment outcomes instead of on labour market participation does not fundamentally change this result.1

I.1 Employment access and unemployment rates of immigrant women

5. In all countries under consideration, except in the Czech Republic, foreign-born women have lower employment rates than their native-born counterparts (see Table 1 and the Annex). Less than 60% of foreign-born women of working-age are in employment, with only three exceptions (Portugal and Switzerland 64%, Norway 62%).2

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1 The term “employment rate” is used in this document synonymously with the employment-population ratio. It is not the ratio of persons employed to persons in the labour force.

2 An employment rate for women that is above 60% is one of the Lisbon objectives for the EU member states, to be reached by 2010. As far as the native-born are concerned, this threshold is currently only met in the Scandinavian countries, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom. Only Portugal meets this goal with
Table 1. Percentage-point differences in unemployment and employment rates between native- and foreign-born women of working-age (15-64) by level of education, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>low</th>
<th>medium</th>
<th>high</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>foreign-born from non-OECD countries</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unemployment</td>
<td>employment</td>
<td>unemployment</td>
<td>employment</td>
<td>unemployment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
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<td>-10.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Belgium</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-9.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-8.2</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>-19.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-19.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>-19.7</td>
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<td>-15.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
<td>-9.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>-0.2</td>
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<td>8.2</td>
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<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-7.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>11.2</td>
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<td>-4.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-11.3</td>
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<td>0.4</td>
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<td>-19.8</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
<td>-7.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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</table>

Notes: "-" indicates that the figure is not significant and ".." indicates that it is not available. Data for Canada refer to 2003.

Low-skilled level refers to less than upper secondary level, medium-skilled level refers to completed upper secondary level and highly skilled level refers to tertiary education.


6. The difference in employment rates between foreign- and native-born women increases with educational attainment. Among those who pursued post-secondary education, the gap exceeds 19 percentage points in Denmark, Germany and Greece. For those with basic education, the differences are not only substantially lower on average, but also more heterogeneous. In nine of the 21 countries for which data are available, low-qualified immigrant women have higher employment rates than their native-born counterparts. Nevertheless, in all countries which have a negative employment gap for low-educated immigrant women, their employment rates are lower at all education levels.

7. These figures conceal sizeable differences according to the migrants’ region of origin, since immigrants from non-OECD member countries tend to have lower employment rates than immigrants from within the OECD area. This difference is particularly pronounced in the case of Ireland, but also large in Sweden, Germany and Denmark.

8. High-qualified immigrant women from non-OECD member countries are particularly disfavoured. In Germany, for example, the employment rate of this group is only 43 percent - compared to 60 percent for all high-qualified immigrant women and 81 percent for native-born women. Similar results hold for most OECD countries and notably for Switzerland, Luxembourg and the Nordic countries, where the differences in employment rates between high-qualified native- and foreign-born women reach 20 per cent or more. It is likely that this is partly attributable to the problems of the recognition of foreign qualifications and more generally of their training, but it is also linked to factors such as country-of-origin behaviour and attitudes towards the employment of women, language problems in the early years of presence in the host country and immigrants’ limited access to jobs in the public service, etc.

9. Such obstacles are not restricted to immigrant women, but they may be more affected than immigrant men because of the occupations in which they tend to be concentrated. High-qualified immigrant women are largely overrepresented with respect to their male counterparts in education and medical professions – i.e. in occupations which are regulated – in contrast to engineering-type occupations where respect to foreign-born women. This is partly attributable to the fact that substantial parts of the current foreign-born population in Portugal are Portuguese who were born in former colonies and who immigrated to Portugal during the 1970s.
they are underrepresented. Immigrant women are also systematically overrepresented (both with respect to immigrant men and native-born women) in the arts and humanities.

10. Figure 1 depicts the evolution in immigrants’ employment rates by years of residence in European OECD countries. It illustrates a process of convergence towards the employment rates of the native-born. However, this convergence is more pronounced for immigrant men than for women. Indeed, for immigrant men convergence appears to be largely achieved, on average, after 6 years of residence, whereas for immigrant women it is never completed, even after more than ten years. In most countries with the exceptions of Southern Europe, Luxembourg, Ireland and Hungary, immigrant women with six or more years of residence have lower employment rates than the native-born (Figure 2). Nevertheless, the gap in employment rates reduces significantly with the period of residence: it is particularly notable in France and the United States and to a lesser extent in Sweden and Germany.

![Figure 1. Employment rates of immigrants by years of residence and gender, European OECD countries, 2004, working-age population (15-64)](image1)

![Figure 2. Differences in the employment rates of foreign- and native-born women (15-64) by years of residence, selected OECD countries, 2004](image2)

Notes: Data for Canada refer to 2003. Countries ordered by the gaps in employment rates for 6 years of residence and above.
11. A glance at the unemployment rates of immigrant women shows results similar to those observed for the employment rates (see Annex). More than 15 per cent of the foreign-born women in the labour force are seeking employment in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, the Slovak Republic and in Poland. In relative terms, one observes that the unemployment rate of immigrant women is more than twice as high than that of natives in Luxembourg, Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland and Austria, and even 2.5 times higher in Switzerland (and even 4 times higher for non-OECD immigrants (Figure 3). The ratios are even higher for non-OECD-born immigrant women in many countries, exceeding a factor of 3 in Luxembourg, Sweden and Switzerland. The difference in absolute values vis-à-vis the native-born is positive in all countries, but – in contrast to what has been observed for the gaps in employment rates – does not generally increase with the qualification level (see Table 1).

Figure 3. Ratio of unemployment rate of foreign-born women to that of native-born women, 15-64, 2004

Notes: Data for Canada refer to 2003. Countries ordered by ratio of unemployment rate of all foreign-born women to that of native-born women.

I.2 Characteristics of jobs occupied by immigrant women

12. When in employment, immigrant women tend to occupy jobs which are less skilled than those of their native counterparts (Table 2). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced for women who were born in non-OECD member countries. The gap in occupational attainment is high in Germany, Austria and especially in Southern Europe – with the notable exception of Portugal. Further exceptions are Poland, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Ireland. The situation in these latter countries may be linked with the importance of foreign direct investment, notably in Central Europe, and with the migration of young professionals in the United Kingdom and in Ireland (see OECD 2005).³

³ However, these results have to be interpreted with caution, as the definition for managers in the United Kingdom (and probably also in Ireland) differs somewhat from that in other countries (Elias and Mc Knight 2001).
### Table 2. Percentage of women in highly skilled occupations by place of birth, 15-64, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>native-born</th>
<th>of which: ISCO 1</th>
<th>foreign-born</th>
<th>of which: ISCO 1</th>
<th>foreign-born non-OECD</th>
<th>of which: ISCO 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6.9</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>32.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>37.7</td>
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<td>30.5</td>
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<td>30.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>2.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>29.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>38.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
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<td>57.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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<td>6.8</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **"-" indicates that the figure is not significant. The job skills level is based on the International Standard Occupational Classification (ISCO 1998). Highly skilled occupations refer to legislators, senior officials and managers (ISCO1), professionals (ISCO2), as well as technicians and associate professionals (ISCO3).**


### Note

13. However, it is not possible to evaluate this result independently from the qualification structure of immigrant relative to native-born women. Table 3 presents so-called overqualification rates for the foreign- and the native-born, i.e. the proportion of women whose educational attainment is higher than the general requirements for the occupations which they hold (Damas, Dumont and Monso 2005). These figures clearly show that immigrant women are systematically more exposed to overqualification than the native-born. The differences relative to the native-born women are particularly large in Southern Europe, and more marked for women from non-OECD countries.

### Table 3. Percentage of women (15-64) in jobs for which they are overqualified, by place of birth, selected OECD countries, 2003-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>native-born</th>
<th>foreign-born</th>
<th>foreign-born from non-OECD countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Overqualification occurs when highly qualified persons work in a medium or low-skilled occupation or if medium qualified persons work in a low-skilled occupation. For definition of highly skilled jobs, see table 2. Low-skilled jobs are elementary occupations (e.g. cleaners) and medium skilled occupations are the residual.

14. The preceding analysis suggests a vertical segmentation in the labour market for women to the disadvantage of immigrants, similar to the segmentation observed along gender lines (Jaumotte 2003). Table 4 presents the types of jobs held by foreign- and native-born women for the European OECD countries in more detail. One observes that immigrant women tend to be overrepresented in the same occupations as the native-born, i.e. in professional and associate professional occupations in the health sector, as well as in secretarial and sales occupations. A glance at the respective distributions over these occupational sectors shows, however, that immigrants are much more frequently employed in low-skilled occupations, particularly in elementary occupations (20% versus 9% of the total employment, respectively). In contrast, women, whatever their origin, are largely underrepresented among engineers and associated engineers.

15. These aggregate figures conceal some noteworthy differences among European OECD countries. For example, in several countries, immigrant women are overrepresented in certain managerial occupations (Belgium, France, Ireland and United Kingdom). Nevertheless, the majority of immigrant women remain concentrated in low-skilled occupations (e.g. elementary sales and services).

16. A sectoral analysis leads to broadly similar results. The notable exception concerns the “administrations and extraterritorial organisations”, where immigrant women are largely underrepresented – in contrast to native-born women. Yet, this sector presents only a relatively small part of total employment. In contrast, overall, more than 17 per cent of immigrant women work in the health sector, similar to the share in native-born women’s total employment. However, the figure for immigrant women reaches about 30 per cent in the Scandinavian countries (32 per cent in Norway, 29 per cent in Sweden, 28 per cent in Denmark and 24 per cent in Finland) and 23 per cent in the United Kingdom. This reflects the importance of immigrant labour in this sector where labour shortages are present, notably with respect to nurses and caregivers. In some countries, a substantial proportion of immigrant women are also employed in education. In Sweden and the United Kingdom, for example, education accounts for about 15 and 13 per cent, respectively, of the total employment of immigrant women.

17. Relative to the native-born, immigrants are much more often employed in the household sector where they are four times overrepresented compared to the native-born. They are also twice as concentrated as native-born women in hotels and restaurants.

---

4 See, however, Footnote 3 with respect to the United Kingdom and Ireland.
Table 4. Female employment by occupation and place of birth, 15-64, 2003-2004, data pooled over EU countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational category</th>
<th>foreign-born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>native-born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>occupational share of total employment of foreign-born women</td>
<td>over-represented</td>
<td></td>
<td>occupational share of total employment of native-born women</td>
<td>over-represented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100- Legislator, senior officials and managers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110- Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120- Corporate managers</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130- General managers</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200- Professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210- physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220- Life science and health associate professionals</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230- Teaching professionals</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240- Other professionals</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300- Technicians and associate professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310- Physical and engineering science associate professionals</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320- Life science and health associate professionals</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>330- Teaching associate professionals</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340- Other associate professionals</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400- Clerks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410- Office clerks</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420- Customer service clerks</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500- Service workers and shop and market sales workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510- Personal and protective service workers</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520- Models, sales persons and demonstrators</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600- Skilled agricultural and fishery workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>610- Skilled agricultural and fishery workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700- Craft and related trades workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>710- Extraction and building trade workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>720- Metal, machinery and related trades workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>730- Precision, handicraft, craft printing and related trades workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>740- Other craft and related trade workers</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800- Plant and machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>810- Stationary plant and related operators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>820- Machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>830- Drivers and mobile plant operators</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900- Elementary occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>910- Sales and services elementary occupations</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>920- Agricultural, fishery and related labourers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>930- Labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Columns do not sum to 100 because not all employed women indicate their occupation. ** indicates that the figure is not significant.

Overrepresentation occurs when the share of foreign- or native-born women in one particular occupation is more important than their share in total employment.

Sectoral over-representation is supposed to be undetermined (Und.) if the share of foreign-born women in the employment divided by their share in total employment in that sector is higher than 0.9 and lower than 1.1.

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat).

Table 5. Female employment by sector and place of birth
Women 15-64, 2003-2004, data pooled over EU countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>foreign-born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>native-born</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share of total employment of foreign-born women</td>
<td>over-represented</td>
<td></td>
<td>Share of total employment of native-born women</td>
<td>over-represented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and fishing</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, manufacturing and energy</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail trade</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and other community services</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and extraterritorial organisations</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>Und.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Columns do not sum to 100 because not all employed women indicate their sector of activity.

Overrepresentation occurs when the share of foreign- or native-born women in one particular sector is more important than their share in total employment. Sectoral over-representation is supposed to be undetermined (Und.) if the share of foreign-born divided by their share in total employment in that sector is higher than 0.9 and lower than 1.1.

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat).

18. An evaluation of the labour market integration of immigrant women also needs to account for the full- or part-time nature of the work and whether the employment contract is of temporary or permanent duration. Table 6 presents a fairly mixed picture in this regard.
19. The prevalence of *temporary employment*, to the extent that it is associated with more limited employment protection, is often seen an indicator of the lack of labour market integration. However, the incidence of temporary employment needs to be interpreted with caution, as it may also constitute a first step into the labour market, particularly in the presence of information asymmetries that one might expect between immigrants and domestic employers. Accordingly, in all countries under consideration with the exceptions of Switzerland and Luxemburg, immigrant women are more likely to hold a temporary work contract than the native-born. The differences in relation to natives are particularly marked in Poland, the Czech Republic, Norway, Finland, Greece and Spain. However, in many other cases, the differences may not be significant.

20. An analysis based on employment rates may overstate women’s presence in employment, as they are more often present in *part-time employment* than men. Although this general observation also holds for immigrant women, they do not tend to be employed part-time more often than the native-born. Although part-time employment is much more frequent among foreign-born women in Finland (+15 percentage points with respect to natives) and Italy (+12 points), the contrary is observed in the United Kingdom, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland (-10, -9, -9 and -8 percentage points, respectively).

### Table 6. Share of temporary and part-time employment in total employment, Women, 15-64, by place of birth, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% temporary employment</th>
<th>% part-time employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>9.0 8.6</td>
<td>36.9 41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>14.7 11.2</td>
<td>38.5 41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.4 26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>19.2 10.4</td>
<td>8.1 7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>16.5 10.3</td>
<td>29.9 33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>34.5 20.6</td>
<td>32.6 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>14.7 13.8</td>
<td>33.6 29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>13.7 12.1</td>
<td>46.8 40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>24.7 13.3</td>
<td>13.3 8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>8.9 5.9</td>
<td>7.4 5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>5.4 3.7</td>
<td>29.7 31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>16.9 14.8</td>
<td>36.2 23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>3.9 7.7</td>
<td>39.5 40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>20.8 15.4</td>
<td>67.1 75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>20.1 11.5</td>
<td>43.5 45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>51.5 21.2</td>
<td>- 12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>28.2 20.5</td>
<td>11.3 13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>- 4.9</td>
<td>- 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>53.1 31.8</td>
<td>22.2 17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>22.9 16.7</td>
<td>35.2 36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>11.6 13.0</td>
<td>51.9 60.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>10.6 5.7</td>
<td>34.8 44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.7 18.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes:* ":" indicates that the figure is not significant. Data for Canada refer to 2003.

21. All considered, the overall picture of the labour market integration of immigrant women in OECD countries presents itself as a segmented labour market where one essentially observes that immigrant women tend to share the same characteristics of employment as women in general, but generally in a more pronounced fashion – except for part-time employment. The situation of women who were not born in the OECD area appears to be even more unfavourable.

22. The cumulative handicaps of the immigrant population (lack of domestic labour market experience and human capital, language problems, lack of recognition of foreign qualifications, discrimination, *etc.*), combined with gender-specific problems of labour market integration (*e.g.* lower appreciation of their human capital, difficulties to pursue a professional career) are prime reasons for this outcome.
II. The evolution of the labour market integration of immigrant women over the period 1994-2004

23. Section I presented cross-section, point-in-time data. Yet, integration has a dynamic perspective. Hence, we now turn to trends in the labour market experience of immigrant women over the period 1994-2004.

24. Such a dynamic analysis seems appropriate since the above analysis has shown that the current situation for immigrants is unsatisfactory in many aspects, despite the fact that the employment rates of immigrant women have increased in all countries with the exceptions of Austria and Germany (Figure 4).

![Figure 4. Employment rates of immigrant women 1994 and 2004, 15-64 years](image)

Note: Data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, to 1992 for Germany and to 2003 for Australia and Canada.

25. Departing from this observed increase, the remainder of this document sets out to shed some more light on the dynamic aspects of the labour market integration of immigrant women. More precisely, it addresses four questions. Firstly, how is the increase in immigrant women’s employment rates associated with the general evolution of the labour market? Secondly, how have the characteristics of immigrant women changed over the past decade and how did this affect their employment? Thirdly, how do recent arrivals fare now compared to the situation ten years ago? And, finally, did the nature of the employment among immigrant women change?

II.1. The role of the overall evolution of the labour market

26. In the period under consideration here, two key employment indicators – growth of the overall employment rate and of the unemployment rate – have shown a favourable evolution in most countries.

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5 These two countries experienced large-scale immigration from asylum seekers and refugees - particularly following the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia - during the period under consideration. In Germany, there was also a substantial inflow of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe.

6 Due to data limitations, this section focuses on a subset of countries (i.e. the former EU-15 with the exception of Finland, plus Australia, Canada and the United States). The data situation on which analysis in an international comparison has to be currently based is thus somewhat unsatisfactory. There is a clear need for better and more detailed data on immigrant women, notably of the longitudinal kind.
Only Germany, Austria and Sweden did not experience growth in overall employment rates, and in five countries the unemployment rates did not decline (Germany, Austria, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal).

Table 7. Labour market characteristics 1994-2004, working-age population (15-64)

| Country     | Percentage point changes in unemployment rate (total population) | Percentage point changes in employment rate (total population) | Percentage point changes in the employment rates of women
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Numbers in brackets are not significantly different from zero. The 1994 data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, to 1992 for Germany and to 2003 for Australia and Canada.


27. This general observation also holds for women. Over the past decade, women’s employment rates have increased in most OECD countries, both for the native-born and immigrants. Indeed, the countries where native women’s employment has increased the most – Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands – are, together with Denmark, also the ones in which immigrant women’s employment rates have experienced the largest increases (the overall correlation coefficient between the increase of the employment of immigrant and native women is 0.73). These are also countries which had relatively low employment rates of women ten years ago.

28. The three countries in which overall employment (i.e. of men and women) did not grow show an interesting pattern. In Germany and Austria, there was a (limited) growth of employment rates of women in which immigrants did not participate. Indeed, they are the only two countries in which the employment rates of immigrant women did not increase. This situation was different in Sweden, where immigrants’ employment has grown considerably, despite a slight decline from a very high level in the employment rates of native women and a low growth in overall employment.

29. In most countries, immigrant women have, by and large, participated in the increase in women’s employment rates in a way similar to that of the native-born. In Austria, Canada, Germany and Italy, immigrants lag between 4 and 6 percentage points behind the increase in native women’s employment rates. In contrast, however, immigrant women have benefited from increases in women’s employment rates in Denmark and Sweden, with increases of 10 and 8 percentage points above those of the native-born.

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7 See OECD (2003) for a detailed analysis of the evolution of the labour market outcomes in OECD countries in the 1990s.

8 See OECD (2002a) for a discussion of the underlying determinants.
Immigrant women also disproportionately benefited from increases in Portugal (4 percentage points) and the US (3 percentage points).

II.2 The evolution in the migration waves and the characteristics of the immigrant women

30. Part I of this paper has depicted important differences between immigrants from Non-OECD and OECD countries, with the latter being generally better integrated into the labour market. It is therefore important to note that the non-OECD country share of total female immigrants has grown in all countries under consideration here, with the exception of Austria (Table 8). Particularly in the Southern European countries – but also in Germany and Denmark – the relative importance of non-OECD immigrants has substantially increased. By and large, the employment rates of immigrants from OECD and non-OECD countries have evolved in a similar way. Nevertheless, in Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, the employment rates of immigrants from OECD countries showed a more favourable evolution than those of immigrants from outside the OECD area – in contrast to Italy, where only non-OECD immigrants benefited from the observed increase in the employment rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Evolution of employment rates of OECD and non-OECD immigrants, 1994-2004, women, 15-64 (percentage point changes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Numbers in brackets are not significantly different from zero.
The 1994 data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, and to 1992 for Germany.
1. For Germany, for the foreign-born it is assumed that country of nationality is the country of birth.

31. One possible explanation for the increase of the employment rates of women over the past decade is the favourable development in the skills distribution among women. In particular, in all OECD countries under consideration, the share of the low-qualified among women of working-age has declined (Table 9). However, although this change has also taken place among immigrant women (with the exception of Greece), it has not been as strong, especially in the Southern European countries and Ireland. The notable exceptions here are the United Kingdom and the United States, where the share of the low qualified diminished substantially more among immigrants than among the native-born.9

32. Controlling for education level (and thereby for the growth in educational attainment), how have employment rates of native-born and of foreign-born women changed over the past decade? As Table 9 shows, the evolution in qualification-specific employment rates has been relatively uneven across the OECD, both for native- and foreign-born women. Despite the overall increase in women’s employment rates in most countries, only Spain and Ireland have experienced increases in employment rates for both high- and low-qualified native-born and immigrants alike. On the other hand, the employment of low-skilled immigrant women has tended to grow more than that of their native counterparts – with the exceptions of Austria and

9 Note, however, the reclassification of education levels for the United-Kingdom in 2004 (see the Notes to Table 9).
Germany. In contrast, only few countries (Belgium, Spain and Ireland) experienced significant changes in the employment of highly-qualified immigrant women. The growth in immigrant women’s employment rates was thus somewhat skewed towards low-qualified individuals, in contrast to the development among native-born women (see also OECD 2003 for the development of the overall population).

### Table 9 Changes in the skills structure and of employment by skills level, 1994-2004, women, 15-64

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evolution of the share of low-qualified women in the working-age population (percentage points)</th>
<th>Evolution of the employment rates of native- and foreign-born women by skills level (percentage points)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>-13</td>
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<td>-9</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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</table>

**Notes:** Numbers in brackets are not significantly different from zero.

1. For reasons of historical consistency, ISCED level 3c for the United Kingdom and Luxembourg in 2004 has been re-classified to low-skilled.

The 1994 data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, to 1992 for Germany and to 2003 for Canada.

**Sources:** European countries: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat); United States: Current Population Survey March Supplement; Canada: Labour Force Survey.

### II.3 Evolution of the outcomes of recent arrivals

With regard to the dynamics of the labour market integration of immigrant women, it is of particular interest to see how employment rates of recent arrivals (i.e. immigrants with five years of residence or less in the host country) have evolved over the past ten years compared to the native-born. Figure 5 shows that the changes in employment rates of recent arrivals compared to those of the native-born over the past decade have been relatively uneven across the OECD.
34. Immigrants are particularly sensitive to fluctuations in the business cycle and tend to serve as cyclical buffers when employment falls rapidly in an economic downturn. By the same token, employment picks up more quickly than that of the native-born when the economy is growing (see OECD 2005). This tends to be true for immigrant women as well. This applies especially to recent arrivals who – as with any new entrants into the labour market – tend to face more difficulties under slack economic conditions. In countries where recent economic growth has been above the OECD average (e.g. in the United Kingdom, Spain, Ireland and the United States), the employment rates of recently arrived immigrant women have tended to show a more favourable evolution over the past decade than those of their native counterparts. In contrast, in countries where growth performance has been relatively weak (i.e. in Germany and Italy), the employment rates of such recent arrivals have deteriorated relative to those of the native-born. Overall, for those European countries for which information is available for both dates, the gap in the employment rates of recent arrivals in relation to the native-born has increased slightly.

II.4 The evolution in the nature of jobs held by immigrant women

35. One way to grasp the evolution in the nature of employment of immigrant women would consist in considering changes in the incidence of part-time and temporary employment and in the distribution of employment by occupation. The share of part-time employment among native women has tended to grow in most countries, except in the Scandinavian countries, where part-time employment was already relatively high in 1995. This tends to overstate the actual growth of women’s presence in employment. In general, the share of part-time employment among immigrants has moved in parallel to that of the native-born, i.e. there is little indication that the growth in immigrants’ presence in employment tends to be overstated relative to that of the native-born. Exceptions here are Germany and Italy, where the growth in immigrants’ part-time employment was much more pronounced than for the native-born.

36. For the limited number of countries for which 1994 data are available, temporary employment of immigrants has tended to increase over the past decade. Trends for the native-born have been more varied.
Noteworthy here is the apparent shift in the incidence of temporary employment, with a drop among native-born women in Spain, for example, being accompanied by an increase among immigrant women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Changes in part-time employment</th>
<th>Changes in temporary employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Numbers in brackets are not significantly different from zero.


37. The tendency for employment growth among immigrant women to be skewed towards the low-qualified is reflected in the changes observed in the occupational distribution over the past decade. Indeed, the divergent evolution for the native-born and immigrants is much more pronounced here. Whereas native women benefited from a shift towards more high-skilled occupations in all countries with the exception of Portugal, this is not generally the case for immigrants. Particularly in the Southern European countries, their employment has shifted towards low-skilled occupations, indicating complementarity of immigrant women’s employment to that of the native-born. In no country for which data are available have immigrants outpaced the native-born with respect to the evolution in the occupational level attained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Changes in the share of occupations in total employment, by occupational skill level, native- and foreign-born women, 1994-2004, 15-64 years</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: For the definition of job qualifications, see note to table 3.

Numbers in brackets are not significantly different from zero. The 1994 data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, and to 1992 for Germany.

Sources: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat).
General assessment and conclusions

38. A logit estimation pooling the 1994 and 2004 data for selected European countries makes it possible to assess the interaction of different factors, and thereby to address the question of whether or not immigrant women can be considered to be more integrated than ten years ago, after accounting for some structural differences. The results are summarized in Table 12. Even after controlling for skill level and age structure, immigrant women remain at a disadvantage vis-à-vis native women in most countries. Only in Luxembourg, which is a special case, have immigrant women higher employment probabilities than the native-born. However, there are no more significant differences between immigrant and native-born women in Southern European countries.

39. Although the observed trend increase in women’s employment rates holds even after controlling for the important changes in the skills structure outlined above, immigrants have not disproportionately participated in this increase and in several countries (Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom), immigrants even appear to have benefited less than the native-born. The only countries where the evolution for immigrant women was more favourable than for the native-born are Sweden and France. One possible explanation for immigrants’ lagging behind in the improvements in employment rates could be that the triggers behind the higher employment rates of native-born women – changes in family patterns and gender perceptions, as well as better child-care facilities and the like, had a smaller impact on immigrant women. In the latter case, their access may also be limited due to financial constraints.

Table 12. Logistic regression results for the employment of women, 1994 and 2004, 15-64 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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</table>

Notes: The 1994 data refer to 1995 for Austria and Sweden, and to 1992 for Germany.
1. In the case of the Netherlands, education was not controlled for due to a lack of data.
Dependent variable: employed (0/1)

Control variables: ten year age-groups (dummy variables); high/medium/low-skilled (dummy variables); year (dummy variable for 2004); immigrant (dummy variable); immigrant*year.
+/-++ positive coefficient significant at the 5%/1% level, respectively
--/- negative coefficient significant at the 5%/1% level, respectively
0 coefficient not significantly different from zero.

10 This estimation assesses the influence of a variety of factors (immigrant status, qualification level, age, year, and the interaction of year and immigrant status) on the employment probability of women. A negative coefficient for “immigrant*change 1994-2004”, for example, indicates that immigrants have participated less in the overall change in the employment of women (both native- and foreign-born) over the past decade, after controlling for the structure of the women’s workforce (i.e. age, qualification level and immigrant status).
Immigrant women have also benefited less from the overall expansion of occupational attainment among women. Indeed, the growth in the employment of immigrant women has been largely oriented towards low-skilled occupations. In countries such as Spain where the growth in immigrants’ employment was particularly pronounced, immigrants in low-skilled occupations appear to have replaced their native counterparts, who experienced upward occupational mobility. This could indicate that the overall growth in the employment of women – which is to a large degree fostered by changes favouring an increased labour supply – has been partly accompanied by increased competition between native- and foreign-born women. The result of this competition is an increased clustering of immigrant women in low-skilled occupations which are less desirable and for which they are often overqualified.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


### Employment and unemployment rates for women 15-64 by level of education and place of birth, 2004

#### Foreign-born

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Low Unemployment</th>
<th>Medium Employment</th>
<th>High Unemployment</th>
<th>Total Unemployment</th>
<th>Low Unemployment</th>
<th>Medium Employment</th>
<th>High Unemployment</th>
<th>Total Unemployment</th>
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**Notes:** "-" indicates that the figure is not significant and "." indicates that it is not available. Data for Canada refer to 2003.

**Sources:** European countries: European Community Labour Force Survey (data provided by Eurostat); United States: Current Population Survey March Supplement; Canada: Labour Force Survey.

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Annex.
Labour market outcomes of migrant women in OECD countries: overview and determinants

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26 September 2005

Jean-Christophe Dumont, Marion Isoppo and Thomas Liebig
Non-Member Economies and International Migration Division
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Overview

- Labour market outcomes of migrant women
- Evolution of participation and employment rates over the past decade
- Key determinants of the labour market integration of migrant women
- Conclusions
Migrant women have a lower participation rate than migrant men and native-born women.
Fig. 1

Migrant women are more likely to be unemployed.

Ratio of unemployment rate of foreign-born women to that of native-born women, 15-64, 2004.

- All Foreign-Born
- Non-OECD Foreign-Born

The chart shows the ratio of unemployment rates for migrant women compared to native-born women across various countries. The countries are represented along the x-axis, and the ratio values are indicated along the y-axis. The figure highlights the higher unemployment rates for migrant women compared to native-born women in most countries.
Employment characteristics of migrant women are similar to those of native-born women

- Working migrant women are overrepresented vis-a-vis men and native-born women in “Hotels and restaurants” and in “Housholds services” ...

- ... but many foreign-born women also work in the Education and Health sectors.

- The share of foreign-born women working in highly skilled occupations is generally lower than that of native-born women ...

- ... and foreign-born women are more likely to be overqualified in their job.
There are important differences in terms of labour market outcomes according to the region of origin of migrant women. Women born outside the OECD tend to participate less, have higher unemployment and to be more concentrated in low-skilled activities. This situation may be due to differences in individual characteristics (education, language, social capital, ...) as well as to behavioral specificities of foreign-born women. However, one cannot rule out discrimination issues!
Employment rates of migrant women have generally improved during the last decade.
But these improvements are not sufficient to ensure a convergence process

- Despite progress in the participation rate of foreign women the discrepancy with nationals have increased in several countries and …
- … even when the difference in participation has shrunk, the remaining gap may be quite large.
- Migrant women have benefited less from the increase in employment than the native-born in a number of countries.
- The growth in the employment of immigrant women has been largely oriented towards low-skilled occupations.
Labour market outcomes tend to improve with duration of stay.

Employment rate of foreign born in EU countries according to duration of stay, 2004

Similar trends can be observed in other OECD countries (United States, Canada, Australia).
Education has a positive impact on labour market outcomes of migrant women ... but is not decisive.

Family structure seems to play a greater role for migrant than for native-born women.


- Foreign women
- National women

No child
At least one child of which the youngest is 0 to 3 years old.
Conclusions

- Immigrant women’s labour market situation is characterised by the accumulation of the disadvantages faced by both women and immigrants.
- Little, if any, convergence in terms of participation and employment rates over the past decade.
- There is some evidence of improvement after some years of residence, but important gaps remain.
- Occupational downgrading and work-family balance pose particularly serious problems for migrant women.
- Discrimination problems cannot be ruled out.

However, the identification of the relevant benchmark for evaluating labour market outcomes of migrant women remains to be discussed.
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN ITALY
Jonathan Chaloff

The views expressed are those of the author and do not engage either the OECD, the European Commission or the national authorities concerned.
IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN ITALY

Jonathan Chaloff

1. Introduction

1. Italy is a major destination country for immigrants. Starting in the late 1970s, immigration achieved major importance by the start of the 1990s, prompting a series of legislative attempts to regulate migration for employment and survey undocumented migration (Chaloff, 2004). Women have always made up a significant part of the immigrant population in Italy, even though they have received less consideration than their male counterparts. The primary motivation for immigration to Italy among women is work and family reunification, both of which tend to penalise women. As far as work is concerned, amnesties and regularisations for contract work have tended to favour predominantly the male sectors of the labour market, with the recent exception of domestic assistance. The rules governing family reunification, on the other hand, delay arrival of the spouse for at least a couple of years, creating disturbances within the family.

2. Italian statistics usually report women as a subcategory: rather than dividing statistics into men and women: the total is followed by “of which, women”. This “of which” colours the perception of women immigrants, portraying them as a secondary category of a broader male phenomenon. Gender statistics for immigrants can also be hard to find. Only recently has women’s migration become the object of attention in its own right, with the rising numbers and increasing social significance. Looking at the revised ISTAT data on residence permits for 1 January 2003, women made up 48.3% of the 1.3 million legal foreigners (Table 1). By the end of 2003, the regularisation had brought the total to 2.2 million, without changing the gender balance. In 2002, only 30.4% of the 840,000 work permits were held by women, while women held 78.5% of the 420,000 family reunification permits. Women have used family reunification to come to Italy, even when their intentions were to work, since this is allowed for family members. There has therefore been a stabilisation of the presence of women immigrants in Italy, as shown by the reunification of families and women’s participation in the labour market. The presence of so many immigrant women has also changed the labour market for native Italian women.

2. Characteristics of the population of immigrant women

3. Immigration to Italy comprises different channels, and women are no exception. No single nationality dominates, and East Europe, East Asia and South America are all important source continents. Women have consistently made up almost half of the increasing annual inflows. Nonetheless, the main nationalities have shifted over the past three decades, from East Africa, to East Asia, to East Europe, essentially mirroring the market for domestic help. Reliable statistics are available for nationality, marital status, age, and location and duration of residence in Italy. The leading nationalities according to the latest statistics (Tables 2, 3 and 4) are Romanian, Ukrainian and Albanian. Romanians and Albanians are both nationalities with a gender balance (the same number of women as men), with entire families living in Italy. Ukrainians are predominantly women with strong ties to their home country. Filipino women, whose long presence in Italy makes them pioneers of a sort, are of dwindling importance in the overall population, and have never achieved gender balance. As far as marital status is concerned, the rate of married immigrant women increased over the past decade from 44.9% to 57.7% (Table 5). A similar increase was also noted for men. This does not mean that the spouse lives in Italy, since many immigrants, especially live-in domestic workers, host their families. Nonetheless, family reunification has held steady at about
60,000 cases annually, including children. More families have meant greater social integration on the one hand, and a greater demand on social services on the other.

4. Since the 1992 Italian citizenship law is extremely strict (10 years of residence and a 90% rejection rate for naturalisation), it is interesting to note the number of women who become Italian citizens through marriage. Marriages between Italian men and foreign women have topped 10,000 annually, not including those celebrated abroad. Patterns of settlement of immigrants in Italy vary according to the local economy and the opportunities offered. Most are found in Lazio and Lombardy, urban and industrial centres, and far fewer in the southern and rural regions. When compared with immigrant men, women are over-represented in the Naples area, for example, and under-represented in Calabria (Table 1). While men tend to cluster around the industrial areas of the North, women work in service sectors present in both large and small urban areas throughout the Centre and North.

5. Over time, immigration to Italy has involved more women than men: 60% of those who have been living in Italy for at least 15 years are men, while in 2001-2002, 60% of newcomers were women (Tables 6-7). Those resident in Italy the longest are the Mauritians, the Americans and the Filipinos, while Bangladesh, Moldova and Ukraine are recent source countries.

6. The population of immigrant women has been slowly aging but is still mostly of working age (63.7% of the women are between 18 and 39) (Table 8). Minors are not issued permits and therefore do not appear in the permit statistics, but about 20% of the total female population is under 18. Age distribution varies according to nationality: Ukrainians and Filipinos are older, while Balkan citizens tend to be younger.

7. Crime statistics in Italy are more detailed than labour statistics, so it may be useful to note crime and prison data: 6.4% of women in Italian prisons are foreigners (compared with about one-third for men) (Table 9), although the higher level of incarceration is largely due to the fact that alternatives such as house arrest are not offered to foreigners. Prostitution is a major issue in the public perception of immigrants, with a supposed 20,000 foreign prostitutes in Italy, many of whom are trafficked women. A special provision of the 1998 immigration law allows these women to receive residence permits; about 800 a year benefit, mostly East Europeans and Nigerians.

3. Employment

8. Surprisingly little is known with certainty about the employment status and outcomes for immigrant women in Italy, since the National Statistics Institute Labour Force Survey does not provide data on employment by nationality or place of birth, notwithstanding its trimester sample of 200,000 individuals. However, secondary measures provide the basis for some inferences.

9. Residence permits report the reason for staying in Italy, and reveal a shift from family immigration to work immigration. Prior to the 2002 regularisation, 34.5% of foreign women were in Italy for work; the regularisation granted more than 300,000 work permits to women, increasing the proportion of workers among the total.

10. Consideration of immigrant women in the labour market, however, often neglects to consider the fact that family permits allow, but do not require, work. Estimates of the population of foreign workers are based on the number of work permits (250,000 women in 2003), but the more than 300,000 women with family permits are entitled to free access to the labour market. Many work irregularly or are job-seekers, as shown in a recent survey of employment centres (IOM, 2005). In fact, the survey showed that one-third of the foreigners using employment centres are women, and that many of them are long-term unemployed,
who must by definition have family permits, since work permits do not allow for long-term unemployment. There are many foreign women, then, who have difficulty in finding regular work.

11. The 2001 Census showed a high level of education among foreign women: 13.5% of them held university degrees, more than among foreign men and Italian women. Yet the IOM study showed the difficulty of achieving formal recognition of qualifications (certification) as well as informal recognition (by employers) of their academic and professional skills.

12. A recent study (Anolf, 2000) showed that 75% of foreign women in Italy were in the labour force, of whom 15% were unemployed and 35% underemployed. Only half of the active female immigrant labour force had regular employment: 13% had been asked to perform “inappropriate work”, either prostitution or illegal activities, by employers.

13. Immigrant women also appear to be largely excluded from contract employment. Women represented only 14.2% of applications for contract work in the 2002 regularisation (Table 10), compared to 77.8% for domestic work and 86.4% for assistance. Table 11 shows the breakdown by category.

14. The Pensions Institute (INPS), which tracks employment through pension contributions, had only 289,000 foreign women working in 2002 (Table 12), one-third of foreign workers, of whom just over half were in non-domestic sectors. Table 13 shows the breakdown according to type of labour (contract or self-employment) and is close to the INPS figures. We can therefore estimate that the rate of regular employment of foreign women in Italy is about 35%, notwithstanding the fact that these women are younger than their Italian counterparts. The rate of overall female employment in Italy is about 32.8%, far below the European average of 51% (the Lisbon objective is to reach 60%).

15. Immigrant women appear to be employed in less dangerous jobs than male immigrants, at least based on workplace accident data. The Workplace Insurance Institute (INAIL), had only 16,313 reports of accidents involving foreign women, compared to 89,466 for foreign men. Nonetheless, the psychological stress of the predominantly female sectors of the labour market, especially live-in elderly care with its social, linguistic and residential isolation, can take a heavy toll over time and leave workers suffering even after their return home.

16. Entrepreneurship among immigrant women appears to be on the rise. The Unioncamere and Infocamere Observatory on Female Entrepreneurship reported that at the end of 2004, there were 32,000 businesses run by a foreign-born woman, an 11.6% increase over the previous year (Table 14). The rate of increase was much greater than that of the total number of businesses (1.3%). Most entrepreneurs in this category were Chinese; the leading regions were Lombardy, Tuscany, Lazio and Campania.

4. Domestic care workers (badanti)

17. The driving force behind female labour migration to Italy and the main sector of occupation for women is the domestic sector, which comprises maids and elderly care _badanti_, or “minders”. INPS data showed 103,348 foreign women in the domestic sector in 2002 (prior to the massive regularisation), compared to 23,031 foreign men and 98,023 Italians (Table 15). The main nationalities are Ukraine, Romania, Philippines, Poland, Ecuador and Peru (Table 17).

18. While demand for maids first came from the urban upper and upper-middle class in the 1970s and 1980s, the demand has expanded to child care, and to minders for the elderly, disabled and chronically ill.
19. As for child care, while Italy has a fertility rate of 1.2, one of the lowest in the world, it also covers child care demand; ISTAT reported in 2003 that 60% of working mothers leave their children with their grandparents during the work day and only 20% use day care or nurseries.

20. A recent Censis survey revealed that 2.4% of Italians over 65 have a live-in “minder”. Public structures are insufficient to meet elderly care needs, forcing even middle-class families and those outside of large cities to pay for private live-in care.

21. This kind of live-in work, with its long hours and cohabitation with the employer, make women immigrants to Italy less visible and slows down any form of social integration, either with the local community or with fellow immigrants.

22. The transformation of elderly care in Italy into a system reliant on foreign “minders” has also worsened the overall situation in this domain, since families have ceased to provide care within the family as well as to demand public services. In the past, elderly care fell to daughters and daughters-in-law, who are no longer willing to sacrifice themselves for parents and in-laws of increasing longevity. On the other hand, there is no demand for new and alternative collective solutions for post-retirement care, from assisted living to retirement communities.

23. The post-feminist paradigm has been applied to Italy (Andall, 1999), interpreting the liberation of middle-class Italian women as being at the cost of the freedom of their maids and care workers. Domestic workers, in fact, must give up their own family ambitions and life to allow their employer to reconcile family and work. The hours and the pay (EUR 600/month, according to the latest regularisation) offered to domestic workers in Italy, in fact, are not compatible with maintaining a family nearby, forcing immigrant women to either renounce motherhood (as shown by the abortion statistics for foreign women), or to leave their children with relatives in their home country. A further possibility was shown in a recent Censis study on immigrant adolescents¹, which uncovered a world of children of domestic workers placed by their mothers in Catholic convents and ex-orphanages (1 600 according to the 2001 Census).

24. Research conducted among the longest-standing groups of domestic workers revealed that many of these women were overqualified for this work (Fondazione Andolfi, 2003): 41.6% were married, most had emigrated for economic reasons and 42.4% lived with their employer: 69.6% had emigrated alone, and about half had decided to leave to help their families. One in four was “suffering” in Italy and 17.4% saw their job as “humiliating”.

25. The early part of this decade saw a change in the women working in this sector, a veritable “Ukrainisation” of the field. More than 100 000 were regularised in 2003-2004. Many of these women are over 40 and are supporting their children’s education in Ukraine. They came alone because there is “no work for the husband in Italy”, or because they are divorced and their unemployed husbands have been paralysed by the social change in their home country (Ambrosini & Bocagni, 2003; Tassinari & Valzania, 2003). Quite often these women monetarise their social capital and sell jobs among themselves in an informal employment clearinghouse (EUR300-400 for a contact with an Italian employer). The availability of Ukrainian – and now Moldovan – women has increased the supply of domestic workers, driving wages down even further.

¹ www.chicam.net
5. Education and training

26. Public school enrolment shows near parity of foreign students, with girls representing 47.7% of overall foreign student enrolment. While little data is available, it appears that girls are more likely than boys to continue on to university-track secondary schools.

27. University statistics do not consider Italian-born or raised students, but only those enrolling directly from abroad. Italy is not a major destination for foreign students and has seen a drop in enrolment over the past decade, as competition from East Europe increases and administrative barriers remain high. The 31,777 foreign students in 2002 included more than 20,000 from outside the EU: 56.4% were women (Table 19). Only among Asians and Africans were women in the minority.

28. Women finishing university in Italy by no means face an easy career path. Foreign students face limits on the possibility of converting their study permit into a work permit.

29. Immigrant women underutilise public vocational training opportunities, both when offered to the general public and when offered to immigrants. In most cases, courses are planned for sectors where most employment is offered to men. Most training opportunities for immigrant women reinforce their concentration in the personal-care sector, providing marginal wage benefits and skills upgrades. Some attempts have been made to offer training courses to help women out of the trap of domestic work, although underemployment and unemployment remain the rule for immigrant women.

30. Even the initiatives meant to match supply and demand (such as ACLI-ColI’s Milan project to formalise matching between families and workers) do not address other employment sectors. Initiatives that are created by immigrant women themselves, however, tend to aim at employment in higher status sectors with greater job stability (programming, financial services), although few of these initiatives have had positive outcomes.

6. Asylum Seekers

31. Italy is not a major destination for asylum seekers in Europe. For many years it was accused of allowing easy transit of asylum seekers towards other countries. Since Italy offered no subsidies and no reception system, and even today lacks a single asylum law, there were no incentives for applicants. Asylum seekers lived for many years in the same conditions as undocumented aliens.

32. Those who did apply for asylum were mostly men fleeing from war zones, and fewer than one-fifth were women. Only 27.9% of refugees in Italy are women, mostly from conflict areas in sub-Saharan Africa.

33. A national reception system was created for asylum seekers in the early part of this decade and is attempting to improve the situation for them. However, only 15% of those involved in the system’s training and placement courses have been women.

7. Muslim women in Italy

34. Recent events have led to greater interest in Islam in Europe, including the relationship between Western societies and Islam and the gender aspects of this relationship. The question of head-coverings, which led to debate in France and the United Kingdom, has also been raised in Italy. This led to some public demonstrations in Turin, which has one of the most consolidated Muslim communities in Italy. This may also be due to the cyclical nature of immigration from Islamic countries: North African women arrive about five to seven years after their husbands and only recently have acquired sufficient familiarity with Italian society to start to place collective cultural demands.
35. The Muslim population in Italy is by no means homogeneous, and a division between traditional families and independent women has been described within the Maghreb and Senegalese populations (Sant-Blancat 1998). While families are made up of “reunified” wives who maintain close ties with the village cultures from which they come, the second group is made up of university educated working women from the urban middle class, whose immigration to Italy was related to an aspiration towards personal liberty and mobility with no sacrifice of Islamic identity.

36. Yet most of the “Muslims” enumerated in estimates in Italy are actually from countries where observance of Islam is fairly elastic, such as Albania and Bosnia. Most Albanian Muslim families even decline to take their children out of “religion” classes run by the Catholic Church in Italian public schools, perceiving Catholicism as a positive means towards social integration in Italy.

8. Maternity, abortion and health

37. Family life is difficult to reconcile with work in Italy. Only half of Italian women aged 35-44 with children are in the labour market, compared to 87% without children. Immigrant women are in even more difficult circumstances, concentrated in low-wage sectors and jobs which leave little space for a personal life. Nonetheless, immigrant women are an important component of Italian fertility. Many cities in the Centre-North see 10-20% of births to immigrant women; about 35 000 children were born to foreign parents in 2003. Yet immigrant women seem to rapidly adjust their child-bearing strategies to the Italian average, imitating the Italian lifestyle and having fewer children than the average for their country of origin. This could be attributed to workplace demands and the housing shortage, but it appears closely related to cultural factors as well.

38. Abortion statistics in Italy are very detailed. Abortions by minors are almost exclusively among immigrant girls. Overall, the abortion rate is three times higher among immigrant women than Italians (28.7 per thousand compared to 9 per thousand), and almost equal to the birth rate. In 2001, the main Day Hospital service provided to foreigners was abortion (27.2% of all same-day operations, compared to 3.8% for Italians). The rate was over half for “non-resident” (undocumented) foreigners.

9. Discrimination

39. Women immigrants in Italy often face discrimination. Research cited above (Anolf, 2000) found that 40.3% of the women found a hostile environment. Integration of their children is also not guaranteed. The first generation of children of East Africans who grew up in Italy in the 1970s and 1980s is now largely abroad, in more tolerant EU countries. Today’s second generation in Italian schools is less likely to imagine staying in Italy than their first generation parents.

40. A series of press content analyses conducted in 2001-2003 by Censis showed how immigrant women appear far less frequently than men in the media; how immigrants tend to be associated with crime, with frequent recourse to stereotypical imagery. Immigrant girls are particularly invisible in the public eye (Censis, 2003).

41. A survey of immigrants conducted in the South of Italy in 2003 by Censis revealed that 20% of school-age children of immigrants had been verbally abused, with 2.2% physically assaulted and 21.7% subjected to some form of isolation or exclusion: 24% of the women were unhappy with their working conditions: 33% of women had faced workplace discrimination, generally in terms of pay levels, treatment, tasks or hours demanded.
10. Conclusion: “of which, women”

42. The fact that there are more or less the same number of women immigrants as men immigrants has not meant that Italy has given equal attention to women’s issues. Both in the workplace and the realm of social services women appear disadvantaged compared to men. Even the quota system for admission of foreign workers, which is employer-driven, favours businesses which recruit mostly men (Chaloff, 2005). The current trend towards using training programmes abroad for recruiting worker also favours men, even in the domestic sector. There are few cases of training in “women’s sectors” and there are no attempts to recruit women for training in non-traditional sectors.

43. Domestic work is clearly the main area of women’s employment, yet it represents an employment opportunity which is least likely to lead to long-term social integration. Since most employment in Italy is found through informal networks of friends and family, there is little space for intervention by employment services. Word-of-mouth is still the main means for finding work, and while church parishes and ethnic networks are essential for employment, they have guaranteed segregation. The only way to address this seems to be to help increase the social capital of immigrant women, through associations and contact with native women.

44. Yet it is still difficult to find associations involving immigrant women. In part this is due to the stagnant saturation of representative structures by privileged members of the pre-existing Italian associations (church, trade union, third sector), and in part because of the heterogeneous nature of the immigrant population. Few associations have appeared which can claim real representation, notwithstanding a strong demand from Italian institutions.

45. More generally, the issues of women immigrants fall within the broader context of immigration policy in Italy. Italian immigration policy has, in fact, tended to struggle to make the shift from passive reaction to emergency situations to a more systemic policy capable of long-term governance.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Tables
Tab. 1 – Residence permits by gender and Region 1/1/2003

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Source: Ministero dell’Interno, Caritas
Tab. 2 - Foreign women with residence permits, 1/1/03 by nationality

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*Source: Ministero dell’Interno*
## Tab. 3 – Foreign women with residence permits, by area of origin (1992-2003)

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Source: Istat 2004
## Tab. 5 - Foreign women with residence permits, marital status, 1 January (1992-2003)

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*Source: Istat*
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<td>11.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**             | 22.7          | 4.3       | 5.7       | 6.9       | 7.5       | 10.1      | 5.6      | 100.0 |

Source: Istat
### Tab. 7 - Foreign women with residence permits by year of entry in Italy and area of origin, 1/1/2003 (1992-2002 %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<td>9.1</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>Central / East Europe</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
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<td>14.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
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<td>8.9</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>1.8</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<td><strong>4.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.6</strong></td>
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*Source: Istat*
Tab. 8 – Demographic structure of the population of foreign women (1992 – 2003)

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% in each age cohort</th>
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<td>Up to 17</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<td>1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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Source: Istat 2004

Tab. 9 – Foreigners incarcerated in Italy, by sex and nationality, 30/6/04

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<th>Sesso</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>% of total</th>
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<td>775</td>
<td>141</td>
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<td>1240</td>
<td>127</td>
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<td>2744</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>247</td>
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<td>130</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36.2</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>21.3</td>
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<td>4015</td>
<td>3982</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>1928</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>28.8</td>
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Source: Ministero della Giustizia, 2004
Tab. 10 - Applications for regularisation in 2002 by gender and type of contract

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<th>Contract</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Live-in assistance</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract work</td>
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<td>85.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: ISMU 2003

Tab. 11 - Women’s applications for regularisation in 2002 by nationality and contract

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Contract work</th>
<th>Domestic work</th>
<th>Live-in assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>39102</td>
<td>43197</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>29694</td>
<td>22990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>3074</td>
<td>12201</td>
<td>11495</td>
</tr>
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<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>2438</td>
<td>11613</td>
<td>9680</td>
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<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>9702</td>
<td>10648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;1000)</td>
<td>6027</td>
<td>4477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
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<td>5145</td>
<td>2420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;1000)</td>
<td>5145</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;1000)</td>
</tr>
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<td>3381</td>
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<td>9540</td>
<td>3087</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;1000)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Russia</td>
<td>1219</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;3000)</td>
<td>2178</td>
</tr>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1166</td>
<td>Nd (&lt;3000)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Source: ISMU 2003
Tab. 12 – Workers paying INPS pension contributions, by gender and area of origin (2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area di provenienza</th>
<th>C S Africa</th>
<th>N Africa</th>
<th>C N America</th>
<th>S America</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Oceania</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
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<td>171124</td>
<td>6171</td>
<td>21160</td>
<td>103286</td>
<td>189761</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>39795</td>
<td>566032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>26270</td>
<td>27423</td>
<td>13650</td>
<td>36910</td>
<td>61431</td>
<td>100367</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>22532</td>
<td>289461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60251</td>
<td>198547</td>
<td>19821</td>
<td>58070</td>
<td>164717</td>
<td>290128</td>
<td>1632</td>
<td>62327</td>
<td>855493</td>
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</table>

*Source: Inail - INPS 31 7 2003*
Tab. 13 - Foreign women with residence permits for work, 1 January 1992-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contract Work</th>
<th>Self Employment</th>
<th>Job Seekers</th>
<th>Special (a)</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>76718</td>
<td>6898</td>
<td>35226</td>
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<td>118842</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>83293</td>
<td>6178</td>
<td>15719</td>
<td>2187</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>90112</td>
<td>6276</td>
<td>16486</td>
<td>9793</td>
<td>122667</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>94735</td>
<td>6495</td>
<td>15695</td>
<td>12868</td>
<td>129793</td>
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<tr>
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<td>104279</td>
<td>6951</td>
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<td>12937</td>
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<td>254329</td>
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<td>22113</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</table>

(a) Humanitarian permits allowing work, mostly issued to ex-Yugoslavia refugees..

Source: Istat
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<th>Year 2003</th>
<th>Year 2004</th>
<th>Var. %</th>
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*Source: Osservatorio sull'imprenditoria femminile di Unioncamere e Infocamere*
## Tab. 15 – Domestic workers registered with INPS, by sex and nationality (1995-2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52.1</td>
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<td>56.3</td>
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</table>

*Source: Inps 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. Asia / Philippines</td>
<td>20111</td>
<td>35179</td>
<td>35974</td>
<td>36798</td>
<td>36606</td>
<td>42106</td>
<td>39089</td>
<td>37547</td>
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<tr>
<td>E Europe</td>
<td>7991</td>
<td>18247</td>
<td>15098</td>
<td>15781</td>
<td>19051</td>
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<td>26672</td>
<td>33068</td>
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<td>15765</td>
<td>15681</td>
<td>17046</td>
<td>21057</td>
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<td>17150</td>
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<td>16039</td>
<td>14268</td>
<td>13064</td>
<td>12416</td>
<td>15079</td>
<td>15200</td>
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<td>17084</td>
<td>13725</td>
<td>12572</td>
<td>1147</td>
<td>12084</td>
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<td>9515</td>
<td>8649</td>
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<tr>
<td>C America</td>
<td>3227</td>
<td>4806</td>
<td>4668</td>
<td>4763</td>
<td>4728</td>
<td>5392</td>
<td>4864</td>
<td>4624</td>
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<td>W Europe</td>
<td>2949</td>
<td>3029</td>
<td>3077</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>2926</td>
<td>3027</td>
<td>2830</td>
<td>2535</td>
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<td>N. America</td>
<td>1148</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1562</td>
<td>1505</td>
<td>1753</td>
<td>1630</td>
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<tr>
<td>S W Asia</td>
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<td>229</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>205</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>67697</strong></td>
<td><strong>124836</strong></td>
<td><strong>113137</strong></td>
<td><strong>111796</strong></td>
<td><strong>114182</strong></td>
<td><strong>136619</strong></td>
<td><strong>130334</strong></td>
<td><strong>126379</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Inps 2004*
### Tab. 17 - Domestic workers who made pension contributions in 2003, by nationality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>104000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>81000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>47000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>35000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>31000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>28000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>25000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>18000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>15000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>15000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>92000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All foreigners</strong></td>
<td><strong>491000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italians</td>
<td>100000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Inps/Caritas 2004*

### Tab. 18 - Regional distribution of domestic workers in Italy, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of Italy</th>
<th>Domestic workers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>231000</td>
<td>47,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>169000</td>
<td>34,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>91000</td>
<td>18,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>491000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100,0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Inps/Caritas 2004*
Tab. 19 - Foreign university students in Italian universities, by origin and sex, 2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of origin</th>
<th>Students enrolled</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>% who are women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>2704</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3143</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-15</td>
<td>10285</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>13316</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N America</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S America</td>
<td>1676</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31777</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Instruction, University and Research.*
Women Migrants: Facing less labour protection & labour market legal opportunities than men

by

Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin
Labour Migration Specialist
International Labour Office
Geneva
e-mail: mfontes@ilo.org
ILO’s Research based on surveys

- Bahrain
- Lebanon
- Kuwait
- U.A.E.
- Ethiopia
- Costa Rica

Ramirez Machado’s report covering legislation in 60 countries: the majority of domestic workers in private households are exposed to adverse conditions of employment and unfair work practices in terms of hours of work, rest periods and overtime.
## Domestic workers’ conditions of work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ILO- Women Migrant Domestic Workers' Surveys in Bahrain, Lebanon, Kuwait, U.A.E. and Costa Rica</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lebanon</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average working hours per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtime paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average days off per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health fees or social security coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 5 household residents per domestic w.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, verbal or sexual abuse cases out of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages per month in U.S. dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-payment of wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of domestic workers interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of female dom. w. out of total interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage by Labour Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding of passport by sponsor or employer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Labour markets & Policies

Existing demand in labour markets for foreign domestic workers is not being recognised. The domestic sector has been abandoned by nationals who are not enough in number and who will not come back to the sector in the future (non-competition with n.w.)

Policies make the difference: in Europe two types of countries
1. Those like Italy and Spain that have through regularisations and/or annual quotas accepted that they have a real demand and;
2. Those that ignore or close their eyes to what is happening inside (Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, etc.)

• Bilateral Agreements provide larger legal opportunities to men than to women migrant workers
Migration Management Areas to reduce no. Women migrant workers facing vulnerable situations

- Establish a gender-balanced migration policy

- **Monitor** or regulate the activities of private employment agencies and other intermediaries recruiting for jobs abroad

- Promote the creation of a single information system on jobs abroad easily available (at least at the regional level)

- Promote targeted gender-sensitive employment and vocational training programmes
Migration Management Areas to reduce no. Women migrant workers facing vulnerable situations

- Establish Bilateral Labour Agreements (50% quotas for men/50% for women)
- Negotiate Recognition of Diplomas
- Enforce the use of an Employment Contract
- Work with the Ministry of Labour and Mobilize the Social Partners
- Improve Labour Inspection in those sectors where women workers are found in difficult working conditions
Migration management responses to protect domestic workers: countries of destination

- **Legislation**: making sure that the labour code provides the same rights and protection to domestic workers as any other worker & does not include any discriminatory clauses.

- **Policy**: making sure it recognises the labour market demand for domestic workers.

- Introduce some type of monitoring of working conditions in the workplace (the household).
Migration management measures to protect domestic workers: countries of destination

- Forbid the withdrawal of identity documents
- Enforce prosecution in the case of recruitment agents and employers/sponsors identified as having violated their contractual obligations and having committed abuses.
- Increase flexibility in changing sponsors (without imprisonment and deportation) in cases of workers complaining of abuses.
Migration management measures to protect domestic workers: countries of destination

- Undertake awareness-raising campaigns aiming at changing and avoiding behavioural practices such as forbidden weekly or monthly resting days, withholding passports, withholding of wages, and physical, sexual and psychological abuses.
- Provide shelters and free-of-charge lawyers for run-aways.
- Set up a central registry or database comprising a copy of the contract, the full address of the recruitment agency, name of recruitment agent, full address of employer and other useful information in case of grievance.
Migration measures to protect domestic workers:
countries of origin

- Ensure the migrant worker has signed a contract before leaving the country;
- Create a database with a registry comprising a copy of the contract, the full address of the recruitment agency, name of recruitment agent, full address of employer and other useful information in case of grievance;
- Provide useful pre-departure information on who to contact in case of urgent need, legal rights, and other information on cultural differences, etc.;
- Embassies in countries of destination could provide enough labour attachés to deal with complaints and urgent needs of national workers abroad.
Anti-trafficking Projects strategy

**Capacity Building**
- Improvement of migration policy including the drafting and negotiations of bilateral agreements
- Improvement of migration legislation and administration
- Improvement of a gender-sensitive employment and training policy
- Improvement of the licensing & monitoring system of private employment agencies for jobs abroad

**Small community-based pilot schemes**
- Improvement of women’s access to reliable information on legal job-placement abroad
- Expanding women’s access to vocational training and employment
- Developing small-entrepreneurship for women with the support of a micro-finance component
- Improving women’s access to vocational training and employment
- Expanding women’s access to vocational training and employment
- Improving women’s access to vocational training and employment
- Developing small-entrepreneurship for women with the support of a micro-finance component
Trade Unions

- Mobilize and organise migrant workers
- Ensure representation and voice for migrant workers
- Make representation on behalf of migrant workers
- Share information on recruitment and placement of migrant workers between sending and receiving countries
- Conduct legal literacy courses in sending communities
- Play an advocacy role, highlighting the plight of victims
- Provide direct services for victims of trafficking
- Support the establishment of self help groups for victims of trafficking
Employers

- Engage in dialogue with authorities
- Engage in Tripartite consultation to assess demand for foreign workers
- Monitor the implementation of labour agreements
- Provide information about the receiving country
- Support and conduct training programmes to prepare for overseas employment
- Support employment creation for prevention of trafficking and the rehabilitation of victims of trafficking
- Encourage associations of recruitment agencies to be socially responsible and aware of the vulnerabilities of female migrants
- Put checks on employers/recruitment agencies with bad records
- Support community initiatives
Women benefiting from regularisation schemes and/or annual quotas

- The **Social cost of migration is reduced**: able to travel to their countries often to see the families they have left behind.

- The **Economic gains of migration are increased** through larger remittances and increased possibilities to save money to go back to country of origin.
Turkish Migrant Women’s Labor Force Participation: An Overview

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet İçduygu

Migrant Women and the Labour Market: Diversity and Challenges

Round Table: Migrant women of same country of origin and their different ways of integrating

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Bedford Hotel, Brussels, 26-27 September 2005
History of Turkish Emigration to Europe

- 1961-1974: Labor Migration
- 1974-1980: Family Reunion
- 1980-2005: Marriage Migration + Family Reunion + Asylum + Clandestine

No. Of Turkish Citizens in Europe:

- 1970: 750 thousand
- 1980: 1.4 million
- 1990: 2.1 million
- 2005: 2.5 million
Stocks of Turkish and Turkish-born Citizens in Selected OECD countries, 2002

Stocks of Turkish citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Stocks</th>
<th>Of which women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1912.2</td>
<td>879.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>208.0</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>121.4</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>100.3</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stocks of Turkish-born population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Stocks</th>
<th>Of which women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Data refer to population registers except for the United Kingdom, USA, Canada where data refer to the Labour Force Survey and for France (1999 Census)

*Source:* Trends in International Migration, OECD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>34.1</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>38.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>41.7</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>19.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Urban Men</th>
<th>Urban Women</th>
<th>Rural Men</th>
<th>Rural Women</th>
</tr>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>78,7</td>
<td>6,3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>92,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
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<td>8,3</td>
<td>91,8</td>
<td>90,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>73,7</td>
<td>8,2</td>
<td>90,8</td>
<td>88,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>69,9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75,1</td>
<td>47,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>70,3</td>
<td>15,2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>51,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>66,2</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>75,2</td>
<td>49,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>68,9</td>
<td>18,5</td>
<td>12,9</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Status of Female Employment, Turkey (2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Unpaid family worker</th>
<th>Self employed and employer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wage and Salary</td>
<td>38,1</td>
<td>81,6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed and employer</td>
<td>12,9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid family worker</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9,4</td>
<td>73,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sectors (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>58,5</td>
<td>9,5</td>
<td>89,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>12,9</td>
<td>27,2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0,5</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>28,1</td>
<td>62,2</td>
<td>6,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Basic Tendencies: Women in Turkey

2003: Male LFPR is 70 %

Female LFPR is 27%

Female LFPR in Urban 18.5% in Rural 39%

- Female employment in urban areas:
  - mostly in service sector

- Female employment in rural areas:
  - in agriculture/unpaid family labour
  - mostly in the informal sector
  - in low-skilled, low-paid jobs
  - low level of formal education
## The educational profile of the female labour force (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Literate</th>
<th>Primary school graduates</th>
<th>Secondary school graduates</th>
<th>Highschool graduates</th>
<th>Higher education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Basic Tendencies: Turkish Women abroad

2001-2003:

Turkish male migrants LFPR is around 52-89%
Turkish female migrants LFPR is around 22-68%
Global LFPR is around 64-81%
Foreigners’ LFPR is around 58-78%
Foreign Female LFPR is around 43-71%
Foreign Male LFPR is around 71-90%
## Participation Rate in Selected OECD Countries, 2002-2003 Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global rate</strong></td>
<td>71,7</td>
<td>64,2</td>
<td>81,2</td>
<td>71,8</td>
<td>79,7</td>
<td>69,2</td>
<td>76,4</td>
<td>78,0</td>
<td>75,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreigners</strong></td>
<td>74,7</td>
<td>57,0</td>
<td>80,2</td>
<td>65,0</td>
<td>64,2</td>
<td>62,5</td>
<td>61,3</td>
<td>66,0</td>
<td>67,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkish foreigners</strong></td>
<td>64,7</td>
<td>39,8</td>
<td>74,9</td>
<td>58,9</td>
<td>49,9</td>
<td>55,8</td>
<td>57,6</td>
<td>47,4</td>
<td>51,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>41,6</td>
<td>22,3</td>
<td>61,7</td>
<td>40,4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30,4</td>
<td>45,1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign women</strong></td>
<td>63,1</td>
<td>42,7</td>
<td>71,6</td>
<td>51,5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48,4</td>
<td>52,1</td>
<td>60,4</td>
<td>56,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>83,5</td>
<td>60,5</td>
<td>83,7</td>
<td>74,8</td>
<td>51,6</td>
<td>78,6</td>
<td>69,7</td>
<td>70,8</td>
<td>76,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The sign "-" indicates that the estimate is not statistically significant.

* The participation rate refers to persons aged 15 to 64 years who are in the labour force divided by the working population (2001-2002)
## Participation Rate of Foreign-born Population, 2002-2003 Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Switzerland ¹</th>
<th>Germany²</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Greece</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>73,1</td>
<td>57,8</td>
<td>78,1</td>
<td>66,0</td>
<td>67,1</td>
<td>66,1</td>
<td>73,0</td>
<td>65,9</td>
<td>69,6</td>
<td>68,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of which</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turkey born population</strong></td>
<td>68,9</td>
<td>46,6</td>
<td>78,3</td>
<td>59,4</td>
<td>57,6</td>
<td>55,9</td>
<td>72,1</td>
<td>61,6</td>
<td>59,8</td>
<td>52,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of which</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>49,3</td>
<td>26,6</td>
<td>67,9</td>
<td>38,6</td>
<td>52,0</td>
<td>30,4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>44,8</td>
<td>45,2</td>
<td>30,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>86,1</td>
<td>67,2</td>
<td>87,4</td>
<td>78,1</td>
<td>64,8</td>
<td>79,6</td>
<td>89,3</td>
<td>75,9</td>
<td>74,8</td>
<td>73,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The sign "-" indicates that the estimate is not statistically significant.
* The participation rate refers to persons aged 15 to 64 years who are in the labour force divided by the working population

1. For Switzerland, calculations are only based on 2003 data
2. For Germany, about 6.84% of the foreign born populations has been ignored
### Unemployment Rate in Selected OECD Countries, 2002-2003 Average

| Unemployment rate* in selected OECD countries, 2002-2003 average | Austria | Belgium | Switzerland | Germany | Denmark | France | Netherlands | Sweden | UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Global rate | 4,8 | 7,3 | 3,6 | 9,2 | 4,9 | 8,9 | 3,1 | 5,3 | 5,0 |
| of which | | | | | | | | | |
| Foreigners | 9,0 | 17,5 | 7,3 | 15,1 | 12,9 | 18,5 | 7,4 | 12,4 | 8,0 |
| of which | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkish foreigners | 13,7 | 34,2 | 12,6 | 19,1 | - | 25,4 | - | - | - |
| Women | 13,0 | 48,1 | 14,9 | 17,9 | - | 38,4 | - | - | - |
| Men | 13,9 | 28,3 | 11,6 | 19,7 | - | 20,8 | - | - | - |

Note: The sign "-" indicates that the estimate is not statistically significant.

* The participation rate refers to persons aged 15 to 64 years who are in the labour force divided by the working population.
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Basic Tendencies: Turkish Women abroad

- **Female employment**
  - mostly in service sector and some in manufacturing sector
  - unpaid family labor
  - in low-skilled, low-paid jobs
  - low level of formal education
  - low level of language proficiency
  - new migration (family reunification) brings difficulties for the insertion into the labour market
  - variations among countries of immigration
Concluding Remarks (Questions ?)

- **Factors Affecting the LFPR**
  - (Legacy of) the history of immigration
  - Individual characteristics of migrants (age, education, gender, SES, human and social capital, language, “culture”)
  - Labor market conditions in the country of immigration

- **Why variations among the countries of immigration in terms of the LFPR?**

- **Structural/system-based analysis vs “culture-based” explanations**

**Case: LFPR’s of the Turkish Female Migrants in Australia?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LFPR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asian Migrant Women and the Labour Market

Eleonore Kofman
(School of Health and Social Sciences, Middlesex University, UK)

This paper examines the position of Asian migrant women in the labour market in OECD countries, and in particular the European Union. The term Asian encompasses extremely heterogeneous migrations in a wide geographical area stretching from East Asia, South East Asia to the Indian sub-continent. Each nationality has its own history and relationship with a receiving state. It is not possible to do justice to the complexity and diversity of migratory situations in this brief review so only some of the more significant groups will be singled out – Chinese from the mainland or People’s Republic of China as well as Hong Kong, Filipinas, Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis from South Asia.

Post-war immigration from Asia was related to colonial links and subsequent processes of decolonisation from the late 1940s onwards. This led to populations with colonial links migrating to the UK (Indian sub-continent, Hong Kong); France (Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam) and the Netherlands (Indonesia). One of the main characteristics of this migration was that from the outset it constituted a migration of settlement consisting of entire families or permitting family reunification. The groups brought with them different experiences; some were peasants in rural, others had a commercial and urban background. Thus in the UK, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis originated from poor rural areas, whilst Indians were more likely to be urban, especially those coming from East Africa where they formed the merchant class. Economic and social background, cultural traditions and religion all play their part in the subsequent social mobility and employment of female migrants and their descendants.

From the late 1970s, patterns of Asian immigration began to change in traditional societies of immigration as well as Europe. Probably the most significant shift was the rethinking of immigration policy, ending the previous exclusion of Asians in force since the late 19th and early 20th century in the major societies of immigration such as Australia, Canada and the United States (Castles and Miller 2003). In these countries, Asian immigration rose dramatically due to the combination of labour and family migration, students and refugees. In relation to the latter these three countries all took in large numbers of Indochinese, in particular Vietnamese refugees. For example from 1978 to 1981, the US took in 438,000 from Vietnam, Australia 55,000 while from 1979 to 1982 Canada took in, 59,000 Vietnamese, 7000 Cambodians and 2500 Laotians. The continuing intake of refugees in the 1980s and the significance of family reunification meant that the Vietnamese population has grown. In the 2001 census in Canada 148, 400 Vietnamese by birth were recorded, of whom 75,700 were women. Recent Chinese emigration was shaped by the opening up to the external world and economic reforms from the end of the 1970s and the prospect of the transfer of Hong Kong from the UK to China which occurred in 1997. It was preceded as from the 1980s by large-scale emigration from Hong Kong to Canada, United States and
Australia. In Canada, the Chinese constituted the largest single nationality by birth of immigrants, second in Australia and third in the US. Compared to earlier waves, recent migrants have been highly educated with greater mobility among women (Da 2003). Filipinas too have a long history of female emigration though the group with the highest percentage of female migrants is the Thai. Their main destination has been the US but in Europe they have generally immigrated as sex workers or brides, reflecting previous male tourism to the country (Mix and Piper 2003). And as the table below shows there is a distinctive mix of nationalities.

Table 1

STOCK OF ASIAN IMMIGRANTS BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH IN 2001-3 (000s)

AUSTRALIA (2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Of whom women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1,117,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>171,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>164,9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>115,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>110,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>89,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CANADA (2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Of whom women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>332,8</td>
<td>177,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>314,7</td>
<td>156,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>235,6</td>
<td>122,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>233,7</td>
<td>139,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>148,4</td>
<td>75,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNITED STATES (2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Of whom women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1,457,5</td>
<td>857,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,183,6</td>
<td>542,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,167,6</td>
<td>634,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>946,7</td>
<td>510,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>916,2</td>
<td>530,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SOPEMI 2005

In Europe, Asian migration too changed as a result of the stoppage of mass labour immigration (1960s in UK and 1970s elsewhere in Northern Europe), the arrival of refugees from East Africa and SE Asia, especially Vietnam and later Cambodia, and subsequently the shift of Southern European states from countries of emigration to countries of immigration as from the late 70s and 1980s. This was also a time of the transition to democracy and changing social structures and practices in Southern Europe. One of the major changes
was the increasing participation by women in the labour market but within welfare systems that continued to rely heavily on the family to provide care for children, disabled and the elderly.

Hence middle and upper middle class women in the latter countries began using migrant women in domestic labour, initially in household tasks but increasingly for child and elderly care. This was far less common in Northern countries though they were also brought in by diplomatic and internationally mobile families. These flows were dominated by the Filipinas who, as can be seen in the statistical table on year of evidence, to a much higher degree had arrived prior to 1992 (Chaloff 2005).

Whether it be to the traditional countries of immigrant settlement or to Europe, the emigration of Asian women as workers, wives and mothers (Piper and Roces 2003) has profoundly influenced the theorisation of contemporary migration. A number of writers argue that the undervaluing of care work within capitalism has meant that many women in the First World who can afford to do so are turning their back on this work and subcontracting it to migrant women. Saskia Sassen (2000), for example, suggests that the working out of the forces and processes of economic globalization (structural adjustment programmes, opening up to foreign capital and removal of state subsidies) are systemically linked to the growing significance of female migration in the pursuit of alternative survival strategies. The latter involve the export of female migrants as labour migrants: sex workers, entertainers, marriage partners and industrial cleaners working in offices where 'the real work' of globalisation occurs. Her work highlights the ways in which women are incorporated into this global economy and attempts to outline the circuits connecting labour demand and supply. Women play their part in ensuring the survival of households, and even national economies. Such alternative global circuits provide the means of making a living and a profit, and securing government revenue through remittances. The other side of the coin, that is the demand for labour in the First World, is supplied by Sassen’s analysis of the role of migrant labour in the marginalized, flexible and devalued sectors of production and services in global cities (Sassen 2000). However their contributions in these sectors are not recognized by the state and thus their moves across borders are often unauthorised (Sassen 2003).

Sassen thus offers an insight into the significant presence of poorly paid migrant women workers in the privileged centres of global power. Arlie Hochschild's analysis of global care chains locates these interdependencies at a household level. Global care chains are defined 'as a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring' (Hochschild 2000: 131). The chains may vary in their number and connective strength. For example, the emigration of a woman to care for a child or an elderly person in a wealthier country may generate another link in the chain bringing in someone from a poorer area to look after her own children and parents or it may entail another member of her own family, such as a sister, being remunerated to do the caring. Many of these women, especially from the Philippines, experience downward social mobility and contradictory class positions (Parrenas 2001). However stimulating these
analyses have been, they fail to recognise or account for the diversity of women’s migratory involvement, ranging from less skilled to skilled employment (Kofman 2004) and the relationship between work and marriage (Piper and Roces 2003). Furthermore, the globalisation of social reproduction takes places in numerous sites and spaces (public, voluntary, private, household) and not just in the domestic sphere as emphasised in theorisations outlined above (Kofman and Raghuram 2006). In the next section I briefly outline some of the dimensions of diversity of Asian migrant women.

DIVERSITY OF ASIAN WOMEN MIGRANTS

(i) Geographical Distribution
The Chinese are the most widespread whilst other nationalities are concentrated in certain countries or limited in perceptible numbers to a few. Filipinas have extended their presence into new countries of Northern Europe. South Asian immigrants are still largely concentrated in the UK where there is continuing family reunification as well as increased levels of skilled migration, especially from India. Vietnamese are one of the few groups present in Eastern Europe where they were recruited during the Communist years. Thai women are prominent in Nordic states.

(ii) Gender Ratios
Thai populations in the Nordic countries register the highest proportion of women (see table 2) who generally enter as sex workers or as brides, the latter a consequence arising from previous male tourism to the country. Filipinas populations too have a majority of female migrants due to the significance of independent labour migration (domestic, nurses). At the other end of the spectrum Pakistani populations, especially where the migration is recent and family reunification is not well established have a predominance of males eg. Greece. Independent female labour migration from Bangladesh and Pakistan is either not allowed or restricted by legislation.

Table 2

STOCKS OF ASIAN POPULATIONS BY NATIONALITY IN EUROPE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DENMARK</th>
<th></th>
<th>FINLAND</th>
<th></th>
<th>GREECE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures are in thousands.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUNGARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IRELAND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NETHERLANDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NORWAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PORTUGAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPAIN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SWEDEN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED KINGDOM (2003)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only the largest groups are indicated but these figures do not include those with the citizenship of the country in which they are resident.*

(iii) Participation in the labour market
The level of participation of a particular nationality reflects both the extent of independent labour migration as well as extent to which those entering through family migration enter the work force. We may be underestimating the degree to which women are working since many are pushed into the informal sector, especially if they are not permitted to work upon entry, as I sometimes the case with family migration. Refugees too have low rates of labour market participation especially in the early years of settlement. Within countries there are substantial differences in labour force participation, unemployment and sectoral specialisation between nationalities (see UK example)
Table 3
FEMALE IMMIGRANT LABOUR FROM ASIA BY PLACE OF BIRTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRALIA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>655.5</td>
<td>301.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>105.6</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2486.4</td>
<td>1060.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CANADA (2001)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>209.4</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>166.1</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>162.8</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>140.9</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>103.5</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3150.8</td>
<td>1458.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED STATES (2003)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1010.9</td>
<td>590.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>787.7</td>
<td>270.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>657.6</td>
<td>306.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>579.7</td>
<td>272.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>543.9</td>
<td>278.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WORKING IN THE UK BY NATIONALITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This includes the Middle East

Source: SOPEMI (2005)
UK Labour Force Survey
(iv) Sectoral Differences and Structures of Opportunity
Whilst attention has focused on domestic services and sex work, migrant women are employed in a wide range of sectors, including skilled work in education, health and social work, restaurants and take away outlets.

That is what kind of work is available and whether they are primarily directed towards certain kinds of work. Migrant women in many countries are largely employed in domestic work or the hospitality sector. Many countries do not permit them to enter into the kind of public sector jobs which native women occupy eg. nursing, social work or if they do direct to less well paid and secure jobs within the sector.

(v) Deskilling and over qualification
There has been much concern in Australia and Canada about the deskilling of female migrants and the difficulties they have experienced in transferring human and social capital (Man 2004; Salaff and Greve 2004). Many skilled female migrants in these countries enter as spouses of skilled male migrants (Kofman and Raghuram 2006; Raghuram. 2004). Though women share similar problems to men such as recognition of credentials, lack of local experience and insufficient knowledge of the language, women are more likely to be working in restrictive and regulated professions (Boyd and Pikkov 2005; Kofman and Raghuram 2006). Over qualification may be sanctioned by the state as in the Canadian Living Care Giver Programme which requires relatively high level of qualifications yet channels women into household labour (Pratt 1999).

In Europe attention is now beginning to be paid to over qualification rates of immigrant women relative to native-born. In all countries foreign born have higher educational attainments than the general requirement for the occupations they undertake and this disparity is particularly severe in the case of Southern Europe, Austria and Germany( Dumont and Liebig 2005). It is also significantly worse for foreign-born from non-OECD countries with the exception of Hungary and in France, Portugal and the UK where the higher level of over qualification between foreign-born in general and non-OECD is small. However, the reasons for the relatively small level of over-qualification are likely to be very different for these three countries. However there has as yet been little detailed analysis of differences between countries and especially between nationalities which also experience different degrees of racial discrimination.

DIFFERENCES BY NATIONALITY
Filipinas
Since 1992, women have dominated Filipina emigration (Asis 2003) so that they are generally in the majority, often taking the lead in migration. Two areas of concentration are to be found, that in the health sector, especially nursing, the other as domestic labour, particularly in Southern Europe and other affluent countries such as Singapore and Hong Kong. The emigration of Filipina women is not recent though this has often been forgotten in migrant
histories. For example, Filipina women, and a smaller number of men, were recruited to the UK as from the late 1960s until the mid-1970s to work in those areas rejected by indigenous labour such as clothing factories and residential homes (Bhabha and Shutter 1994).

The largest number are to be found in the US which colonised the Philippines from 1898 to 1946, imposing English as the national language and an American school system. This opened the possibility of working and studying in the US which became a pre-requisite for social mobility for nursing (Le Espiritu 2005). Since the 1965 Immigration Act, immigration from outside Europe was made easier and health professionals were recruited by US health organisations. As the numbers migrating annually to the US have fallen, the recruitment of nurses has become globalised such that large numbers of Filipina nurses are now to be found in several European countries such as Ireland, Norway and the UK as well as Gulf states (see table 4). Thus over 85% of Filipina nurses are working internationally.

Table 4
Filipina Nurse Migration Outflow 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>4231</td>
<td>5383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>4562</td>
<td>5045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>1218</td>
<td>1529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2269</strong></td>
<td><strong>11267</strong></td>
<td><strong>13536</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Buchan et al 2005

Filipinas also often tend to form the elite of domestic service (Andall 2003), receiving higher wages and in recent years being replaced by newer flows of labour such as Eastern Europeans in Southern Europe.

Chinese
The Chinese form large populations in all the traditional immigration countries but they are also commonly found in many European countries. Chinese women, as with men, have a notable presence in the commercial sector, many working in restaurants and take away food outlets and other commercial activities. In European states, Chinese communities have grown rapidly in the 1990s For example in Spain, the Chinese population expanded from 4090 in 1990 to 28693 in 2000 and 56086 in 2003. In Italy, they had the highest number of female migrant entrepreneurs in the years 2003 and 2004 (Chaloff 2005). Many women work in family businesses. However, they are not employed to a great extent as live-in-assistance. For example, Italian statistics on regularisation shows that the greatest number of women were regularised
under the category of contract work and then domestic work but less than 1000 as live-in assistance.

**UK Case Study**
In the past few years, and especially with the results from the 2001 census, there has been a large number of studies examining differences in labour market participation for ethnic groups and by gender (Clark and Drinkwater 2005; Dale et al. 2004; Equal Opportunities Commission) and charting changes since the previous census in 1991. Furthermore, for the first time in 2001 a question was asked on religion. These studies all demonstrate the substantial differences between the main ethnic minority groups, especially between different Asian groups. Unless stated otherwise, the data presented below refers primarily to the 2001 census and the population 16-74 years in the main minority ethnic groups (Equal Opportunities Commission 2004). Hence it reflects the outcomes of immigration over the past 50 years.

- **Indian** - well-qualified with 21% to degree level. Employment rates slightly below that for the white population with about the same percentage looking after dependants and out of the labour market. A high percentage (25%) working in professional occupations or as managers and senior officials.

- **Chinese** – perform well educationally with 82% of women in full-time education between 16-24 years. High percentage of self-employed (19%) and high percentage working in hotels and restaurants (31%) as well as in professional and managerial occupations (29%). Under 15% looking after family/home.

- **Pakistani** – low participation in education. One in five women was in employment while 36% were looking after family/home. Unemployment rates are high whilst two-fifths of working women were employed part-time.

- **Bangladeshi** – only 42% were full-time students and their employment rate was low at only 17%. Two-fifths were outside the labour market and looking after family/home. Unemployment rates and part-time employment were high.

Dale et al (2004) suggest that low levels of activity associated with Bangladeshi and Pakistani women is due to marriage, children and lack of qualifications.
References


MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

MIGRANT WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES

Angeline Low

The views expressed are those of the author and do not engage either the OECD, the European Commission or the national authorities concerned.
MIGRANT WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES

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1. Introduction

1. Close to a quarter of Australia's labour force were born overseas and their participation rate is lower than persons born in Australia. Migrants from English-speaking countries participated in the labour force at a higher rate than migrants from non-English-speaking countries and than persons born in Australia. Moreover, migrants from non-English-speaking countries have the highest unemployment rate, with the over representation of unemployed women immigrants (ABS, 2003). However, in the past three censuses, 1991, 1996 and 2001, women from non-English-speaking backgrounds were over-represented as employers and as self-employed, although this varies according to birth places. Why? What are the experiences of migrant women in Australia? What are their best practices?

2. There is limited knowledge about immigrant women entrepreneurs in Australia and in general in the other OECD countries. Existing entrepreneurship literature tends to overlook the complexity of immigrant women's entrepreneurship. Additionally, researchers tend to overlook sensitivities and the intersectional relationships of gender, class and ethnicity and the embeddedness of the economic and social environment in explaining the differential participation rates of immigrant women in business.

3. To build knowledge on immigrant women entrepreneurship, I studied the entrepreneurship of a group of 80 Asian-born women entrepreneurs (ABWEs) in Sydney. The research included field interviews with the immigrant women entrepreneurs so as to understand why they went into business, the resources they had at start up, how they established themselves in business, the discrimination they experienced, and the economic and social contributions they made to Australia. This qualitative research listened to the voices of the ABWEs. Textual data related the immigrant women's entrepreneurship at the intersections of immigration, gender class and ethnicity. When gender, class and ethnicity intersect, the immigrant women's pathways and experience in enterprise and job creation are expected to be more complex.

4. In this reference document, I will summarise the key findings based on the following questions raised in the study about the ABWEs and their entrepreneurial experience: Who are they? Why did they go into business? What resources did they have at start up? How did they manage family, business relationships and international business networks? Did they experience discrimination and, if they did, how did they manage it? What are their experiences of business success and failure? What are the economic and social outcomes of their entrepreneurship? Finally, I will highlight some of the policy implications and the scope for future research to support policy formulation and implementation.

2. Who Are They?

5. A prominent feature of the ABWEs is embeddedness of the family. See Figure 1. While the important role of the family appears in various shapes and forms in Australian and in other international research into ethnic entrepreneurship, my research suggests that the family should be elevated to equal importance with the other embedded factors that influence ethnic entrepreneurship. In other words, one of the key findings of this study is that female immigrant entrepreneurship is firmly embedded in the family and family social relations to a greater extent than the literature has recognised to date.
Figure 1. A MODEL OF THE EMBEDDED INTERSECTIONS OF IMMIGRANT FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

6. The majority of the ABWEs are married, and others had been married before and are now separated, divorced or widowed, while a small number are single and had never been married. Children and dependants reflect the burden of family and home care responsibilities of the ABWEs and these responsibilities compete for time that the ABWEs have for business. A number of the ABWEs are also caring for their aged parents and two of the ABWEs are taking care of the financial and welfare needs of ex-husbands.

7. The socio-demographic profiles of the ABWES are diverse, but each of them is unique as well as bearing resemblance to the others in many ways. In the sample mix of ABWEs at the time of the interviews, the majority of the ABWEs fall into the highly economically active age group of between 31 and 50 years old. Of the remaining ABWEs, five are below 30 years old and twelve ABWEs are above 50 years old.

8. The majority of ABWEs are of Chinese parentage or ancestry, but they are not homogeneous. Most of the ABWEs entered Australia as skilled migrants, with business, professional and trade skills. A quarter of the ABWEs came as refugees and asylum seekers under the humanitarian visa category and less than a third are family-sponsored migrants.

9. The class background of the ABWEs is diverse and is similarly represented by their educational background as by their immigration visa entry class. Most of the ABWEs did their schooling in their birth countries before they arrived in Australia. The majority of the ABWEs from Laos and Vietnam arrived as young refugees with their parents and would have had a primary or secondary school education in Australia. A few of the ABWEs with a refugee background went on to complete university. The ABWEs from the other countries were less likely to have had an Australian school education, although some on arrival accessed Australian education at colleges, trade schools and universities.

10. Compared with Australian-born women, the ABWEs are more likely to be university-educated and more likely to hold a postgraduate degree. These qualifications were mainly obtained overseas. A few of the ABWEs took up some trade skills in Australia, mainly hairdressing, floral arrangement, journalism and real estate management, with the aim of using those skills in a business career.

11. The ABWEs operated a wide range of businesses. Altogether, the 80 ABWEs were involved in over 50 different business areas that cater to a mixed Australian market. These ranged from Asian grocery shops to garment manufacturing, tailoring and clothes alteration; from trading a wide range of products to providing legal, accounting, architectural and dental services; from construction of apartments and buildings and to real estate agencies selling and managing properties, and advertising and ownership of the ethnic print media. The majority of the businesses operated by the ABWEs are located in mainstream commercial areas and less than a quarter are located in areas of higher co-ethnic density, while less than a fifth are home-based.

12. Slightly more than half of the ABWEs are in business partnerships with their husbands and other male relatives. They work full-time in the business and they make or jointly make strategic decisions about the business.

13. Given the background as to who they are, the following sections show how family, shared immigration experience, ethnicity, class, gender, group characteristics, economic opportunity and regulatory structures play important roles in determining their paths to entrepreneurship and in shaping their entrepreneurial outcomes.
3. Why Did They Go into Business?

14. Pathways to immigrant women’s entrepreneurship are diverse. It is important to note that there is no one single factor that, by itself, determined the entry of the ABWEs into business and the outcome of their entrepreneurship. Rather, a complex range of factors is present at different times and these factors interact in uneven and complex ways in impacting on and in shaping the ABWEs’ entrepreneurial process.

15. The study confirms the findings in the female entrepreneurship literature (Brush, 1992; Buttner & Moore, 1997; Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998; Carter & Anderson, 2001; Phikala, Vesalainen, & Viitala, 2000; Still, 1997) (Hughes, 1999; Moore & Buttner, 1997; Nagarajan, Lebrasseur, & Blanco, 1996) about why women go into business, but finds significant differences in the trigger factors that set the ABWEs onto the path of entrepreneurial endeavours. The key reason as to why the ABWEs went into business is embedded in family relations and in a complex way. To understand their motivations, I unpacked the family and sharpened the understanding of how each component within the family intersects, especially with gender, ethnicity, class and immigration. In doing so, I found that the ABWEs’ main motivation for entrepreneurship is embedded in the social structure of marital relationships where there is a need to balance self, husband and the rest of the family and home responsibilities. Immigration impacts on balances in family relations.

16. While the ABWEs cited strongly a financial reason for going into business, this was found to be very much a “husband-related reason” which existing literature often ignored. Their migrant husbands also faced blocked mobility in the labour market, an example of how discrimination impacts on family relations directly and indirectly. The ABWEs were challenged when their husbands were dissatisfied with their jobs, when they did not earn enough or when their husbands were unemployed. Having "an under-achieving husband" challenged marital and family dynamics, class and social standings, often with negative consequences for which the ABWEs tried to compensate through self-employment. The ABWEs related how they deliberately created enterprises to include their husbands and how they were "pushed" into business because of their husbands. However, some of the ABWEs pursued self-employment to gain financial independence from their husbands and to have their own money to spend. This desire for financial independence was very much carried over from their pre-migration experience where the women had also worked and had personal control of the money that they earned prior to emigrating to Australia. Together, it appeared that for various “husband reasons” that were also tied to financial reasons and blocked mobility in the labour market, it was the nature of the marital relationships that shaped the entrepreneurship of this group of migrant women studied. While my research found that husbands had the highest trigger impact on the decisions made by the ABWEs to go into business, I found that they did not consider themselves victims in marital and family power relationships.

17. This aspect of going into business for what I have labelled as "husband reasons" has not been fully recognised or has been submerged as a "family reason" in most women’s and ethnic entrepreneurship literature, where children are often quoted to have influenced the decision for women to move into self-employment. Borrowing a term from Lever-Tracy, Ip, Kitay, Phillips, & Tracy (1991), the Asian immigrant women have a “cultural disposition” to refer to children in discourses, saving their embarrassment to talk about the state of their marital relationships to outsiders. Untangling husband-wife relationships in no way diminishes the rest of the family as an important part of immigrant women’s entrepreneurship. Rather, this produced a more careful and more complex analysis of how family shapes immigrant entrepreneurship by highlighting the importance of the husband-wife relationship when both are similarly impacted by their experience as migrants in the labour market.

18. This study also confirms the findings of the women’s entrepreneurship literature about the other reasons for female entrepreneurship and found that the ABWEs faced similar dissatisfactions over employment and desired financial independence and time flexibility. However, the difference between job
dissatisfaction of English-speaking migrants who faced the "glass ceiling" and non-English-speaking migrants is that the ABWEs suffered blocked mobility factors and faced racial discrimination through an "accent ceiling" (Collins, Gibson, Alcorso, Castles, & Tait, 1995) embedded in the labour market. This is especially a “double glazing” barrier for skilled and professional migrant women in the labour market. The findings are similar to the ethnic entrepreneurship literature. According to Waldinger, Aldrich, Ward, & Associates (1990), these barriers are the main “predisposing factors” of group characteristics and “a powerful spur to business activity”. Thus, group characteristics, such as blocked mobility and discrimination, are determinants as well as experiences in immigrant women entrepreneurship.

4. What Resources Do They Have At Start-Up?

19. Of the critical resources that the ABWEs have that enabled them to set up their business, personal savings are the most important source of capital for the ABWEs. The ABWEs relied more on personal savings and informal credit than on formal financing. However, the ABWEs of refugee background showed a lower rate of access to personal savings and a higher rate of accessing informal debts compared to the other ABWEs. All of the ABWEs who came as business migrants were able to use their personal savings as they had ready cash in Australian banks (a policy requirement before the issuance of their business migrant class visas). This again indicates the diversity in the socio-economic background of the group of ABWEs and how immigration visas and class shape settlement and economic choices. Nonetheless, overwhelmingly, the ABWEs relied on personal savings to finance their business start-up and they are proud of it. The ABWEs expressed their pride and personal achievement in starting a business without going into debt. If they did go into debt (especially for those who came as refugees), it is more likely to be informal debt such as borrowings from parents and relatives, once again reflecting the importance of family.

20. Bank financing at start-up is low amongst the ABWEs. This is because often these women had self-disqualified themselves from being able to access bank financing. Some said that they thought the banks would not lend them the money, so they did not bother to ask. Those who came under the business migration program were more likely to access bank financing than other immigrant groups. This is because they were more likely to be able to borrow since they could demonstrate a history of banking through their pre-migration business experience and could point to their Australian bank statement that showed large sums of money already transferred to Australia.

21. My study did not produce clear evidence of the significant interplay of ethnic resources in aiding business start-ups for the ABWEs, even though the ethnic entrepreneurship literature has argued that access to ethnic resources contributes to the entrepreneurial success of immigrants (Light & Gold, 2000). However, the ABWEs who came as refugees are more likely than the others to draw on ethnic resources as they have more closely knit family and co-ethnic networks and they live in closer proximity to each other. This is evidenced by the higher rate of credit they received from family and relatives compared with the other ABWEs.

22. There are other dimensions of ethnic resources. One resource that ABWEs have, and to which researchers like Cope & Kalantzis (1997) have eluded to, is "productive diversity." One feature of productive diversity is multilingualism, an asset to the ABWEs. The ABWEs are found to be highly multilingual (see also Low (2001)). This multilingualism facilitates international trading activities for the ABWEs. In addition, the ABWEs have a marked ability to weave through different cultures, another example of how ethnicity and class intersect, and this increases further the economic value of their productive diversity.

23. Importantly, this study found that although there are contradictions, nevertheless, multiculturalism has created more space for immigrant women in the same way that feminism since the
1970s has created more space for women in the economy. Multiculturalism has created a structural space for immigrant female entrepreneurship, a further example of the need to embed the study of ethnic female entrepreneurship within the broader economic, social, political and cultural structures of society. The ABWEs are able to capitalise on multiculturalism in their businesses, such as by offering new products and services adapted to suit Australian consumers. Asian cuisine is an obvious example. Less obvious is their ability to open new Asian markets for Australian produce. The productive diversity that accompanies immigration is not recognised adequately in Australian immigration debates. As a consequence the economic contribution of ABWEs or of other immigrant women has not been acknowledged adequately in debates about the economic impact of immigration in Australia (see also later section on economic contributions of the ABWEs).

24. The disproportionate distribution of class resources amongst the ABWEs impacted on the size of businesses that they set up. The smallest cash start-up capital was less than $1,000 and the largest was $650,000. There were as many ABWEs who started with $5,001-$10,000 as there were ABWEs who started with $25,001-$50,000. Those who came as business migrants are more likely to establish larger businesses (as reflected in larger start-up capital) than those who came as refugees or under the independent skills and family reunion categories. Also, the ABWEs-business migrants continued to operate larger businesses, employing more people than the other ABWEs. This is another reflection of how class resources (in this case prior to emigration) shape the economic outcomes of entrepreneurship.

25. It was found that the ABWEs adopted various interim strategies to overcome cash constraints at start-up. These include operating from home, in home garages and, in one instance, selling from the boot of a car. At start-up, none of the ABWEs owned commercial properties, but at the time of interviews, twelve of the eighty ABWEs owned commercial buildings and now fewer operate their businesses from home. This is another demonstration of the ability of the ABWEs to grow their business and to accumulate wealth despite modest start-up capital. This experience of ABWEs challenges earlier research findings that women start small businesses and that their businesses generally remain small.

26. The individual ABWE is very much an active agent in her path to entrepreneurship. This aspect of human agency is important in understanding the critical resources that are embodied in the ABWEs themselves and how each applies her knowledge and skills, class and cultural resources to the business. The majority of the ABWEs did not enter business start-ups without some prior industry or product knowledge, although they may lack in depth expert knowledge. The choice of business which they set up is embedded in the opportunity structures (Waldinger et al., 1990) within the economic and political environment at the time, and it is their industry and product knowledge, intersecting with existing economic opportunities that gave them the confidence to go ahead to invest in the business in the first instance.

27. However, despite having some industry or product knowledge, the majority of the ABWEs lacked relevant business skills at the time when they had decided to establish a business. I found this was not a deterrent nor of concern to them when they ventured into business. As I had observed, the key to success was that they were confident about learning on the job. Their sources of learning are to a lesser extent, relatives, friends and co-ethnics, and to a larger extent their suppliers and experiential learning. Their confidence in progressive or on-the-job learning enables them to keep on improving their skills and knowledge in managing their enterprises, but this for some also came at great cost.

28. Being able to learn is one thing, but it is worthwhile emphasising here that business success also depends on the opportunity structure and the state and institutional regulatory structures (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001a, 2001b) that provide ideally the optimal economic conditions for business start-ups and growth. Thus, even when the ABWEs lacked the relevant skills and knowledge, they went ahead to invest nevertheless, confident in their ability for experiential learning and in the business opportunity and
business growth climate at the time. In addition, the stable political and regulatory environment and high standard of existing business infrastructures, provided them comfort to invest. All these enabling factors support immigrant entrepreneurship in Australia.

5. Managing Family and Business

29. There is no evidence in my study to suggest that the ABWEs have been exploited as cheap labour in family businesses, although there certainly is a lot of evidence that many devote very long hours to the task of working and managing the business, caring for their family and doing housework.

30. Time flexibility was not an important reason for the ABWEs to go into business in the first instance, but it did shape the sort of business activity that they entered into. Self-employment allows them some time flexibility to juggle between family responsibilities and business. Here again, the juggling needs are not homogeneous since it depends on the ages of the children. Needless to say, the ABWEs with young children find it harder juggling family and business responsibilities. My research found that those with babies and young children often brought their children to work so that they could feed them and keep an eye on their young ones. The ABWEs with school-age children had to juggle with transporting their children to school and school activities. Childcare still remained the responsibility of the women even though they are now working and access to affordable childcare is a problem for these migrant women, especially at their business start-up stage. Clearly too my research found that female entrepreneurship is gendered: male entrepreneurs generally do not face the same family-business juggling performance.

31. As with child-caring responsibilities, social structures and cultural norms intersect with gender to impact on the ABWEs’ domestic responsibilities, such as cooking and house-cleaning duties. I found that, irrespective of class and ethnicity, the ABWEs are responsible for most of the cooking and cleaning at home and they receive very little help from their husbands. One surprising outcome of the research is that wealthier immigrant women will still cook and clean for their families after a hard day’s work doing business. Compared to the more emancipated Western women, ethnic women are, because of their cultures and traditions, locked into what is expected of them in regard to domestic responsibilities. This is another example of the embedded intersection of culture or ethnicity within gender, class and family.

32. Another interesting finding is that none of the immigrant women interviewed, including the wealthiest, accessed formal childcare as they all said they could not afford the service at the time. In fact, affordable childcare is an issue that is universal for all working women in any developed countries.

33. Although the burden of family and housework has had little impact on business success, it does impact on the ABWEs individually. The voices of the ABWEs form a story of remarkable strength amidst the burden and hardship of having to look after their babies while serving customers, having to hide their children from customers, rushing to pick up children from school and returning home to cook and clean till late at night. This story needs to be told as this is the gendered nature and character of immigrant female entrepreneurship.

6. Building Business Relationships and Networks

34. My study also looked at how the ABWEs built customers’ and suppliers’ relationships in Australia as well as overseas.

35. It is found that the business locations of the ABWEs are not confined to ethnic enclaves. The businesses operated by the ABWEs from Laos and Vietnam are more likely to be located in ethnic enclaves (a result of refugee resettlement policies that located them to specific areas of initial settlement), while the rest of the businesses are spread across metropolitan Sydney. There is, however, a cluster of
ABWEs who are established in Sydney’s Chinatown, but the location of Chinatown itself is now rather mainstream as the city’s central business district has grown tightly into and beyond it.

36. In addition, the ABWEs were not solely reliant on ethnic networks and ethnic patronage at start-up and that they are capable of building long-term and valuable customers outside their ethnic groups. These findings challenge the ethnic literature (Collins et al., 1995; Light, Bhachu, & Karageorgis, 1990; Light & Gold, 2000; Wadling et al., 1990) where it was suggested that ethnic entrepreneurship emerged from recognising opportunities to sell goods and services that co-ethnics need and mainstream markets do not provide; and that through co-ethnic networks, these entrepreneurs are able to build a loyal ethnic customer base. I found that relatives and friends are not the main source of referrals. Generally, the customers come to the ABWEs' shops or find their business without referrals from relatives and friends or canvassing by the ABWEs. Secondly, I found that generally the customer mix of the businesses operated by the ABWEs is fairly balanced between customers of Asian background and customers who are Anglo-Australians. The interview data also show that the businesses operated by the ABWEs attract more customers (Asian and Anglo-Australians) who walk into their shops unsolicited compared to the number of customers that they had to canvass to win their patronage. Customers of Asian background are as likely as those of Anglo-Australian background to walk in unsolicited. This shows that the ABWEs enjoy the patronage of both ethnic and Anglo-Australian customers alike and it also reflects well on the ABWEs’ ability to attract customers regardless of ethnicity.

37. Thus, my finding challenges the "either/or" between the ethnic niche and the need to “break out” to the mainstream market that is found in recent ethnic entrepreneurship literature. However, the interview data also show that some of the ABWEs employed clear strategies to canvass Anglo-Australian customers, and especially large Australian corporate clients. This has paid off for them, as reflected in their higher sales turnover.

38. In regard to building suppliers’ relationships, again the ethnic literature suggests that ethnic entrepreneurs tend to trade with their own kind and they support each other through the sharing of ethnic resources, such as market information, opportunities and services and hiring of co-ethnics. Once again, my interview data show that the ABWEs defy this trend. First, the majority of their suppliers are not co-ethnics or people of an Asian background; they are Anglo-Australians or other earlier European migrants like the Italians and Greeks. Secondly, the majority of the suppliers were developed through proactive work on the part of the ABWEs who approached these suppliers directly, while referrals from a family member were less likely than referrals from friends. A few of the ABWEs knew some of the suppliers at the start of business, indicating that they did not start building their supplier network from a zero-base. Unlike the overseas literature findings, the ABWEs in Sydney developed their own network of suppliers and are not reliant on referrals of co-ethnics.

39. While it was pointed out earlier that the presence and use of ethnic resources do not feature strongly in the way the ABWEs build business locally, I found this to be the opposite in the overseas business in which they are engaged in. I found that the group of ABWEs who ventured into business overseas did so through a trust network (see also Low (2001, 2003)) comprising family and co-ethnics. These include four main trust blocks; family trust are the relationships that are drawn upon or built through an overseas family network; pre-migration trust or ties that were built when the ABWEs were working or in business before migration; bought trust that is based on the ABWE’s good trade practices that ‘bought’ the trust of their overseas suppliers; and referred trust that is based on the trust bestowed on the ABWEs by their friends who referred them to their own personal and valuable network of business contacts. The majority of the ABWEs trade with their country of birth, indicating the presence of embedded trust networks. In many ways, these trust networks are the closest to ethnic resources that the ABWEs could gather to further their business overseas. At the same time, trust networks are often a source of their competitiveness.
40. It was found that none of the migrant women in the study had any formal training in international trade management and none of them had ever joined an official Australian trade mission to promote their goods or services overseas or to seek new foreign suppliers.

7. Managing Discrimination: Gender, Ethnicity and Class

41. This story of female immigrant entrepreneurship in Australia is also embedded in Australia’s immigration policies and community relations within the Australian society. These are in turn shaped by the changing dynamics of racial discrimination and globalisation.

42. I investigated the forms of discrimination that the ABWEs have to deal with and the impact discrimination has on their lives and career choices. I examined how they managed discrimination and continued on to build a future not only for themselves and their families but also for Australia.

43. The interview data show that more than half of the ABWEs who responded to the question on discrimination had experienced some form of racial discrimination or racism since their arrival in Australia. Racial discrimination at work was one of the strong reasons for the ABWEs’ move to self-employment by establishing their own businesses. However, discrimination does not end with becoming an entrepreneur.

44. The interview data showed that fewer of the ABWEs of a refugee background share the experience of discrimination. This was at odds with the literature findings and my research findings: for example, blocked mobility in the labour market was often the result of racial and class discrimination for non-English-speaking immigrants in the literature and similarly was the experience of the ABWEs of refugee background. In analysing the interview data, I found that this group of ABWEs had become desensitised to racial discrimination. With so much balancing and juggling to do at home and coping with the demands of running a business, many of the ABWEs of refugee background had closed off their minds to racial discrimination as long as they were physically safe and could go about doing their business. In any case, often they felt disempowered, unable to do anything about it.

45. Overall, the racial discrimination experienced by the ABWEs is subtle and indirect. It is more institutional than individual. Discrimination experienced by the ABWEs is manifested in indirect or subtle forms of racial vilification or racist behaviours towards them. More often than not, they could “feel it”, but are not able to prove it. There are no visible scars, no destruction of properties or loss of business as evidence.

46. Most of the ABWEs manage discrimination by just minding their own business and doing business as best as they can. This passive approach is only possible because, fortunately for this group of ethnic women entrepreneurs from Asia, the discrimination they encounter is of a non-violent or non-physical nature. In addition, some of the ABWEs experience sex and age discrimination at work, sexist behaviours and class discrimination, all of which are complex and intersectional. For this group of immigrant women, discrimination is embedded in gender, race, ethnicity and class.

47. Some ABWEs use their male partners as “the public face of the enterprise” (Lever-Tracy et al., 1991) in response to sex and class discrimination, especially when the faces in the economic and institutional environment belong predominantly to Anglo-Celtic males. This is a form of internalised discrimination, a strategy that I identified being used by the ABWEs in combating racial and sex discrimination in their business. However, racial discrimination can hurt business and the explicit example given by one of the ABWEs shows the effort this ABWE took to ensure that her business is not threatened by racism. In some ways, other ABWEs have followed some elements of her strategy. I labelled this the ABWE’s Business Model Against Racism, which is used to prevent or minimise racist intent against a
business operated by an Asian immigrant. In fact this model itself is another form of internalised discrimination.

48. The ABWE’s business model against racism has four elements. The first one is to keep a low profile of the owner’s ethnicity. The second is to aim for diversity in employment. The third is to ensure and to be seen to be in close compliance with Australian business law, manufacturing standards and other regulatory requirements in conducting their business affairs. The fourth element is to ensure that the business is above all an Australian player, for example, keeping manufacturing in Australia and using Australian-made products and services as much as possible. This could explain in part why the “ethnic economy” does not feature as large in these ABWEs’ experiences as might be expected from overseas literature.

49. When gender, ethnicity and class intersect, there is also positive discrimination for the ABWEs. A few of the ABWEs said that their customers are selective about wanting to do business with Chinese women because they associate ‘Chinese’ and ‘women’ with efficiency and intelligence. This highlights the complex and often contradictory nature of racial discrimination.

50. The issue of class discrimination emerged from the interview data and was also explored. Within the Chinese community itself there are class differences specifically, between Mainland Chinese immigrants and Hong Kong, China, immigrants and Chinese from Chinese Taipei, Malaysia and Singapore. One ABWE said that it was difficult to do business in Sydney's Chinatown unless one could speak Cantonese, the Chinese dialect used by the Hong Kong Chinese. It appeared that the Mainland Chinese are viewed as a poorer class of immigrants and with lower cultural capital. Those from Hong Kong, China, and Chinese Taipei are more of the business or capitalist class, while immigrants from Malaysia and Singapore are perceived as the professional class. This class difference means that the ABWEs who came from Mainland China are more isolated and their social and business networks are more likely to be confined to co-ethnics within their class. This is also exhibited in the lack of participation of the China-born ABWEs in voluntary work in community organisations, as found in the study.

51. My research findings show that the ABWEs who came to Australia as refugees – generally indicating a lower class and South-East Asian origin - face greater institutionalised and individualised discrimination because they are a more easily identifiable group by their higher concentration in certain Sydney locations. However, outside these areas, often the perpetrator cannot distinguish an Asian immigrant of refugee background from another Asian who had entered Australia as a business migrant and one with high qualifications.

52. One strategy to overcome class discrimination is to gain upward mobility through further education or wealth accumulation from entrepreneurial endeavours, and the ABWEs have taken this path. This is also why parents who arrived as refugees are anxious that their children do well in school and complete a tertiary education, as was evident in the ABWEs’ stories. As children, the ABWEs were expected to excel in school as that brought honour to the family and increased their class status, even if it is amongst co-ethnics. This in some ways explains the ABWEs' tenacity in juggling business and family.

8. Business Failures and Success

53. There is a need to understand what success means to the ABWEs and by whose and what yardstick they measure their success. Likewise, there is a need to understand what happens to the ABWEs after a business failure.

54. There are more subjectivities and greater complexities involved when trying to unpack the success indicators of the ABWEs, where the meaning of success is embedded in gender, ethnicity and
class. From the interview data, the "success" that the ABWEs talked about was classified into five success indicator groups. The ABWEs’ success indicators are their emotional wellbeing, family wellbeing, financial wellbeing, wealth creation and recognition. The interview data show that there is not a wide difference in the number of the ABWEs who associate with each of the success indicators. It appears that all are important to the ABWEs as a measurement or measurements of their success as entrepreneurs.

55. The interview results show that slightly more than one-fifth of the ABWEs have experienced one or more failed businesses. One important finding is that ethnicity does not predict business failure. I found the ABWEs do not take their entrepreneurship lightly. Neither is their entrepreneurship a temporary measure born out of unemployment, as one study has suggested about a group of male ethnic entrepreneurs (Castro, Alvarez, Blasick, & Ortiz, 1997). In addition, the financial and personal risks the ABWEs take are not for a run of “short-termism” (Jennings & Beaver, 1997). The notion of failure experienced by the ABWEs may not necessarily refer to the whole business. Failure may refer to a failed product. Failure may result in business closure or exit of the whole firm or just the demise of a product line.

56. The interview data suggest four economic factors for business failures. These are lack of market knowledge, lack of labour and financial resources, partnership break-ups and changes in economic environment. In fact, none of the ABWEs with experiences of failed businesses conducted any formal market research or market feasibility studies. In addition, none of the ABWEs with a failed business had any formal business training and, in a way, failure is also an experiential learning process for them. In any case, most of the other ABWEs who had not indicated any business failure had no formal business training, indicating that there are other complex and intersectional factors that determine failure and success for the ABWEs. This would also need further research.

57. What happens to the entrepreneur after a business failure? All the ABWEs who experienced failed businesses went on to build another business. For example, after an early business failure, one of the ABWEs in the group went on to operate four different businesses with several outlets. For the ABWEs, failure is part of their entrepreneurial process, a stage of entrepreneurial development rather than the end of their entrepreneurial experience.

9. Economic Outcomes: What Are Their Contributions to Australia?

58. To explore the economic contributions made by the ABWEs, the interview data were structured into five areas: the ABWEs’ contribution to business creation and innovation; contribution to employment and job creation; contribution to Australian taxes; contribution to independence rather than welfare dependency; and lastly, the ABWEs’ contribution to new ethnic precincts and tourism. The following is what I found. The contributions made by the ABWEs are significant.

59. This study found that the majority (62) of the ABWEs started new businesses, while ten bought existing businesses, five had taken over the businesses established by their parents and two were given the business by their employers, and one joined in partnership with a business started by her sisters. All the ABWEs who did (and even those who did not) create new businesses have done much to change and reshape the business through their own innovation. They have changed the nature of goods or services for sale, changed or broadened the customer or client base, added more sales outlets, introduced computer applications and professional management, and thus effectively added new and increased value to the businesses they took over or went in partnership with. Furthermore, the ABWEs created new businesses with more than half having created more than two new businesses.

60. Significantly, the ABWEs created new jobs. The businesses operated by the group of ABWEs studied are larger than the Australian average for small businesses in terms of the number of people employed per business. The average number of people employed by the small businesses operated by the
ABWEs is also higher (5.3 people) than that recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for small businesses in Australia (4.7 people)\(^1\). The employment generated by the combined small and big businesses operated by the ABWEs are significant (8.1 people) when compared to the small and large businesses included in the ABS data (6 people). The remarkable job creation capacity of the ABWEs transcends divisions of ethnicity and class status of immigrant women in the group studied.

### Table 1  Number of Small Businesses and All Businesses and Persons Employed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ABWEs</th>
<th>ABS data for Australia(^1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Businesses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of small businesses (with employees)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>532,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number employed</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>2,493,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number employed in an employing business</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Big And Small Businesses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of businesses</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1,114,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number employed</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>6.734,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number employed in a business</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


61. The ABWEs employ a lower proportion of family members and people of similar ethnic background compared with findings in the ethnic entrepreneurship literature. Close to one-third of the ABWEs do not have any family members working with them. Less than ten percent of the ABWEs have more than eighty percent of their employees who are family members. These findings challenge critics that immigrants employ their own kind and even if they do as the ABWEs do, they are contributing to employment.

62. The interview responses showed that the ABWEs have positive feelings towards paying taxes and they claimed to have acted ethically. Many of ABWEs not only made reference to their tax contribution, but at the same time were saying that they were not taking back from the government and society in the forms of unemployment and welfare benefits. Some of the statements made were strong, for example, "I have not received welfare a single day in my life" and one ABWE said “I lose my dignity” if she were to apply for welfare benefits. The ABWEs have no experience with welfare payments prior to migration as none of the Asian countries has a welfare system similar to Australia’s. The pride of entrepreneurship that provided them with financial independence can be seen in all the ABWEs.

63. The emergence of international research into the commodification of ethnicity has in recent times redirected some attention to the positive impact of the concentration of ethnic entrepreneurial activities in ethnic enclaves (Rath, 2002). The following ABWE’s story illustrates this as well as the positive intersections of family, gender, ethnicity, immigration, opportunity structures, group characteristics and state and institution. The parents of one of the ABWEs were early investors in Cabramatta\(^1\), an ethnic enclave of poor working-class immigrants in Western Sydney at the time. They arrived as refugees, but managed to build the first large-scale Asian supermarket that comprised a fresh fruit and vegetable market and an Asian food hall with an adjoining fish market. The market place became the experiential business training ground for this ABWE and for many other co-ethnics. Another ABWE who is a co-ethnic was one of the first tenants in this market complex. She had left her low-paid factory job to start up the fresh fruit and vegetable market there even though she had no prior business experience.

64. Stories like these need to be told. It should be recognised that these enterprising ABWEs of refugee background have contributed to the economic development of a suburb and have left their mark on
the cultural vitality of the area that attracts tourism dollars today and provides employment for many co-
etnics and other Australians. Likewise, the ABWEs who are located in Chinatown are contributing to the
continuing Chinese character in the precinct, where each Chinese Lunar New Year tourists crowd the
streets for a glimpse of the lion dancers. This commodification of ethnicity is also characteristic of all
Chinatowns in major cities around the world and into economic returns.

10. Social and Community Outcomes: What Are Their Contributions to Australia?

65. There is not a lot of research that links ethnic entrepreneurship to the community domain. Is
participation in community organisation an instrument of entrepreneurship? Is voluntary engagement with
communities an economic strategy for the ABWEs to advance their business objectives? My interview data
did not suggest any link between entrepreneurship and participation in community organisations, except
that the ABWE who contributed to volunteerism is an entrepreneur. Perhaps they did get business out of
the contacts and networks, perhaps they did not, but one thing is certain: they were out there in the
community - ethnic and mainstream communities, making their social contributions to Australian society,
and this should be recognised.

66. There are four important findings in this study about the ABWEs’ social contribution to
Australia12.

67. First, there is a high rate of ABWEs’ participation in community organisations. Close to three-
quarters of the ABWEs are engaged in community organisations in a variety of ways and with different
levels of intensity.

68. Second, the ABWEs are as likely to be engaged in voluntary work outside their immediate
community as they are within it, contrary to international research findings that immigrants tend to cluster
within their ethnic enclaves and contribute closely to their particular ethnic community organisations.

69. Third, the ABWEs possess diverse capital and knowledge that they bring to community
organisations. They also contribute by gathering and managing such knowledge to their community
activities that create bonding social capital. The ABWEs nurture and play pivotal roles in ensuring the
survival of Chinese and their other ethnic heritage and in doing so they contribute to the nation's wealth of
cultural diversity capital.

70. Fourth, the ABWEs build community capital through interactions between their knowledge and
skills at different levels of commitment to community work and how they each can leverage their power
and influence for community good. The result is the community capital that ABWEs build, an important
role that is not recognised in current literature.

71. Time has been cited by all ABWEs as a deterrent to taking on more community work, but it is
remarkable that these ABWEs fit in so much despite all the juggling they do. The roles taken and the
contributions the ABWEs make to society are significant and need recognition. They represent many
unrecognised women volunteers from diverse ethnic backgrounds and immigration experiences. It is also
arguable that female immigrant entrepreneurs, like their male counterparts, play a key role as social
entrepreneurs in leading ethnic community organisations.

11. Observations and Policy Implications

72. Was it all worth it? Overall, the ABWEs feel that they are emotionally better off being in self-
employment compared to salaried work. Also most feel they are financially better off being in self-
employment. However, success in entrepreneurship does not supplant or displace other family
responsibilities for the migrant women studied. Their entrepreneurial activities bend to family responsibilities.

73. Policies that address the labour market participation of spouses and other family members, and family and domestic responsibilities of migrant women are important as these are barriers to migrant women’s entrepreneurship and to growing their business. Policies should include improving labour market access for both migrant men and women and providing affordable childcare support for the migrant women. Thus the case for reducing the family and domestic burden and encouraging new business entrants and those already in business to grow their business will add greater value to the integration policies for migrant women in the labour market.

74. Moreover, there is a need for policy makers to consider the barriers immigrant women face in the labour market as many are pushed into entrepreneurship as an alternative career choice with little preparation or experience. This also has implications for Australia’s immigration policy that has attracted skilled immigrants (targeted to meet Australia’s skills requirement), but has not utilised fully immigrants’ human capital skills. Blocked mobility also results in social and human costs for the immigrant women, their husbands and families and their causes should also be addressed. This includes better access to English-language education to overcome language barriers and the accent ceiling and retraining where applicable.

75. The ability to learn progressively and to apply their pre-migration experience to new business opportunities in Australia are important factors that enabled entrepreneurial progress for the ABWEs. This clearly has policy implications for integration of migrants into the labour force and self-employment. However, more research in this area about progressive and experiential learning by immigrant women entrepreneurs to establish how migrant women can best be supported in this regard needs to be made.

76. To encourage migrant women into self-employment, entrepreneurship training should start with opportunity recognition as this further leads to the desire to create new businesses that have higher potential for success and growth.

77. Since it appears that migrant women primarily resort to savings for start-up capital, it is important to support migrant women to grow their business and this may require education in finance and how to raise capital and debt. Banks and financial institutions need to find ways to reach out to and to encourage migrant women to grow their businesses faster through debt financing and other capital-raising instruments.

78. Migrant women with a refugee background are generally less educated and less fluent in English than other immigrants. They are more reliant on family support or borrowings from family, showing how important family is to this group. In fact, the merits of family reunion as an immigration policy need to be reviewed and revalued for all classes of immigrants. Migrant's networks as a form of productive diversity should be recognised and valued. Training and support of women entrepreneurs in engaging or intending to engage in international trade and globalisation need the attention of policy makers and training institutions. Research is needed not only to understand the training needs of immigrant entrepreneurs, but also to take into consideration easier and more convenient access to training given their time constraints and family responsibilities.

79. Research should also learn from the strategies employed by each group who manage to avert discrimination so that models of good practice could be framed to empower other women. Policy makers and law enforcers would need to reassess the ways they could reach out to the female immigrant business community. More work from policy makers in this field of anti-discrimination is needed here. The fact that certain geographical areas have higher concentration of immigrant settlements is not necessarily
negative to the realisation of integration policies. There are opportunities for innovative policies to support migrant women located in their original areas of settlement in enterprise creation and to support their capacity to build community, bonding and bridging capital.

12. Conclusion

80. The story of the Asian-born women entrepreneurs in Sydney shows migrant women are capable of enterprise creation and can integrate successfully in the labour market through self-employment and entrepreneurship. This is not to say that the story of immigrant women’s entrepreneurship is all a "good news" story or that contradictions do not arise related to, for example, self-exploitation and long hours of work. Although the ABWEs faced many barriers and challenges, they mainly relied on personal and informal ways to overcome them. They operate in an economy that is stable and where there is law and order and where business regulations are transparent. These structural factors and the opportunities that are present in the economy enabled them to pursue entrepreneurship with greater confidence. More importantly, they contribute to wealth and job creation as well as to community, bonding and bridging capital. Nevertheless, they require greater support and encouragement from policy makers to grow their businesses as well as recognition for their social and economic contribution to their adopted nation and society.

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2 The terms “immigrant” and “migrant” are used interchangeably.

3 In this paper, the term "immigrant women entrepreneurs” refers mainly to migrant women from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The term “ethnic” is also used to include all first-generation immigrants of non-English-speaking background to distinguish them from immigrants of English-speaking origins.

4 I would like to acknowledge the support of the University of Technology, Sydney and especially my thesis supervisors, Professor Jock Collins and Professor Jenny Onyx, who encouraged me to explore intensely into and to challenge the debates on immigration, gender, ethnicity and entrepreneurship.

5 The group of ABWEs interviewed was not homogeneous and no attempt was made to generalise their experience to be representative of all immigrant women, except to highlight the diversity of their "common" ethnicity and the diversity in their immigration experiences, culture and family characteristics. I also acknowledge the limitations of the size of the study sample, but time, financial considerations and the need to achieve closure on the research process required a manageable sample size.

6 To be selected as an interview subject, the ABWE has to meet the following criteria: she has to be a business owner, either solely or in partnership and the business has to take up a substantial amount of her energy and time; where she is engaged in a family business or in partnership with others, she must be involved in the day-to-day operations of one of the functional areas and be involved in the strategic decision-making processes, which may be informal or formal. There was no limit set on the age, size or the type of the business in which she is engaged, thus allowing me to explore the boundaries of their entrepreneurship.

7 A word of caution is required here on the limitation of my interview data. Making any correlation between family burden and business success is limited as turnover data are not comparable because they need to take into account the age of the business against the number of dependants in the family as a measure. In addition, the burden of dependants on the ABWEs, namely, the burden factor of care, would vary according to the age and state of health of the family dependants and other circumstances at home. This changes over time. All these would need factoring into the analysis.
There is a lack of knowledge about how prevalent racial discrimination is and how this has impacted on the lives and career choices of Asian immigrants, and especially the Asian immigrant women. I have tried to investigate this and heard more often from the voices of the ABWEs who were more articulate in expressing themselves. I observed that the university-educated ABWEs and those who came under the business migrant and skills categories are more articulate about their experiences of racial, sex and class discrimination. This could be due to the varying levels of English-language skills amongst the ABWEs: those who arrived under the business migrant and skills categories tend to have a better command of the English language. While this is a limitation of the interview data, the contribution made by the ABWEs who are more articulate is significant in itself as the interviews captured their voices in ways that little research has covered before.

An important explanation for the success of post-war immigration in Australia is that "migrants have been prepared to put up with community prejudice" (Collins, 1991:280). As a result, immigrants are often reluctant to report acts of racial discrimination against them.

When attempting to determine the number of people employed in the ABWEs’ businesses, I have taken the numbers at the time of interview to provide a snap-shot view of their contribution to employment. This underestimates the employment contribution of the ABWEs as over the lifetimes of their businesses they would have created more jobs.

Unfortunately, the success of Cabramatta today draws in also the undesirable drug trade that hurts legitimate businesses, a problem that needs the support of community and government.


FEMAGE

Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies

Project funded by EC DG Research: SSP4-CT-2005-022355

Dr. Dragana Avramov
Population and Social Policy Consultants (PSPC)
Project objectives

Capture:

- Experiences, attitudes, preferences and expectations of female immigrants
- Experiences, attitudes, preferences and expectations of the national population in the host country with respect to immigration, foreigners and integration of immigrants
- Viewpoints of the key stakeholders about requirements for the comprehensive integration of women immigrants

Provide:

- Policy implications and knowledge-based recommendations concerning current obstacles and opportunity enhancement for demographic and socio-economic integration of female immigrants
METHODS

- Selective exploitation of literature on female immigrants and their integration and of demographic statistics and population projections
- Survey among immigrant women
- Survey of nationals regarding migration issues and foreigners
- Focus groups with policy stakeholders
- Reflexive policy deliberation on the basis of the empirical findings of surveys and focus group deliberations
CURRENT STATE OF ACTIVITIES

- Literature and demographic data: analysis in progress

- Survey of nationals: survey completed, analysis in progress; preliminary results available, final results 31 October 2006

- Survey of immigrant women: in preparation, analysis to be completed 31 December 2006

- Focus groups: in preparation, to be held in 2007

- Policy analysis: in preparation, to be completed 31 December 2007
SURVEY OF NATIONALS ABOUT FOREIGNERS

- **Source:** Migration module of Population Policy Acceptance Surveys (PPAS)

- **Participating countries:** Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Finland

- **Sample size:** 21,807 women and men
CONTENTS OF SURVEY OF NATIONALS

➢ Module on immigration and foreigners:
  ➢ Attitudes on demographics of foreigners
  ➢ General attitudes towards foreigners
  ➢ Demographic advantages and disadvantages of immigration
  ➢ Economic advantages and disadvantages of immigration
  ➢ Policy measures on integration

➢ Other data:
  ➢ Attitudes on population issues;
  ➢ Family and work
  ➢ Family forms and gender relations
  ➢ Fertility, children, parenthood
  ➢ Work and family life
  ➢ Ageing
  ➢ Population- and family-related policies
Positive and negative attitudes towards foreigners (Preliminary results)

- Increase of foreigners favours the spread of crime and terrorism
- Presence of foreigners is positive, it allows cultural exchange

Dr. D. Avramov (PSPC)  E-mail: avramov@avramov.org
Positive and negative attitudes towards foreigners

Key preliminary observations:

- Considerable variation among nationals in attitudes towards foreigners
- In all countries, on average, more negative than positive attitudes prevail
- There are considerable between-country differences in percentages of people having negative attitudes towards foreigners
“Presence of foreigners is positive, it allows cultural exchange” and “Integration of foreigners should be fostered” by education

Percent agree or fully agree

Presence of foreigners is positive, it allows cultural exchange
Integration of foreigners should be fostered

r = 0.20

r = 0.31

Incomplete primary education
Primary education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Post-secondary non-university
First stage of tertiary education
Second stage of tertiary education
"In our country there is no room for foreigners" by education and equivalised income

Dr. D. Avramov (PSPC)  E-mail: avramov@avramov.org
Effect of education and income

Key preliminary observations:

- The most important social differentiation of attitudes towards foreigners is education.

- The percentage of people with negative views towards foreigners is much higher among those with lower education than among the better educated.

- Inversely, the higher is the education attainment the more positive are the attitudes towards immigrants.

- Significant differences exist also according to income. The lower the income the higher is the percentage of negative views. Income, however, is less important than education.
An example of how integration of immigrants is seen through the eyes of natives, by age.

- Foreigners who have not integrated after five years should return to their own country.
- Foreigners are obliged to learn our language and to get used to our customs and rules.
Integration of immigrants

Key preliminary observations:

- The large majority of nationals considers the mastering of the language of the host country a must.
- Considerable proportions of natives think that non-integrated immigrants should return to the country of origin.
- The higher the age of natives the higher is the prevalence of quest for migrants to integrate.
MIGRANT WOMEN’S ROLE IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE NEEDS OF THE LABOUR MARKET

OECD / European Commission
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005
Georges Lemaitre, OECD
Approaches

For European Union as a whole:

- Compare recent women immigrants to those who arrived in the past => picture of trends => what to expect for the future

- Look at employment of outgoing and incoming age cohorts => identify « demographic imbalances » => role for immigrant women (?)
Characteristics of recent immigrant women

- More highly educated (tertiary)
  - than earlier migrant cohorts
  - than the native-born (24% vs 16%)
    - from « rich » OECD (39%)
    - from rest of world (22%)

- Among employed:
  - more highly educated than native-born
  - also more low educated persons
  - but relatively small change compared to earlier migrant cohorts => due to highly educated OECD immigrants
Occupations of employment of immigrant women in early years after arrival

- Overrepresented among elementary occupations (i.e. unskilled)
- Underrepresented among managers, technicians and associate professionals, clerks
- But earlier cohorts show closer match with native-born => « convergence »
- Role => filling immediate labour market needs => conversion / adaptation
Sectors of employment of immigrant women in early years after arrival

- Overrepresented in hotels and restaurants, private households
- Underrepresented in trade and repair, real estate and business activities, public administration, education, health and social work
- Again, earlier cohorts tend to show closer agreement with native-born
- High sectoral specificity not a permanent feature, decreases over time
Mismatch between qualifications and skill level of jobs - immigrant women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of residence</th>
<th>&lt;= 5 years</th>
<th>6 to 10 years</th>
<th>&gt;10 years</th>
<th>Native-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Percent of total)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University graduates in high-skilled jobs</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University graduates in low-skilled jobs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary graduates in low-skilled job</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shortage occupations: Where there is an « excess » of older (50-60) versus younger (20-30) workers

Criterion: > 5 percentage points difference in incidence

- Occupations (older - younger in %age points / share of total employed)
  - Life science and health professionals (8 / 2.0)
  - Teaching professionals (12 / 6.2)
  - Skilled agricultural & fishery workers (10 / 2.4)
  - Drivers and mobile-plant operators (6 / 0.4)
  - Sales & services elem. occupations (11 / 8.7)
### Relative concentration of immigrant women in various occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of occupation / share of employed</th>
<th>Recent arrivals (&lt; 5 years)</th>
<th>All immigrant women</th>
<th>Native-born women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life science and health professionals</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching professionals</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled agricultural and fishery workers</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers and mobile-plant operators</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and services elementary occupations</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low-skilled or high-skilled immigration?

- **Low-skilled**
  - Availability of low-skilled jobs
  - Convergence to native-born employment rates for low educated
  - But => overall employment rates are low

- **High-skilled**
  - Certain occupations likely in demand
  - May be competing with native-born
  - Convergence is partial
Conclusions

- Current (and future?) role of immigrant women: filling immediate needs (many low-skilled) before integrating mainstream labour market
- New future requirements: need for more of certain skills and for quicker and surer integration
  - Through
    - Selection
    - Training upon / before arrival
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET: DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

MIGRANT WOMEN INTO WORK – WHAT IS WORKING?

Alexandra Heron

The views expressed are those of the author and do not engage either the OECD, the European Commission or the national authorities concerned.
SUMMARY

This paper presents some examples of initiatives which have fostered the labour market integration of migrant women with less than a tertiary education in six OECD countries (Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK). It is based on case studies from several OECD countries of a number of projects run by government, non-government and private organisations. By way of introduction, it provides a short summary of the main factors affecting migrant women’s employment as identified in the literature, and some general background information on the countries covered. It then identifies and discusses key features emerging from this small-scale study which have contributed to projects’ success and which are common across countries and projects, for example, the use of work placements to provide host country work experience. Other less frequently used approaches, such as mentoring schemes, are also examined as tools which may be effective in assisting project participants into work. In conclusion, a number of areas for more thorough evaluation are proposed, for example, the most effective ways of linking language acquisition for work with other preparation for labour market participation, such as training and work experience. Similarly, the nature of the supports contributing to positive outcomes for project participants needs further attention, such as the accessibility and affordability of childcare.
MIGRANT WOMEN INTO WORK – WHAT IS WORKING?

1. Introduction

1. This paper analyses various approaches taken by a number of projects assisting migrant women with less than tertiary education into work, and their degree of success. It aims to identify, in so far as is possible from a small-scale survey, what appears to constitute good practice in the field. It draws on case studies from several OECD countries (described in the Annex) of a number of such projects run by government, non-government and private organisations. The paper focuses on women who have arrived in the host country other than as the principal applicant (for labour migration). That is to say, they have migrated to accompany the principal applicant, or for family reunion purposes (including family formation), or as refugees or asylum seekers. The countries surveyed are Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, so as to achieve a balance between traditional immigration countries and other OECD countries, as well as to include both European and non-European examples.

2. The projects described are not necessarily representative, nor does this paper provide an overview of all programmes in the six countries covered. Indeed, most national governments do not have a comprehensive overview. Projects were identified by internet search and by responses from governments, non-government/voluntary sector agencies (NGOs) or those working on EU initiatives. The descriptions of the projects are based on published reports, where available in English and/or on telephone interviews with the organisations running the projects described.

3. The paper is structured as follows. The background section provides a summary of the main factors affecting migrant women’s employment as identified in the literature, and some general background information on the countries included. This is followed by a discussion of the general features of the “into work” programmes examined, a review of how outcomes are measured and a concluding section containing a summary and recommendations.

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1 Migrant is used here to mean a person not born in the host country (foreign-born). Projects in many countries do not identify participants in this way, but by whether they are, for example, from a visible minority, an ethnic minority or of a non-English speaking background. Such projects are included where it is likely that a significant proportion of the participants are also migrants or, if this is not known, if it seems the experience of the project may nevertheless be relevant. Most projects are women-only ones or provide a gender breakdown of their clients (though they cannot always identify which of their women clients are migrant or ethnic minority women).

2 This term is used to mean those with 0-12/13 years schooling.

3 The author is grateful to the many women and men running these projects, who spared the time to discuss them with her.

4 Mainstream public employment services are not included.
2. Background

Factors affecting employment

Overview

4. Considerable research has been done in recent years to provide a better understanding of the barriers to labour force participation facing women of working age (OECD, 2002a; OECD, 2003a). Major determinants of women’s labour force participation include the presence of children, levels of education, disincentives in tax and benefit systems, the availability and affordability of childcare, parental leave policies, the level of the national unemployment rate, the availability of part-time work (in some countries) and cultural attitudes to women working. For migrants, both men and women, employment rates are influenced by the acquisition of language skills, their education levels, the extent to which work experience and qualifications gained in the country of origin are accepted in the host country, the extent of their host country work experience and discrimination (OECD 2004b; OECD 2005a). Other factors such as the acquisition of social capital which, for example, assists the creation of social networks to improve job seeking, have also been identified as affecting employment opportunities. The factors affecting the labour force participation of migrant women in OECD countries are similar to those faced by native-born women as well as to those faced by migrant men. But the combination of both sets of factors poses particular problems for migrant women who wish to enter the labour market.

5. In the following sections, several factors affecting either women’s or migrants’ employment are examined in more detail, with a focus on how they affect migrant women in particular. By way of background, Table 1 presents the 2003 employment to population ratios for foreign-born and native-born women and men. It also identifies the differences in these ratios between foreign-born and native-born women (the women’s gap) and men and between foreign-born women and men as well as between native-born women and men (the gender gaps). In all six countries, the proportion of foreign-born women in employment is substantially lower than the proportion of the native-born. The foreign-born gender gap is also wider than that for the native-born population. The women’s gap is over 10% in all countries except Australia and the foreign-born gender gap is wider than this in all the countries, except Australia and Sweden. However, examining one gap in isolation from the other can be misleading. For example, in Sweden, the foreign-born gender gap is low but the women’s gap is relatively high. A number of factors affect these outcomes. These include the selection processes for migrants, the extent to which migrants’ characteristics match host countries’ labour market needs and the nature of the labour market access permitted in the past to certain categories of migrants.

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5 This difference would be greater if adjusted for the foreign-born women’s younger age structure, but less if adjusted for years in country.
Table 1: Employment to population ratio, 16-64, (%), men and women by country of birth, selected OECD countries, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (1) The difference between the employment rate of foreign-born and native-born women. (2) The difference between the employment rate of foreign-born and native-born men. (3) The difference between the employment rate of foreign-born men and foreign-born women. (4) The difference between the employment rate of native-born men and native-born women.

Source: calculated from OECD 2005a.

**Childcare**

6. Of the institutional determinants of women’s and migrants’ labour force participation, there is evidence that amongst the most significant for migrant women is the availability and affordability of childcare. For women in all OECD countries (except Belgium, Denmark and effectively Sweden) the presence of children has a dampening effect on women’s employment rates, (OECD, 2002a). Such caring responsibilities pose problems not only where children are not yet at kindergarten or school, but also where there are school age children, as school hours and holidays rarely coincide with working ones. Foreign nationals are more likely than nationals to cite family responsibilities (32% as against just under 20%) as a reason for remaining outside the labour force (OECD, 2005a). One analysis (OECD, 2005a) indicates that in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK the presence of children (where the children were aged under three – under six for Germany) is strongly associated with inactivity for foreign women in couples.

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6 But note, for example, that the employment rate of Black Caribbean women (proportion of migrants unknown) with children in the UK was higher in 2000-02 than for White women, including higher full-time employment rates (Lindley et al., 2004).

7 Five other countries show a slight increase in employment rates for women with one child but a decline with two.

8 If the average age at which migrant women have their first child is significantly lower than for native-born women (as in the Netherlands), this may mean that they gain less, if any, work experience before they have children. This may adversely affect their subsequent opportunities to enter the labour market.

9 Figures for foreign-born and native-born were not available.

10 Calculated for 10 EU countries from the European Labour Force Survey Figures.

11 The other 3 countries examined in this paper were not included in this analysis.

12 Figures for foreign-born and native-born were not available.
Even in the case of Sweden, where childcare facilities are amongst the most available and affordable of all OECD countries (Immervoll and Barber, forthcoming) foreign-born women’s employment rates (though high internationally) lag those of the native-born (see Table 1 above). This indicates that though important, other factors may have an equally important affect on migrant women’s entry into paid employment. It is also possible that migrant women may have different attitudes to the use of formal childcare than native-born women.

**Language fluency**

7. Fluency in the language of the host country is important for a migrant’s integration, especially into the labour market. While not the only factor affecting integration, the degree of fluency is a strong predictor of the chances of obtaining and keeping employment and of increased earning levels (OECD, 2003b; Dustmann and Fabri, 2003). The opportunity to practise the host country language which employment provides, reinforces language proficiency (see *e.g.*, Chiswick and Miller, 1994; Beiser and Hou, 2000) and also facilitates social integration.

8. Beiser and Hou (2000), drawing on a 10-year study of the resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees who arrived in Canada between 1979 and 1981, looked specifically at gender differences in language acquisition and resulting employment outcomes. They found that the women in the study started acquiring English from a lower base than the men, both in terms of prior knowledge and their level of education, and that a decade later their English language skills remained considerably lower than those of the men. They attributed this largely to the fact that the women had fewer opportunities than the men to learn English. It appears that this was due, in part, to government policy which was then targeting language training towards those who seemed most likely to enter the labour force (*i.e.*, excluding many women with young children). The authors also found that whilst employment increased English fluency for both men and women, it had a particularly beneficial effect on women’s proficiency. However, women were far less likely than men to participate in the labour force, probably because of childcare responsibilities. As in other research, it is reported that host country language proficiency became an important factor over time – for both women and men – explaining long term labour force retention and income levels (see also OECD, 2005a).

9. Given the importance of host country language acquisition, Table 2 contains a brief overview of the basic language tuition made available to new (and some long-term) migrants in these six countries. It summarises the duration of the tuition available, how classes are organised, provides a general idea of who may participate, fees, and of the availability of childcare and transport assistance.

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13 In particular, it does not cover any extra tuition which may be available to those receiving government funded financial assistance for the unemployed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Duration of tuition</th>
<th>Organisation of classes</th>
<th>Cost of classes and eligibility criteria</th>
<th>Childcare and other assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>510 hours + up to 400 extra for some humanitarian entrants</td>
<td>Full-time, part-time, evening, weekend and possibility of home-based tuition (by trained volunteer or materials for distance learning).</td>
<td>Free (some skilled migrants without functional English may pay a larger visa fee to contribute to tuition costs). Newly-arrived adult (some 16-18 yr olds) permanent migrants including humanitarian entrants, those switching from temporary to permanent status, those on temporary visas which lead to permanent ones and family reunion and formation entrants. Must not have functional English.</td>
<td>Free. Offered to all clients taking classroom-based provision who have under school age children. To be offered within 3 months of registering for tuition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Enhanced (more work-focused) Language Training was launched in 2003/04)</td>
<td>Three years is the usual participation length, regardless of number of hours weekly, but this can be extended till migrant reaches functional English or French level. Available in English and French.</td>
<td>Full-time, part-time, evening, weekend and possibility of home-based study or distance learning.</td>
<td>Free. Newly arrived immigrants who have/will receive permanent residence, government assisted refugees and other permanent residents (not citizens). Migrants who have been long-term permanent residents may have less priority for a class. Must not have functional English or French.</td>
<td>Free childminding assistance provided to clients who show such funding will make a difference as to whether they can attend classes. Transport assistance may be available including for children who must accompany parents to classes e.g., during school holidays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>600 hours (language) + 30 (orientation education)</td>
<td>Flexible courses, full-time, part-time, evenings and weekend classes.</td>
<td>Payment of about one euro per hour, but may be waived. New non-EU migrants are entitled, including refugees, and courses are compulsory in many cases where there is an integration need. Limited availability for non-EU longer-term migrants due to resource constraints, though where they are in receipt of social assistance, courses may be compulsory.</td>
<td>Limited childcare funded by the provider of the integration course is available if the providing agency thinks it is necessary. In practice this is likely to mean that there must be sufficient women needing childcare to make up a class, before it is made available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>500 hours (language) + 100</td>
<td>Full-time, part-time, some</td>
<td>Free.</td>
<td>Childcare during classes is provided for new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Fee</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sweden</strong></td>
<td>Unlimited until at a level considered work ready.</td>
<td>Classes are available to those new migrants assessed as needing them. If they are assessed as needing them, the classes are compulsory. Those eligible to be assessed are new non-EU permanent and most temporary migrants (of 16 years+), including refugees, many asylum seekers, and family reunion and formation entrants. Must not have functional Dutch.</td>
<td>Free.</td>
<td>No childcare provided by the class providers, as participants can rely on provision made by their municipalities. This is available at low, means-tested fees for all legal residents (including many temporary ones) for all children of 12 months and older.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UK</strong></td>
<td>Unlimited till pass NVQ 2 equivalent. (3)</td>
<td>Free to all over 16 including UK and EU citizens, refugees, many asylum seekers, others who have been resident for 3 years (or one year for family reunion/formation with UK citizens, permanent residents and refugees).</td>
<td>No government funding for childcare or travel expenses for the classes unless the agency providing the course makes special provision (which some do for refugees or other hardship cases).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. This table does not include additional programmes available to those in receipt of government financial assistance for the unemployed.
2. Significant changes will be implemented in 2006.
3. This would be equivalent of job ready for most jobs. It is the third level of language qualification (foundation level and the NVQ 1 equivalent have to be passed first).

Sources: Information provided by national or municipal governments.
Lack of host country work experience and qualifications

10. Employer preference for host country qualifications, and work experience appears to work to migrants’ disadvantage in the labour market (see Haque, 2002 for the UK; OECD, 2004a for Sweden; OECD 2005b for Germany). Employment opportunities also appear to be affected by how soon after arrival migrants begin working and start to accumulate work experience in the receiving country (see OECD, 2004a, for Sweden, where early employment - within the first year of arrival - seems to have the most significant effect on employment four years later, outweighing the impact of language and, to a lesser extent, vocational training, including for women). Migrant women who delay entering the workforce (or vocational training), for example for childcare or eldercare reasons, may face particular difficulties when they do try to do so later.

Educational levels

11. The labour force participation rate for foreign citizens (men and women) in OECD countries (2002-03 average), with less than upper secondary education (i.e., less than 12/13 years schooling) is much the same as that for nationals or higher, except in Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and, to a lesser degree, Belgium. For those who have completed upper secondary education the situation is not the same, as in only seven countries do foreign nationals participate as much as, or more, than nationals. However, in only 5 countries is their participation much lower. Tertiary educated foreigners invariably have lower participation rates than tertiary educated nationals, but nearly always have higher rates than foreign citizens with lower educational attainment (OECD, 2005a).

12. In all OECD countries, except Japan and Korea, employment rates for tertiary educated women are much higher than for women with less than secondary education (nationals and non-nationals taken together). Increasing the level of education of women from less than upper secondary to tertiary education, always has a positive effect on women’s employment rates (both for women with and without children) (OECD, 2002a). It has been suggested that policies designed to increase female education levels could have a major impact on the level of women’s employment (OECD, 2003a). A similar effect could be anticipated for migrant women, particularly if they obtain their educational qualifications in the host country.

13. Table 3 (below) presents the labour force participation rate for foreign and national women by education level for Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Foreign women at all educational levels have a lower participation rate than national women with the same educational level. But as with national women in these countries, the activity rate of foreign women increases with their level of education, except for tertiary-educated foreign women in Germany. However, the gap between native-born and foreign-born women with the same educational levels does not necessarily decrease as educational levels increase. This issue is explored further in Dumont and Isoppo (forthcoming).

14 Some countries provide the means to validate foreign qualifications and evaluate skills and work experience, though such procedures are not necessarily straightforward or effective (e.g., for Sweden, see OECD 2004a; for Canada, see Ray, 2004).

15 Iredale, (2005) discusses on-shore assessment of qualifications to analyse where gender bias in these processes may occur.

16 Data for Australia and Canada are not available.
Table 3: Female labour force participation rate by education level for selected OECD countries (25-64). Average 2002-03.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Less than upper secondary</th>
<th>Upper secondary</th>
<th>Tertiary level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>73.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dumont and Isoppo, forthcoming.

Discrimination

14. Studies indicate that discrimination is an enduring fact in the labour market (e.g., Zegers de Beijl, 2000 regarding ethnic minority/migrant men and hiring decisions in four EU countries and ethnic minority/migrant women in one). OECD (2002a) comments with regard to women that “there is continuing gender differentiation in job opportunities, pay and working time arrangements”. It has been noted that women from ethnic minorities face discrimination on the basis of both ethnicity and sex (Agocs, 2002a). Similarly, migrant women also suffer from sex discrimination and discrimination on the basis of being foreign-born and/or on the grounds of their ethnicity (if different from the predominant one in the host country). Discrimination may be direct (intentional) or indirect (e.g., a practice which adversely affects a group such as women or migrants significantly more than men or non-migrants). The latter includes practices by an employer which may make the employment of migrant women less likely to occur, e.g., seeking new employees informally from friends and family of existing employees, imposing unnecessarily high language requirements.

15. Laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex and ethnicity exist or are in the process of being implemented in all six countries covered in this paper. In addition, in several of them, laws exist requiring the active implementation of policies to promote equality in employment for categories of employees (e.g., ethnic minorities, women) by specified employers (e.g., public employers, employers of more than a specified number of employees). In a survey of the literature, Agocs (2002a) concludes that “formalised equity programs with mandatory goal-setting and vigorous and continued enforcement by government authorities make a significant difference in results” to employment outcomes for the groups designed to benefit from them. There is some UK evidence that the adoption of voluntary equal opportunities policies may lead to reduced discrimination against ethnic minorities in hiring (referred to in Barnes et al., 2005). To give an idea of some of the methods used by laws promoting employment equity, Table 4 outlines some of their most significant requirements. They impose a duty to promote employment equity and as tools for achieving this may require, for example, that individual employers keep statistics of the gender or ethnic breakdown of their workforce and/or to set targets (not quotas) for the employment of certain groups. The effectiveness of these laws cannot be reviewed here, and it is evident that none of them specifically promote employment equity for migrant (or visible or ethnic minority) women as a group. But the existence of such laws for particular groups illustrates another potential strategy for assisting migrant women into work. That is, one which requires employers to actively plan to attract them into their workforce, rather than relying solely on the women themselves to overcome the barriers to their workforce participation.

17 As they apply to women and/or groups whose definition (e.g., those of non-English speaking background for Australia, visible minorities in Canada) ensures they will include many migrants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country(1)</th>
<th>Groups covered</th>
<th>Employers Covered</th>
<th>Legal duty to promote equality in employment</th>
<th>Monitoring statistics must be collected and made available to public</th>
<th>Compliance monitoring</th>
<th>Sanctions (effectiveness not evaluated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia(2)</td>
<td>Women and men, and migrants of NESB(3) and their children</td>
<td>All government departments; public agencies with 50+ employees.</td>
<td>Yes (numerical targets for NESB and their children set)</td>
<td>Yes, annually: number of employees, by occupational group, wage levels, part- or full-time hours, etc., by target groups. Compiled and published by government on internet.</td>
<td>Employer must submit statistics to government monitoring agency. All government departments and public agencies of 100 employees or more must also prepare an action plan usually for 3-5 years and submit it to monitoring agency which must advise whether it is supported. Large public agencies must submit review report at end of plan’s life. All departments and public agencies of 250 employees or more must report annually to monitoring agency that they have complied with the equal employment law.</td>
<td>Yes. Legal proceedings possible. (Non-enforceable recommendations can be made). Agency not submitting statistics named publicly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Women and men, and visible minorities</td>
<td>All federal government departments; public agencies with 100+ employees. Some private employers of 100+ (includes most of those bidding for federal contracts (4) of 200 000 Can dollars or more).</td>
<td>Yes (numerical targets set, including by FCP employers)</td>
<td>Yes, annually: number of employees, by occupational group, wage levels, hires, promotions, dismissals, part- or full-time hours, etc., by target groups. Each employer’s annual report published in full on internet by the government. Not applicable to FCP employers.</td>
<td>Employer must prepare action plan for 1-3 years and review it. It must submit annual report to government with statistics and progress report. Monitoring undertaken by CHRC. Not applicable to FCP employers.</td>
<td>Yes. Legal proceedings possible. Publicity used in relation to non-FCP private employers (public rating system). FCP employers subject to compliance reviews with sanctions possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL (relevant law expired at the end of 2003).</td>
<td>Foreign-born persons from designated</td>
<td>Public and private, both where over 35 employees</td>
<td>Yes (numerical targets set)</td>
<td>Yes, annually: number of employees by grades and part- or full-time work, by country of birth (and that of parents).</td>
<td>Employer had to submit annual report with statistics and action plan, to government.</td>
<td>Yes. Legal proceedings possible. Publicity also used to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>countries and their children</td>
<td>Public and private, with at least 10 employees.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No collection (except for pay equity between men and women), or publication required (though collection may be advisable to comply with the duty).</td>
<td>Yes. Legal proceedings possible. (Fines).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sweden**
- Women and men and all ethnic groups
- Public and private, with at least 10 employees.
- Yes
- No collection (except for pay equity between men and women), or publication required (though collection may be advisable to comply with the duty).
- Annual active equal opportunities plan (men/women)/active promotion of equity amongst all ethnic groups at the workplace required (latter less rigorous).
- No requirement to lodge information with central monitoring body.
- Employers self monitor in cooperation with employee representatives; Ombudsmans for sex and ethnic equality proactively monitor compliance with the duties.
- Yes. Legal proceedings possible. (Fines).

**UK**
- All racial groups
- Public authorities (PA). Private employers where performing public procurement contracts.
- Yes
- Yes for most public sector employers. Annually: number of employees and applicants for jobs, promotion and training by racial group. More statistics (e.g. retraining, disciplinary action and performance appraisals) required from employers of 150+.
- No requirement to lodge information with central monitoring body.
- Major PAs must publish a race equality action plan and a self review after 3 years.
- Commission for Racial Equality must proactively monitor compliance with the duty.
- Yes. Legal proceedings possible.

Notes:
1. Germany does not currently have such legislation in relation to ethnic minorities.
2. Information in this table is for the State of Queensland and references are to the State government and State departments and agencies.
3. Non-English speaking background.
4. The Federal Contractors Program (FCP) is established by policy not law.

Sources: Queensland State Government (Australia) Office of Public Service Merit and Equity; Canadian Human Rights Commission; Glastra et al.; Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (Netherlands); Swedish Offices of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman and the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination; Commission of Racial Equality (UK) website.
**Host and home country effects**

16. An additional factor affecting migrant women’s labour force participation rates may be the cultural attitudes towards women working which existed in the country of origin, if these were unfavourable to labour force participation (Antecol, 2000). However, comparing women’s employment rates in their country of origin with those they exhibit in some receiving countries, it appears that migrant women are participating more in certain host countries’ labour force than they did in the country of origin (Dumont and Isoppo, forthcoming). These differences will be partly affected by reasons for migration and also how well foreigners’ characteristics match the labour market needs of the host country. Additionally, participation rates may be influenced by individual factors, for example, very low levels of education amongst Turkish and Moroccan women in the Netherlands (just over 60% had only primary education in 2002, for men the figures were 43% and 53% respectively) (Snel et al., 2004). A discouragement effect may also contribute to a low participation rate by women from certain countries of origin, if a particular ethnic group faces disproportionately high unemployment rates (i.e., they will not make themselves available to work) (Harzing, 1995). For example, in the UK, Bangladeshi women’s unemployment rate was 21% in 2000-02, whereas that for white women was 4% (Lindley et al., 2004). In Germany in 2004, the unemployment rate for Turkish national women was 24%, whilst for German citizens it was 9.7% (their participation rates were 39% and 67%, respectively) (OECD Secretariat calculations from the European Labour Force Survey).

**Job search networks and other factors affecting employment**

17. A significant institutional obstacle facing migrants in the labour market is the fact that jobs in many countries are filled through informal networks (see e.g., for Sweden, OECD, 2004a). This disadvantages those without access to these networks. Migrant women may have fewer of these networks than men or, where they do have them, the variety of occupations to which they provide access may be restricted. Migrants also face institutional barriers where their right to work is restricted by law. For example, in Germany, it is only since the beginning of 2005 that family reunion migrants have been able to have the same type of labour market access as the principal migrant, immediately upon arrival. Previously many had to wait a year for any access at all and then faced other restrictions. In many countries asylum seekers cannot work for long periods, which may inhibit later labour market integration. These types of restrictions, as they may specifically affect women’s labour force participation, need further examination as they may be more harmful than realised. With regard to other factors, it is unclear the extent to which the elimination of disincentives in tax and benefit systems to second earners compared to single earners, the availability of (short) paid parental leave and the availability of part-time work (in some countries) would boost migrant women’s labour force participation in particular.

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18. Attitudes in some host countries, too, can be hostile to women working or working full-time if they have pre-school children (ISSP, 2002).

19. An example of such a provision occurs in Germany, where asylum seekers must wait one year and are then able to work subject to labour market testing. In Sweden, the delay in seeking work can be shorter. There, asylum seekers may work if it is considered that the assessment of their application will take longer than four months.

20. Reviews of work-life balance in all the countries covered in this paper (except Germany) have been undertaken by the OECD (OECD 2002b; OECD 2005c).
3. Key features of the country case studies

Introduction

18. The projects reviewed in this paper all fostered the labour market integration of migrant women with less than tertiary educational qualifications, though not all targeted them exclusively. The projects are described in the Annex to this paper and the 15 examined in most detail are summarised in Table 5 below. They range from small-scale projects catering for about 20 participants, to intermediate ones of 50 or more, to a few larger ones with over 500 participants. Although the initiatives may not necessarily be transferable across countries, some key features are evident in many projects, as the discussion below highlights. Their identification is intended to contribute to understanding how to improve the labour market integration of migrant women. For example, all the projects helped with finding childcare for participants and most provided supported work placements to gain work experience. Most also linked language acquisition with work training and/or work experience, a practice which is not yet necessarily integrated into the basic national language programmes in the countries covered. Emphasis was placed on confidence building and the availability of a range of support mechanisms for participants. Many programmes were relatively lengthy, requiring participation of six months or more. Some of these common themes reflect issues highlighted in the literature discussed above. For example, the link between the importance of host country work experience and labour market integration. Others seem to have been less explored, such as the importance of confidence building and support during time spent gaining host country work experience.

19. The projects described measured their success in various ways (discussed below, in section 4, in Outcomes). This was largely done by examining outcome data and using other assessment measures (e.g., external qualitative evaluations, client satisfaction surveys) rather than in experimental settings using control groups. Project success rates were variable and affected (inter alia) by the pre-existing skill levels and host country language fluency of participants. It is worth noting that significant commitment is demanded of the migrant women who are expected to participate in these programmes and courses. They are often dealing with an alien culture and a language they are unfamiliar with; leaving their homes to go out may itself be a major challenge. The expectations of their partners and family – and their own expectations of their role - may be different from those which the host country has of them, and may be difficult to reconcile. They may also be dealing with a large family in economically stringent circumstances and bearing the primary burden of settling their children in a new environment and of other domestic labour. These less measurable factors are also likely to affect outcomes.

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21 The large-scale European Community EQUAL initiative has a number of projects with this focus and has contributed funding to some of the projects considered here. For a general description of Equal, see (downloaded on 6/07/05) at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/index_en.cfm

22 But see the introduction of the Canadian Enhanced Language Training intended to provide job-specific language training with professional mentoring and job placements in an immigrant’s profession, (downloaded on 6/07/05) at: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdlrp/hrdb-rhbd/elt-clna/description_e.asp#g1

In the Netherlands, combining language classes with vocational training/work/work experience may be possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project and administrator</th>
<th>Participants’ characteristics</th>
<th>Type and size of project and employment/training outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given the Chance (AUS 1)</td>
<td>All refugees, mostly women. Five had tertiary education. Varied English language skills.</td>
<td>NGO. 19 participants, 16 women. 3 months after end of 12 week course, 58% were in paid employment, education and training, at 12 months, 73% were.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behind the Label (AUS 2)</td>
<td>Clothing workers, mostly migrant women. Poor English language skills. Mainly from East Asia and Indo-China.</td>
<td>Government. 1 000 (approx) attended training courses over 4 years of project (some double counting). Project aimed to upskill, reskill and improve English language skills; detailed employment outcomes difficult to measure but long-term outcomes likely to be positive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canada</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Women’s Centre (CAN 1)</td>
<td>Migrant women.</td>
<td>NGO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womens Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor (CAN 2)</td>
<td>Women only, 80% (approx) migrants.</td>
<td>NGO. Aug 2004-March 2005, 165 prepared job action plans, 57 found work experience and 61 found jobs (some double counting).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Germany</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project on Vocational Training for Refugee Women, Berlin (GER 1)</td>
<td>Refugee women. Varied educational levels. Had basic German language skills.</td>
<td>NGO. 44 over two 12 month courses. 16 found jobs, 11 went into training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paritatisches Bildungswerk, Bremen (GER 2)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Appro a third have tertiary education. Had basic German language skills.</td>
<td>NGO. 31 in 2003/04 for 12 month course. Approx a third find jobs, a third undertake vocational training and most of others go into adult education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Computer Centre Berlin (GER 3)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Varied school or professional education.</td>
<td>NGO. 20 in a 6 month course in 2004/05. 15 into paid work or training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremerhaven - Retail Customer Orientation Project (GER 4)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Varied educational levels. All had largely fluent German. 14 of the group of 15 were born in Russia or Ukraine.</td>
<td>NGO. 25, 15 in 16 month course, all in short supplementary training. 75% of the 15 were in work 6 months after end of course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Netherlands</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different (NL 1)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Low education levels.</td>
<td>Government. 180 in groups of 20. One group had a control group. After 2 years, 27% of the experimental group had jobs but none in the control group did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stichting (Foundation) AKROS – Vrouwen Atelier Mozaiek (NL 2)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Varied educational levels.</td>
<td>NGO. 30 in a 7 month course in 2004/05. 14 into paid work or training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sweden</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avanti (SW 1)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Low education levels. Poor Swedish language skills.</td>
<td>Government. 11 month programme for 24, of whom 17 completed course and 11 found work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wordpower (SW 2)</td>
<td>Migrant women. Low education levels. Poor Swedish language skills.</td>
<td>NGO. May 2002-May 2004 for 68 women. 11% in jobs in May 2005, 15% dropped out due to pregnancy, others have had temporary work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Kingdom</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account 3 Women’s Consultancy (UK 1)</td>
<td>Women only, 80% from ethnic minorities (many Bangladeshi women) and substantial proportion foreign-born. Most with less than complete secondary education.</td>
<td>NGO. May 2004-May 2005, 596 women assisted with job search and/or training (some double counting). Various outcomes recorded, e.g., June 2001-March 2003, 140 women participated in a number of in-house training courses with 62 (44%) then finding jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minority Outreach Project (UK 2)</td>
<td>Ethnic minority men and women, about half were women. Most had upper secondary education or less. 58% were Asian or Asian British, 24% were Black or Black British.</td>
<td>Government. 20 projects assisted 4 000 clients over 2 years with finding jobs and training. Outcomes measured 13 weeks after first contact with a project: of the women clients, 25% found work and 8% began training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Host country work experience and links with work skills and language acquisition

20. Most of the projects examined incorporated work experience for participants into their programmes. This was considered to be crucial to enhancing clients’ chances of obtaining a job: several projects reported that clients regularly continued on as employees in the workplace which had provided their placement. Some projects conducted classroom-based teaching in parallel with work experience, dividing the week or month up between the two (e.g., AUS 1, GER 2, GER 4). For these projects, this enabled ongoing training (for language and other workplace skills) and the provision of support to participants during the work placement. Other projects arranged work experience at the end of the project when they considered the participants ready for it (e.g., GER 1, SW 1). In most of the latter type of projects, client support was provided by contact between a project staff member and the client and the employer. In both situations, projects reported providing advice to clients, for example, interpreting what was happening at the workplace, or mediating problems arising from a placement. These included those due to intercultural misunderstandings. Of the few projects whose focus was not on providing work experience, similar support was provided by at least three, after a client had successfully found paid employment (CAN 2, UK 2 informally in some situations, and UK 3). The projects considered that this in-work support aided employment retention.

21. Most projects also forged a link between language acquisition and preparation for entering the workplace. Language training took place at the same time as training in job search, employment readiness and/or in other work-related skills (e.g., pre- or vocational training) occurred. It then often continued whilst programme participants were on work experience. Several projects placed an emphasis on the importance of acquiring language competency which was specifically work focused.

22. A period in work experience assists a participant in “marketing” themselves as job ready to host country employers. In the projects examined here, it appeared also to provide a number of other significant benefits. These included the chance for a participant to improve work-related language skills (several projects commented on how marked an improvement in language skills was achieved by clients during work experience), to acquire the self-confidence needed to hold down a job and to obtain an understanding of how the host country workplace operates and its expectations of employees – as well as how to manage her personal work/family life balance. In many cases, though, the process was relatively lengthy. This was the case either for the classroom-based aspects of the programme, or for the work experience period, or for both. Programmes of six months or more were not unusual (e.g., CAN 1, SW 2).

In summary:

- supported work experience appeared frequently as a component of “into work” programmes;
- language training went hand-in-hand with work skills acquisition/work experience;

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23 This project’s evaluation (Barnes et al., 2005) commented on the need to assist clients through what it termed the “grey area” of temporary, short-term and low quality jobs, by ongoing support.
• work experience was reported to improve host country language proficiency;
• many training programmes required relatively long-term participation by clients.

Combining childcare and work

23. The ‘into work’ programmes described in the Annex all, in one way or another, addressed the issue of the childcare needs of their target group. They acknowledged that childcare responsibilities could pose a barrier to participation in their programmes and assisted with overcoming these, as their own resources or public provision permitted. Either childcare provision was built into the support available from the project, or clients were helped to find it through such public provision as was available.

24. Certain projects provided clients with free childcare, either on-site (e.g., UK 1, GER 1) or by way of sessions bought by the project from external childcare providers (e.g., AUS 2). Other projects benefited from publicly funded provision which their clients could access at a low cost. This took the form of either comprehensive national provision for which clients were eligible²⁴ or participants met specific eligibility criteria for public funding of their childcare needs (e.g., AUS 1, NL 1). Another approach (sometimes in combination with the earlier ones mentioned) was adopted where projects acted as childcare brokers. These projects had developed an expert knowledge about the local availability of childcare and any publicly funded childcare subsidies which might be available to clients, and advised them on how to access these. One project tailored its programme to fit in with kindergarten and school hours so that its clients did not need to arrange childcare. Another (GER 4) reported that its clients preferred to use their extended families for childcare.

In summary:
• childcare issues are addressed as comprehensively as possible by “into work” programmes to maximise participation;²⁵
• the service provided by some projects to assist clients in finding childcare and related publicly funded subsidies, can be important in making the best of what is on offer in a national system.

Work skills training and the significance of confidence building

25. A variety of skills-based training was made available to clients through most projects, before or during work placements. These often included intensive training in job search skills, in curriculum vitae/resumé (CV) preparation and in interview skills (in at least one project (CAN 2) suitably smart interview clothes were found for clients). Practical work preparation skills were also often provided as well as providing an understanding of employer expectations and employee rights and responsibilities. Pre-vocational skills and/or vocational training were offered by many projects. Many projects enabled clients to have the opportunity to obtain a labour market recognised certificate, even if it was a low level one. This could then be built on in later training undertaken by the client. Career advancement issues were factored into one or two projects rather differently, by offering further training once employment had been taken up. The factors governing the mix of training on offer were varied. They included the education and

²⁴ In Sweden, there is a legal entitlement to childcare once a child is 12 months old (OECD, 2005c).
²⁵ In one project, clients could access subsidised childcare for the classroom part of the programme, but they could not always do so for the work experience placement organised by the project. Where other arrangements could not be made by the clients, as happened from time to time, some could not undertake that aspect of the programme.
skill levels of the client group, the nature of the local labour market and the types of funding available for programmes. Overall, what was on offer had similarities, though emphases differed.

26. The widespread availability of training in personal development, so as to build up programme participants’ self-confidence, was marked. This indicated how significant projects considered it to be to the success of their programmes. How it was undertaken varied. Sometimes individual plans were prepared to motivate and guide participants through the course and subsequent work placements. This process also ensured that project staff had a good understanding of their clients. Fostering a supportive “team spirit” in the group receiving training together was important to increase motivation and retention during a course. It also assisted clients with learning to speak out in front of others, but in a safe environment. Identifying clients’ existing skills – possibly unrecognised because they were not ones associated with paid work experience – was another element in building self esteem. Work placements were also critical in increasing participants’ self-confidence, with some projects remarking on the sense of achievement felt by clients after their initial workplace experience.

27. A few projects reported a tension between channelling women into traditional women’s jobs and trying to provide them with a wider choice of futures. Whether this was feasible partly reflected what was possible in the local labour market. For example, one London-based project (UK 1) made driving instructors’ training available where client demand and language proficiency made this feasible, driving skills being in demand in London. Another project (GER 1) offered increased opportunities for training in medical and laboratory assistant work. Others were concerned to offer possibilities other than childcare work. This was not a comment on the nature of that work, but on the assumptions some participants initially had that this would be the most appropriate work for them – when often this was not the case.

In summary:

- varied combinations of work-related skills were taught on the “into work” programmes, but significant similarities appeared to exist across countries;
- confidence building was seen by most projects as an essential building block of “into work” programmes;
- widening women’s choice of job options was only occasionally addressed by the projects examined.

The local labour market: understanding it, changing it

28. To provide the best assistance to clients, including identifying options for upgrading skills, most projects had developed an expert knowledge about their local labour market. Often they had close links with local employers; inevitably they had a strong feel for the types of jobs available and the level of skills needed for them. They understood how to access appropriate training for participants and any necessary supports (funding, childcare), as well as the ability to obtain or facilitate work placements. Successful work placements could lead to clients continuing in them as employees, assisting client outcomes. Some projects provided a free job search facility for employers, formally or informally (e.g., UK 3). This was a significant incentive to employers to use the project’s services when they had job vacancies, and again optimised client outcomes.

29. Other projects assisted employers in developing their diversity management capacity (e.g., UK 2, GER 2, GER 3). This included training employers in relation to their human resource management so as to assist them in adopting strategies to recruit and retain employees who were the client groups of the projects delivering the training (see Barnes et al., 2005, for a description of the practical aspects facing one group
of such projects in engaging employers). Some projects reported engaging with individual employers on behalf of those in work placements to negotiate misunderstandings arising due to cultural differences.

In summary:

- nearly all the projects examined had developed links with local employers in the areas where they were operating;
- a few projects engaged formally in assisting employers develop diversity management strategies.

**Reaching the hard to reach**

30. Outreach work was undertaken by several projects to make their services known to the population with whom they wished to engage. It featured strongly in two (UK 2, AUS 2). Such work involved project employees working in the community settings where their potential clients lived. They targeted those who were unlikely to know of the support systems they could access to help them to engage in language or other training – or who may not have previously considered undertaking these activities. Both projects making most use of this approach commented on the importance of using bilingual outreach workers. This was because such workers were familiar with the community they were working with and knew how to find and approach their prospective clients. Social events were used to encourage engagement with the projects. Two Dutch projects (NL 3, NL 6) referred to the importance of visiting women in their own homes to maximise the chances that they would participate in the training offered. Another project sought out the most socially isolated migrant women in their community through their children’s schools (SW 2).

In summary:

- outreach work was undertaken to enable some of the most socially isolated migrant women to be given the chance to participate in activities leading to training and employment;
- bilingual community workers were seen as crucial to the success of both the projects reviewed which had a large outreach component.

**Other support mechanisms available to course participants**

31. Mentoring.26 The provision of mentors for course participants was arranged by two projects. One project provided it through volunteers external to the workplace (but with extensive work experience) of the client receiving mentoring (AUS 1). In another project (SW 1) the mentor was a co-worker at the participant’s work placement and provided with a small financial bonus for undertaking this role. In both cases the mentors were given training and in both instances, the participants viewed the mentoring positively. Several countries provide some general mentoring schemes.27

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26 Only briefly mentioned in the Annex (as they were not primarily work-focused) are two Dutch projects which engaged migrant woman in social and language acquisition activities, as a first step towards engaging with training and work. These arranged Dutch mother tongue speakers to befriend/mentor migrant women to assist with learning Dutch. Both requests for such assistance and the response to advertising for local people to help with this project, were high. EMPLOOI a successful Dutch project assisting refugees into work also makes extensive use of mentors (see Dutch Council of Refugees (2005)).

27 Though not explicitly work-focused, the Host programme in Canada links new migrants with volunteers who help them settle in. See (downloaded on 30/06/05 at: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/host-fs1.html) (The new work-focused ELT programme has a mentoring component, see footnote 18).
Social work support and welfare rights advice. Many projects provided such assistance formally and informally, and had the knowledge to refer clients to other sources of expertise. In one project (AUS 2) the bilingual community workers organised social outings for course participants, as well as undertaking the more traditional role of advising on appropriate training courses and childcare options. Some projects provided welfare rights’ advice on site (UK 1, GER 1, AUS 1). Such support tackles issues (e.g., housing problems, debt, childcare issues but also feelings of social isolation) which may cause such personal difficulties to clients that they drop out of a course.

Engaging with other family members. Another type of support provided by a few projects was to engage with the partners and other family members of the proposed participants. In one project (NL 1) husbands were invited with their wives to the initial meeting for participants where the project was fully explained, and questions answered. The project noted the subsequent strong encouragement which husbands gave their wives during the course. A language learning project also successfully engaged husbands’ support for their wives’ participation (NL 5). However, another project reported less success with their attempt at such engagement. Yet another (UK 1) remarked that its women-only service was reassuring both to clients and to their families, in that the women would be undertaking training only with other women. The projects which reached out to migrant women’s partners acknowledged the different expectations a host country often has of them as well as their wives. Some projects found this approach assisted their clients to participate.

Transport and wage subsidies: These were offered by at least one project (AUS 2) as far as financially possible, to participants in certain courses. Their research, prior to establishing this initiative, had indicated that these were barriers to participation in training courses. The evaluation of another project (UK 2) also refers to the possible need to meet transport costs, childcare help and sometimes to pay a financial incentive for attending training, to assist the most disadvantaged jobseekers. Whether such help may be necessary will depend upon a number of factors including what is provided to clients as a matter of course by way of, for example, cheap public transport and government financial support.

In summary:

• where mentoring programmes were run, these were viewed positively;
• a range of social work support may encourage participation and help retention rates on courses;
• active engagement with the partners and families of women on training courses was seen as aiding participation, where this was undertaken successfully;
• transport and wage subsidies were seen as removing barriers to participation by a project which paid these.

Sweden, government policy is to encourage a similar scheme by municipalities who run the migrants’ Introduction Programmes. See (downloaded on 30/06/05) at: http://www.integrationsverket.se/upload/5160/overenskommelse_eng.pdf. In Australia, the Volunteer Tutor Program is part of the Government Adult English Education Programme and matches migrants with tutor/mentors to help with learning English and about Australia. For the State of Victoria, see (downloaded on 5/07/05) at: http://www.ames.net.au/articleZone.asp?articleZoneID=35 In the United Kingdom, Time Together (part of a wider national campaign to promote volunteering) matches UK citizens as mentors with refugees and is due, with Government support, to expand significantly. See (downloaded on 5/07/05) at: http://www.timebank.org.uk/mentor/

The latter term includes advice about e.g., how to manage debts and access legal advice and how to access social provision including government social payments, health services and housing help.
4. Outcomes

35. Martin and Grubb (2001) reviewing the general evaluation literature on active labour market programmes, concluded that it indicates that women (in particular women re-entrants and often sole parents) benefit from training programmes (though more in terms of improved employment outcomes than higher earnings), on-the-job training, job search assistance including job clubs and individual counselling and short, targeted subsidies to private sector employment. Training programmes should be well targeted, small-scale, provide certification recognised and valued by the market and have a strong on-the-job component (requiring the need to establish links with local employers). Regarding training, HRDC (2002) in a review of research into how training programmes affected women’s employment chances, found that employment-related training involving new job skills, academic upgrading or language training, was particularly beneficial. It also noted that adequate childcare, transport and other financial supports were necessary to enable women to access training. Such training should also be geographically accessible and sensitive to cultural and family-related obstacles.

36. The nature of the evaluations of the impacts of the projects described below are varied. Most do not involve comparing participants with non-participants with similar characteristics, or comparing one area where a programme has been implemented with another similar one where it has not (OECD, 2005d). One Dutch project was evaluated using a control group (NL 1). Otherwise, the evaluation measures referred to by projects were a variety of outcome monitoring measures. These included monitoring whether training is completed, competencies and/or certification achieved, or employment, further training or education entered into immediately following an intervention and/or after some period of time. In some cases (e.g., UK 2) an independent examination of outcomes was commissioned together with a qualitative evaluation. Client satisfaction surveys were administered by some projects, with their results being fed into project development.

37. The apparent success rates of the projects vary considerably. Many factors appeared to influence their outcomes. For example, the local and national job markets as well as the education levels, host country language proficiency, and previous work experience and training, of the participants. Many projects had formal and informal eligibility criteria for participation. These related to, for example, being in receipt of a welfare assistance payment, or having a certain level of knowledge of the host country language, or being able to make private arrangements for childcare. Other projects relied on women knowing about them and having the skills and confidence to apply to participate in them. These criteria were part of the way the particular projects concerned were established and had to operate. In contrast, some projects targeted women who were very removed from the possibility of workforce participation, with low levels of educational qualifications, poor fluency in the host country language and little or no

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29 Which is often of US or Canadian programmes.
30 Caveats made to these conclusions include the small-scale nature of many evaluations and that the effect on outcomes of any compulsion to participate is usually not captured.
31 OECD 2005d cites evidence that employment-related training programmes can in some cases be quite strongly positive over the long-term.
32 An example of the potential benefits of support and counselling is demonstrated by a Canadian income supplement programme (voluntary for sole parents). This programme which also provided intensive individual support (e.g., job search help) and counselling (e.g., advice about childcare and transport) has been shown to have positive effects on employment outcomes and income levels compared to a programme with the supplement but without the supports (OECD, 2005d).
33 The skills and dedication of the staff of the projects is one of these, though an unmeasurable one. For example, an evaluation of one project encapsulated this by referring to its staff’s “positive “can-do” spirit (which is essential to the success of their work”.
previous work experience. Discrimination, too, may have influenced outcomes. All these factors will undoubtedly have affected the end results of a programme. Thus direct comparisons between these projects are not appropriate.

5. Summary and recommendations

38. This paper has presented an analysis of selected initiatives in six OECD countries which have fostered the labour market participation of migrant women with less than a tertiary education. It was undertaken by way of a desk-based survey of a small number of projects and the conclusions drawn below must necessarily be limited. However, despite the lack of experimental evaluations, many of the programmes described above implemented the strategies identified as successful for women in the evaluation literature. Moreover, Martin and Grubb (2001) note that even rigorous evaluations rarely measure the social benefits which may flow from programme participation. In the projects described, this factor was often commented on, particularly in relation to the participants’ increased self-confidence, changed attitudes and behaviour. The key features common to most of the projects were:

- supported work experience;
- addressing participants’ childcare needs;
- linking work training, work experience and language acquisition, in varied ways;
- providing work skills training linked to confidence building;
- a close understanding of, and links, with the local labour market;
- participation for six months or more.

A few projects provided:

- mentoring schemes;
- active engagement with the partners and families of the women on the “into work” programmes;
- support through the initial period in work;
- outreach work to reach the most “hard to reach” women;
- a variety of social work supports;
- opportunities for upskilling and career advancement as well as entering less traditional areas of work;
- diversity management training for employers.

39. **Work placements** appear critical for enhancing the future work or training participation of migrant women generally, including those with low educational qualifications. They provide not just much-needed host country work experience but also the self-confidence to pursue these avenues. To

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Some of which are participants in the EU Equal programme and will be subject to review and evaluation against a range of key objectives set by that programme (e.g. empowerment of target groups, innovation).
achieve a successful work placement a range of supports needs to be provided to participants by "into work" projects. Anticipating and dealing with childcare needs is very important. Linked to this is resolving other practical issues such as transport problems (are subsidies needed and/or an introduction to how to use the public system?). Prior to or during a work placement, projects seek to equip clients with the initial skills essential to make the most of what the placement has to offer. Usually this is done in a holistic way. Building self-confidence goes hand-in-hand with the practical aspects of work readiness programmes. Work readiness programmes integrate language training with other work preparation skills. Support is provided to clients (and employers) during work experience.

40. It is recommended that further evaluation of these strategies should be undertaken to assess the best combinations of approaches for different groups of women with less than a tertiary education. Programmes for some women may need to be relatively lengthy and incorporate a long-term approach to labour market integration. Qualitative aspects such as continuity in the support staff allocated to a client may be important. Consideration could then be given to mainstreaming successful strategies into national job search, training and placement programmes, where this is not already underway.

41. Linked to this is the need to assess the current availability and effectiveness of language classes for migrants so as to understand the reasons why women migrants do or do not access them, and how successful they are in facilitating labour force participation. Some of these programmes currently aim at language acquisition which may not enable the participant to be work ready or enter further education or training. The value of this may be questionable, particularly as it appears that programmes do not necessarily integrate intensive language practice in real life settings such as work experience or training. As Spencer and di Mattia conclude in their survey of introductory programmes and initiatives for new migrants in Europe (MPI, 2004), “there is some evidence that language tuition is most effective when set in the context of work or higher education” (p.10). It is suggested that analyses, including by gender, of who is eligible for classes (e.g., whether family formation migrants access such provision on arrival in the host country), who participates, reasons for non-participation and outcomes, in terms of proficiency achieved and labour market participation, would be useful. These would assist in gaining a clearer understanding of the reasons why women migrants do or do not access language training, how successful it is in facilitating their labour force participation and highlight where improvements could be made.

42. Restrictions on migrants’ eligibility to work upon arrival need to be examined to assess their effect on migrant women’s long-term labour market participation. A similar review of restrictions on eligibility for entry into “into work” programmes and for supports such as childcare, is suggested to identify (with a view to removing) barriers to work participation by migrant women. Since studies have shown that early employment improves long-term labour market integration significantly, these sorts of restrictions may be more harmful than is realised.

43. Childcare availability and affordability, is being actively addressed by several of the countries examined in this paper. It also needs to be assessed for its availability and affordability to low income migrant women (this may include looking at its cultural appropriateness). Public childcare provision may be particularly important to migrant women’s labour force participation, as they may lack the financial means and family/social support networks enabling them to make private arrangements. Outcomes from the most successful “into work” programme may be adversely affected if the national childcare system is inadequate. Active work and family life reconciliation debates are occurring in many OECD countries.

35 A small study of 23 Muslim women in Australia, described in Rida and Milton (2001), discusses why some Muslim women appear not to access language training there, proposing that catering for their specific needs (e.g., women-only classes) may increase their access.

36 See OECD, 2002b (Australia and the Netherlands) and OECD 2005c (Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom) for OECD reviews of work and family life reconciliation policies those countries
and policies (such as childcare provision) are under consideration to promote such reconciliation and facilitate women's employment. These could usefully be examined from the perspective of migrant women and adapted where necessary, to optimise their employment opportunities as well.

44. Other issues are also worth further consideration for inclusion in the range of strategies for assisting migrant women into work. Supporting the greater use of mentoring schemes (as provided by an Australian (AUS 1) and a Swedish (SW 1) project) at the workplace should be considered. This could tap into community goodwill and facilitate workplace integration at the same time as creating host country social networks for the migrant woman who is mentored. Several countries have some general schemes in place which might provide models. The value of support during an initial period in work (possibly through a mentoring programme) could also be explored. Strategies to reach those women most isolated from host country social and work networks should be pursued. These could include outreach programmes, and engaging with their partners and families as well as the women themselves.

45. Successful programmes have a good understanding of their local labour market and engage proactively with employers to create job opportunities for their clients, at times providing a free employee search service. Supporting project staff to acquire the skills necessary to do this and to provide diversity training to local employers and/or to engage with them to resolve misunderstandings arising from cultural differences between employers and those on placements, are other potentially useful tools for “into work” programmes. Spencer and di Mattia (MPI, 2004, p.9) comment that integration “requires the migrant to adapt and the host country to address the barriers that can prevent full economic and social participation”. It appears that laws requiring active policies to promote employment equity, and possibly voluntary diversity management programmes, could facilitate the organisational change needed at the workplace to improve the labour force integration of migrant women. It is recommended that their implementation and/or extension, including their specific targeting of migrant women, should be evaluated and considered. Strategies for engaging with employers about employing migrant women and the nature of the work on offer to them should also be explored, not simply to understand where openings for clients may exist, but whether these can lead to ongoing training and advancement and, possibly, into less traditional – and better paid - fields of work.
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ANNEX
COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

AUSTRALIA

Given the Chance¹ (AUS 1)

This project is run by the Brotherhood of St Laurence² and began in October 2002. Its aim was to provide an intensive, full-time twelve-week employment training programme specifically for refugees. Of the 19 participants, 16 were women, most were under 25 and had been in Australia between three months and six years. Educational and language backgrounds were very varied in that at least seven had not completed secondary education, only five had completed any form of tertiary/professional education and only two had previous work experience anywhere. The course was essentially work preparation and a preparation for further training. It was full-time but only purely classroom-based for the first three weeks. During these first three weeks, confidence and capacity building took place (which was adapted and sensitive to refugee experiences) and participants were each introduced to an Australian-born volunteer mentor whom they then met, in most cases, initially weekly, then fortnightly, over the following year.

In week four, each participant began a work placement for two days each week, continuing with the classroom-based course for the remaining three. The work placement was brokered either by the project co-ordinator with her links in the local area or by the mentors.³ The following weeks demonstrated the importance for the participants of the interplay between the classroom, the workplace and the mentors. During the classroom-based part of the course, considerable training was given to participants about employer expectations and local workplace culture. Such expectations included that employees should show initiative and enthusiasm on the job, characteristics interpreted as infringing on a manager’s prerogative in some other cultures. The ability to self-advocate and talk objectively about themselves and their skills, and present with self-confidence in job interview and workplace situations, was practised through role-play. Health and safety issues, timekeeping and the importance of networking were amongst other issues explored. The mentors – all experienced in the workplace - also played a significant role in interpreting what was going on at the workplace to the persons being mentored and helped them in a variety of ways. It should be emphasised that the mentors themselves received training from the project prior to taking on their role. They also received ongoing support organised by the project, by way of monthly mentors’ group meetings to share experiences and develop their skills.

Combining the teaching of job search skills with work experience was considered critical to putting lessons learnt immediately into practice. The continuation of classroom-based learning also provided a place to iron out difficulties which might have occurred during the previous days spent at work. The co-ordinator also mediated between participants and employers where necessary, for example, if misunderstandings arose (which were sometimes attributable to cultural differences). The combination of classes with work experience was also critical to the rapid improvement of language skills which in most cases was very marked. The classroom-based learning was focused on oral language acquisition. The project also supported (as necessary) certain participants when they had to prepare written reports during their work placements. Childcare was an important issue for several participants. All, except one, of those who needed it, were entitled to childcare due to their humanitarian visa status, which resolved the problem.

¹ Description drawn from information provided by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Carr (2004).
² An NGO with strong Anglican and community links.
³ More recently, the Good Company Website has been set up to put companies interested in assisting NGOs and NGOs, in touch with each other. This has proved a fruitful source of work experience opportunities for this project.
for them. For the one not entitled, it was expensive and only an anonymous donation to cover the costs meant that that mother could participate in the course. Settlement case work services were provided by the project, e.g., counselling or housing advice.

After this initial course, the project continued only by finding work placements and mentors for new participants. In mid-2005, funding was made available by the State Government of Victoria in Australia to run the intensive work preparation course again, twice yearly for three years.

**Outcomes.** The pilot course has been subject to an evaluation (See Kyle *et al.*, 2004). This compared the capital costs and outcomes three, six and 12 months after completion of the course with the then available data for the government funded (but privately run) part of the public employment service for the unemployed, then known as Job Network Intensive Assistance.4 This was the programme for those most disadvantaged in the job market. It could include specific provision for clients of non-English-speaking background most in need of help, for up to 12 months. The Given the Chance project, presumed by the evaluation to be catering for persons with similarly difficult employment search problems (as refugees, the target group of this project, are in a particularly disadvantageous situation in the job market) compared favourably in terms of cost and outcomes with the government scheme. At three months, 58% were in paid employment, education and training, at six months 68% were and at 12 months, 73%; the government scheme showed 54% of clients had such outcomes three months after receiving assistance for varying periods of time up to 12 months. Only 42% of the most disadvantaged in the Job Network Intensive Assistance scheme showed such positive outcomes.

The co-ordinator reports that in late 2004, over 18 months after completing the course, three of the five participants who were accepted as trainees with a multinational retail company are continuing with the same employer, another has been promoted by the organisation where she gained a job during the course, whilst 10 former participants were in a variety of vocational training in order to enter professional work.

**Behind the Label 5 (AUS 2)**

This was a government run, three year project (2002-2004, with the vocational training element extended to mid-2005) undertaken by the New South Wales State Government in Australia. Its purpose was to address the issue of exploitation of outworkers (employees who work at home rather than in a factory) in clothing manufacturing and foster an up-to-date competitive industry complying with the employment conditions required by the law.6 Although not directly targeted at women, the majority of such workers are migrant women of East Asian origin (Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Korean). They often have poor language skills, a lack of other training, few social contacts and low self-confidence. However, they have a strong need for paid work, which leads to their undertaking sewing work at home for small contractors usually of their own ethnic origin. The project developed various strategies to enforce compliance in the industry. But it linked this work with a pro-active training programme intended to provide skills recognition and to upskill workers in the clothing trade, or retrain them in other areas. The purpose was to provide better paid jobs and other work options as the clothing industry is declining.7

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4 This labour market programme has since changed.
5 Description drawn from information provided by the NSW Office of Industrial Relations (OIR).
6 In 2000, in New South Wales, there were c. 17 500 clothing factory workers but, possibly, up to 50 000 clothing outworkers. For some years prior to the project, there had been evidence of their employment at sub-lega standards.
7 An separate but similar initiative has occurred in Canberra, the national capital. It has been led by the trade union representing cleaners and the employer association for the local cleaning industry and aims to
One of the biggest obstacles to making a success of the training programme (as well as the enforcement programme) was difficulties in contacting the outworkers. Their lack of English, their isolation and their distrust of "officialdom", meant they were very hard to contact to inform about training opportunities, nor were they in a position to seek these out themselves. Once contacted, they needed support and encouragement to undertake training and to continue it, as well as help to resolve practical problems. Outreach work was therefore seen as essential to contact them and to provide the ongoing necessary support. This part of the project was undertaken by working through well-established ethnic-specific community groups and by recruiting several bilingual community workers from the communities to be served. These workers knew and understood their community as well as the outworking industry and were able to gain the trust of outworkers whom they actively sought out. This was critical to generating a response to the availability of the training courses. The community workers helped the outworkers to learn how to use existing community and government resources, including the transport system, and to find childcare, as well as discussing with them their choice of training. They also provided personal support on a wide range of issues to many individuals, and organised social events.

The community workers were complemented by a vocational training specialist who could identify appropriate courses and sources of funding, and facilitate the adaptation of courses to suit individual outworkers. It was particularly important for participation rates on the courses that they were located in the geographical areas where the outworkers lived, and at times and places which facilitated attendance. Also significant for retention rates were factors such as planning the courses in consultation with outworkers themselves, using materials relevant to their work experience and providing the community worker support mentioned above.

The outreach work generated a substantial demand for the training programme. English language courses specific to participants from a particular language group (e.g., Chinese) were run frequently as these were initially in great demand - language was perceived as a major barrier to participation in other courses. Over the early years of the project, skills recognition courses in the clothing trade were offered with the later addition of courses to upgrade skills including in the more advanced areas of patternmaking and computer assisted design. Training programmes to enable participants to change employment direction were also run. These aimed at matching participants’ preferences, pre-existing skills, funding availability and labour market demand. As a result, the skills included various childcare and eldercare courses, courses in information technology and in beautician skills as well as food preparation for eldercare facilities. Participants usually completed language training first, followed by skills training, due to the constraints imposed by their need to continue working, at least during the language courses. During the last 12 months of the project, retention rates on courses were nearly 100%.

Research into barriers to participation had been done early in the project and these were found to be principally language, childcare, transport and loss of working time and thus of income. The first was addressed by the tailored English language courses described above. Free or very reasonably priced childcare was costed into all these programmes by way of subsidies to buy sessional childcare from childcare providers, for participants to cover the hours they spent at a course. This support was persuade cleaning companies to comply with legal work conditions and upskill their workers. There are about 2 000 employees in the industry locally. Most are women of non-English-speaking background, largely first-generation migrants with less than a tertiary education. A company’s commitment to this initiative is signaled by signing a Code of Best Practice and offering accredited training in cleaning skills to provide a recognised certificate to employees. The implementation of the Code improves employees’ wages and working conditions. The acquisition of a certificate following the training, enhances employability. (Description drawn from information provided by the Assistant Secretary of the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union).
substantially used. Transport subsidies were available and also, for those on clothing skills courses, funding for a $5 per hour supplement to make up for lost wages.

**Outcomes.** Some 1 000 outworkers attended training courses over the four years of project. There were 31 vocational courses for clothing industry skills, 26 for new skills and 69 English language training courses. Some workers attended more than one course, for example a training course and then an advanced training course or a language and then a vocational training course. All resulted in some form of certification for the successful participant which is recognised on the labour market. Information about the employment trajectory of these individuals has not been provided. However, the public service department with overall responsibility for the project is confident that most of the participants would never have taken part in the other available language and training courses, for the sorts of reasons described above.

Job placements were only added to the training courses in 2004. It had become obvious that succeeding at job interview to get new jobs, outside the clothing industry, was not proving easy for those who had completed earlier courses, despite their enthusiasm and commitment (e.g., one course for 12 participants in family daycare resulted in 25% obtaining work at the end of the course, although it is likely more found work over the following months). The project then linked up with another government training programme which operated closely with employers. As a result, later that year, courses began to be run which combined training and work experience. These were followed up for some participants by job seeking skills workshops. The courses were in food technology for elder care facilities (two courses) and in childcare (two courses). Work placements were found by the course providers and were undertaken for two weeks as part of the eighteen-week training course. Of the 17 outworkers who participated in the first food technology course, six obtained jobs in the industry straightaway and all the others went on to job seeking skills workshops.

In the long-term, the way in which the project worked by initially encouraging outworkers to join social networks and activities before moving into training, was considered vital to obtaining and retaining their participation on training courses. The OIR considers it very likely that their employment opportunities in the long-term have been considerably enhanced by their gains in self-confidence, language skills and vocational training. Even when these have not led immediately to new types of employment, their enhanced abilities have often enabled them to improve their existing working conditions.

**Other voluntary organisations short one-off projects.** An unquantifiable number of these exist or have done so, as in many EU countries, targeting culturally and linguistically diverse women, not always exclusively first generation migrants. Two of these are mentioned briefly to provide an illustration. They each successfully assisted a significant proportion of the women attending the courses they ran. One in Sydney provided a three week training to eight (five of whom were migrant women) women whose linguistic skills were sufficient (not a very high level was required) to become dental assistants. Such was the demand for the skill, that six (four of the five migrants, the fifth had to return to her home country before taking up work) of the participants found jobs as dental assistants straightaway. Another in the remote area of Broken Hill had 84 migrant women coming to register their interest in participating in an “into work” programme which could provide only 20 places. They undertook a twelve-month job readiness programme, and at the end of the course three obtained full-time employment and five part-time work. Several are undertaking voluntary work only, as their husbands are not keen on their entering paid employment.
The **Working Women’s Centre** is an NGO, founded in 1976 in Toronto whose principal mission is to assist immigrant women find employment. It provides substantial job search assistance. In addition it runs a large variety of programmes providing settlement services, health and well-being groups and community development projects, as well as the government funded language programme for newcomers (LINC). Part of its remit is also to provide welfare rights advice *e.g.*, regarding housing problems, debt and government payments.

Its various employment programmes consist of personal career counselling to help clients decide what their skills are and in which employment areas their job search should be directed. They receive help in assessing what they need to do to get into work. If this is simply job search instruction, there are four-day workshops available. These provide participants with an understanding of how to do this in the Canadian job market and build up their confidence in their abilities to undertake it successfully. Intensive assistance is given with coaching for job interview, as well as assistance with preparing a professional CV and appropriate cover letters for different jobs. Help is given with preparing an individual’s action plan for employment.

Where skills need to be developed or language training undertaken, participants can be assisted to find appropriate courses, although basic computer skills are provided as part of some programmes run by the WWC. Where a woman is entitled to the LINC programme (for which the Centre also provides free childcare) she may do this part-time and participate part-time in the job search programme. Although the job search programmes do not provide childcare, the Centre has playrooms with activities for children. The Centre is child friendly and the workers are familiar with providing clients with advice with children present.

A significant part of the job preparation help provided by the Centre is the work placement programme. The WWC has good relationships with employers locally, both large and small, *e.g.*, local pizza franchises. These have been built up over 30 years, and so the Centre has no problem finding sufficient work placements for their clients. The placements are usually all paid at the minimum wage by the employer and last up to 12 months. A WWC employee works exclusively on finding these for clients. Considerable support during the placement is provided by the Centre. It is regularly in touch with the client on placement and every three months talks to the employer. Its role is to assist the client adapt to the workplace *e.g.*, help her understand her rights and legitimate employer expectations. Where necessary, the support worker will mediate problems between the client and her employer. The Centre considers this is important in facilitating client retention. The women participating in the work placement scheme have very varied language skills and educational backgrounds. About 60% would have no more than the leaving school certificate *i.e.*, 12 or 13 years of schooling.

There are a variety of conditions imposed upon the different job search and work placement programmes. For some, women must be on social assistance. For others, they must have been in Canada no more than either three or 10 years. There are a range of subsidies (federal, provincial and municipal) available to help with childcare during the job placements. The WWC workers have a detailed knowledge of these and are skilled in advising on their availability and helping clients access them. Public as well as home-based care options exist.

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8 Description drawn from information provided by the Working Women’s Centre.
Outcomes. The experience of the Centre is that about half of those found placements are either kept on as employees at it, or else they find a new job quickly once it is completed. The Centre considers that the work experience provided by the placement and their support during it, to both the person placed and the employer, contributes substantially to this outcome.

Womens Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor\(^9\) (CAN 2)

Womens Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor (WEST) is an NGO which assists women exclusively, both Canadian-born and migrant. Windsor is a small regional centre in Ontario about 300 km south of Toronto. Overall, approximately 80% of its clients are migrant women. About half have a tertiary qualification and the remainder, less. WEST provides LINC language programmes and accompanying free childcare. The LINC programme provides a twelve-week full-time training course for 55 women at a time. Once a certain language level is achieved, the women who wish to seek work, are assisted by WEST’s job search and employment preparation programmes. Work placements cannot be undertaken whilst undergoing language training.

The most popular individual service is career counselling leading to the preparation of an individual’s action plan for finding employment. It may or may not be linked with more intensive help. Such help may include more detailed employment counselling and/or pre-employment/ job readiness sessions. These comprise teaching the personal development skills of interview techniques and communication skills, building confidence and emphasising the importance of networking, as well as job search techniques. Advice about accreditation and further training is provided. Training is given so clients can achieve basic and intermediate computer skills, and appropriate certification is awarded when the different levels are successfully achieved. WEST also provides smart, high-quality new and “gently used” clothing which is appropriate for a job interview, which it considers is a real boost to women’s confidence when attending these.

Childcare at a means-tested fee is provided for participants for most of these courses through municipal funding.

A job placement service is funded by a variety of provincial and central government sources. The placements found are unpaid and last about six weeks. These can be part-time where appropriate, and often lead to jobs at the same workplace for clients. The project puts a lot of effort into finding placements and ongoing jobs which clients can apply for, using its local connections. They do their best to place women in the best possible jobs, enabling them to use their skills to the full. The project follows up to see a work placement is going well, provides advice and support if necessary and does the same for a short time after employment is obtained. Work placements are essential to get vital Canadian work experience; the project also finds that it greatly improves their language skills. However, participants have to make their own arrangements for childcare during the placements, often relying on family members to help out. As a result a proportion of women cannot take up potential placements if such arrangements prove impossible to make.

Outcomes. Between August 2004 and March 2005, 165 clients were helped to prepare an employment action plan, 84 had more intensive employment counselling and 41 had taken pre-employment sessions. Fifty-seven women have been found job placements and 61 have obtained jobs which they were in for at least three months. (There may be some double counting where women have received several services).

\(^9\) Description drawn from information provided by the Women’s Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor.
GERMANY

Project on Vocational Training for Refugee Women, Berlin.\(^\text{GER 1}\) (GER 1)

This voluntary sector project in Berlin, which works with women refugees and asylum seekers, has existed since 1990. The project has 2 teachers, a social worker, a child care worker, and an hourly paid legal adviser. There are no eligibility requirements for joining the course as to immigration status, unemployment registration, or a particular level of training or education (except for basic German language skills, see below). The educational level of participants is very varied, with some having had no schooling, whilst others are much better educated.

Initially, the project trained women in traditional areas such as home economics and childcare. In 1994, course content changed to respond to labour market opportunities, particularly in the medical and eldercare fields. Because the women often have low levels of education or qualifications, the aim is to map out a future for them once the course is finished. If they cannot get a job immediately at the end of the course, then the aim is to place them into education or training – usually in a medical field such as nurse training, laboratory technician/assistant training, fields such as medical assistance and pharmacy-related ones.

The project offers a ten-month course of 30 hours per week for about 20 women at a time. They must have a basic knowledge of German, that is achieved A2 level.\(^\text{11}\) The course is free of charge and childcare is also provided free of charge during class time. The course is flexible, and so are the teachers because of the different origins and levels of education of the participants. German language, medical-related studies, civic education (e.g., German law and the systems of social welfare, politics, school and vocational training and the labour market) and computer training are undertaken throughout the course. Some maths, English and German history are also taught.

Assistance is given during the project to help find and renovate an apartment, deal with accommodation contracts and the availability of housing benefit. This is included as part of the German language tuition, for example, practice in understanding abbreviations in advertisements for housing. Similarly, how to deal with social welfare agencies is also covered and the participants are given training in how to find their way around the city.

Extensive job search and job preparation training is provided including how to write a CV, and training in office procedures including using the telephone. Much use is made of role play, both in relation to dealing with German government authorities and, importantly, to practice interview skills. It is crucially important for job market success to build up such skills and with them the confidence of the participants. Other support is provided by the availability of a lawyer for a period each week to help the participants’ with a wide range of legal problems, including about employment rights, housing problems and residence status.

Work experience of three weeks full-time at the end of the course is found by the project, which has good links with hospital, childcare, eldercare and retail workplaces locally. It is usually offered in one of those settings. A meeting between each proposed workplace and the participant is held before the placement to discuss the expectations of both parties. The social worker attends such meetings. Although short, as the placement takes place at the end of the course when participants are ready for it, it is found to

\(^\text{10}\) Description drawn from information provided by the Project on Vocational Training for Refugee Women, Berlin.

\(^\text{11}\) A2 level is not considered to be job ready. The job ready level is B1. The grading of language proficiency starts with A1 followed by A2, then B1, then higher levels.
be successful for most participants. Feedback is sought from the employers too. During it contact is maintained by a teacher to assist the client or employer where needed.

**Outcomes.** Follow up surveys of all the participants’ satisfaction with the course is undertaken and adjustments to it made as appropriate. Of the 2001/02 and 2002/03 participants (44), 16 found jobs ranging from laboratory work, nursing and other care-related work to community translators, restaurant work and one into cleaning. Eleven went into training, one to become accredited as a doctor and others into care/medical related vocational training and other courses. Four had babies.

Employment outcomes immediately after any course are affected by the fact that not all the clients have legal permission to work. Sometimes a client returns some years later to say she has finally received this and is in employment. Because the participants have often been through imprisonment and torture, just being able to look forward and feel more confident (especially in language skills) is a big gain and one without which eventual training and/or employment would be impossible.

**Paritatisches Bildugswerck, Bremen**

12 (GER 2)

The Paritatisches Bildugswerck, Bremen (the PBW) is an NGO which is a further education institute focused on social and intercultural issues. It runs the Modular training course for professional orientation and practice for migrant women. It has run this project each year for 10 years. During the 2003/2004, programme, 31 women attended, with a wide variety of educational backgrounds. About one third would have completed tertiary education. Nearly all the rest will have completed 12/13 years of schooling and have a school leaving certificate. They also have differing German language skills. Some are new migrants (e.g., marriage migrants) but some have lived in Germany for a long time. Because of the modular nature of the course, it is possible to cater for the differing education and language levels.

The project runs for 12 months, 25 hours per week over five days, coinciding with school and kindergarten hours so childcare is not necessary. (This means that all participants must have at least kindergarten age children). It is free of charge. The availability of the course and its good reputation are well known in the local migrant communities and there is always a waiting list to be accepted on to it. There is a minimum German language requirement (A1, see footnote 11) but this is not a requirement to have the degree of language efficiency which is considered as job ready. A woman must be recommended by the government job search agency, that is be registered as seeking work but not necessarily in receipt of a government payment. Those in receipt of government payments continue to receive these throughout the course including the work placements. During the first few weeks, concentrated work is done on understanding each woman’s education and skills, and her ideas for her future employment. German lessons at different levels are commenced and computer skills and general job readiness preparation are studied. This last comprises generic work skills, for example, how to use the telephone and record information received, how to search out information, expectations in the German workplace such as taking the initiative and displaying critical and creative skills. Interview training is also included. Women work on different subjects in groups of different sizes, learning to adapt and form relationships within each. The strong relationships they develop with their teachers enables individuals to achieve considerable personal development.

The project includes two separate work experience placements. The first takes place for four weeks, approximately two months after the course has begun. During the work experience period, the participants meet once, for a social evening together. They are usually extremely nervous before starting but feel a great sense of achievement after finishing it. There is also a noticeable improvement in German language ability. This first period serves to focus the participants’ ideas about what they wish to do in the

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12 Description drawn from information provided by the Paritatisches Bildugswerck, Bremen.
workplace. Many, being mothers, have focused on working in childcare but after doing practical experience in childcare work, many revise their aims. During the next few months, the participants continue acquiring the skills mentioned above. They also spend time researching where they would like to spend the next work placement of 12 weeks, and setting this up. Both work placements are found by the women themselves. They are assisted and advised by the project but it is considered extremely important that they find their placements independently. In doing this, participants assist each other. Local employers are also of happy to provide the (unpaid) work placements. Their awareness of diversity management is enhanced by another project run by PBW on this subject, for local private and public organisations. During the second work placement, one day per week is spent in the classroom. This is found to be important to provide project and peer support to the participants during this workforce experience.

Outcomes. Approximately 35-40% of participants obtain jobs arising from their work placements. These include jobs in the retail, hospitality and health sectors. About a third are able to start vocational training in a range of skills including as medical or childcare assistants. The rest find that their educational level is not recognised or sufficient to enter vocational training. As a result they take up adult education to obtain the necessary qualifications before beginning further training. Only one or two do not continue with employment or further education, often for family reasons to do with childcare. The relatively high educational levels contribute to these outcomes. The intensity of the course and the level of commitment required of participants (including being able to handle direct challenges to their behaviour, e.g., poor timekeeping, unwillingness to speak out in groups) is a factor in its success. Participants’ self-confidence increases considerably during the course. In addition, its two separate work experience components, enabling participants to change direction in terms of the type of employment chosen, is also considered to be important. Most women achieve good language skills by the time they have completed the course.

Women’s Computer Centre Berlin (GER 3)\[13\]

The Women’s Computer Centre Berlin (FrauenComputerZentrumBerlin) has existed since 1984. It runs a variety of information technology training schemes including shorter (six months) courses for 20 foreign-born women with different levels of school or professional education, to provide them with information and computer technology (ICT) skills. They have a strong emphasis on enabling women to find strategies for teaching themselves (self-organised learning), particularly through ICT. This extends to teaching German through a computer programme, though with some classroom-based learning as well. Participants undertake work placements of at least two months. The focus is on assisting them find their own internships rather than doing this for them, though the project actively supports their efforts in doing this. The project also discusses how to implement diversity management with some of the personnel departments of receiving employers. This, through their experience, facilitates the success of work placements. Of the course which lasted from October 2004-March 2005, outcomes were 15 participants into paid work or training. The project noted that women with large families (of which there were several on the course) may have particular difficulty combining work force participation with their domestic responsibilities, even in Berlin where school hours have been extended into the afternoon and childcare provision is amongst the best in Germany. The Centre does not provide childcare but advises participants on how to find appropriate childcare. It also provides advice to companies on the issue of work/life balance for employees and how to promote this.

Bremerhaven - Retail Customer Orientation Project (GER 4)\[14\]

\[13\] Description drawn from information provided by the Women’s Computer Centre in Berlin

\[14\] Description drawn from information provided by the Bremerhaven - Retail Customer Orientation Project.
The *Bremerhaven - Retail Customer Orientation Project* was run by a non-government educational institute. Twenty-five foreign-born women took part in it, most of whom were more or less fluent in German.

The training provided to 15 of the participants was to enable them to obtain the appropriate vocational training to work in the retail industry. Of these 15, 13 were born in Russia and one each in Ukraine and Turkey. Three of those from Russia had tertiary education. The course was full-time at 38 ½ hours a week. Three days a week were spent at a work experience placement, found by the institute as it has good labour market contacts. Two days a week were spent at the institution for the classroom-based training. The group was a cohesive one which worked well. Confidence building was an important part of curriculum, especially at the beginning of the course, as some participants had found the migration experience particularly difficult. The training covered the skills needed for the retail industry and some basic computer training, job search and interview skills and a short 50 hour language training module which was work focused. The course lasted 16 months.

The other 10 participants already had a retail vocational qualification. They, with the 15 in full-time training, received 120 hours training to obtain a customer care qualification (classes were in the evening or at weekends). The vocational training results in a full vocational qualification and the customer care aspect of the course in a special certificate.

Help with finding childcare provision was available through the project. However, as the participants tended to live in big family units, none of them needed childcare as their families helped out. Had childcare been necessary, funding would have been available from the local Labour office and/or from the European Social Fund. A very basic sum of money for expenses was available to participants from the same sources but this was means-tested on family income.

**Outcomes.** The institute helped the women find subsequent paid employment. Of the group of 15, 80% found a job immediately after the end of the course with 75% still working 6 months later. Good grades were achieved by the participants in the vocational training part of the course.

**NETHERLANDS**

**Different** (NL 1)

The *Different* project provides a return to work programme specifically targeting low-educated migrant women who are on disability insurance. The participants had lost their jobs because of disability occurring through manual work such as cleaning. Drawing initially on the experience of the reintegration companies (private reintegration agencies which have contracts with the UWV (the Dutch social security agency) to reinsert persons on unemployment or disability benefits into employment) a pilot project with 60 participants (20 in three different municipalities) was run using methodology prepared by the project’s director. Using the information gained from this pilot to refine the methodology design, a second pilot was run, also of 60 participants. Now (June 2005) a third pilot, further refined from the experience of the second pilot and with a similar number of women, is underway.

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15 Dutch Council of Refugees (2005) contains numerous other examples from the Netherlands of good practices in social and work integration from the network of the Dutch Council of Refugees.

16 Description drawn from information provided by the Project Director.
Each participant (who continues receiving disability insurance payments) is provided with up to 12 months education and training with the aim of reintegrating her into work at a somewhat higher level than her previous job. For three or six months depending upon her level of language ability, she learns Dutch in a work-focused way for two days a week. This education may also include and be followed by some training in, for example, telephone work and some computer training, leading to a professional certification, albeit at a low level. During the course, each participant attends a voluntary and unpaid work placement. The area in which a participant does her work placement is found after discussion with her and is usually in workplaces such as in hospitals, childcare, eldercare – in a range of low-skilled work, such as kitchen work, but not cleaning. It is seen as critical to continued participation that the participant’s preferences are discussed and catered for. Often, for example, kitchen work is well regarded, possibly because it is less isolated work than cleaning. An important aspect of work placements undertaken at the same time as training is that it provides a forum both for a gradual return to work and daily practice of Dutch. Problems with work can also be discussed the following week at the project centre during the training days. The course, however long it lasts, may be full-time or part-time in relation both to the training and work placement aspects. This depends on the strengths and capacities of each individual.

Childcare is needed by a number of project participants. This is facilitated by the UWV. The costs of childcare are based on a participant’s income, which will mean for most women, that it is almost free of charge.

It has been crucial to the project that each woman participating has had the same case manager throughout, to build up trust and to ensure that the person representing the project to her fully understands her situation. When a woman is accepted into the project, there is a very comprehensive intake procedure. Part of the intake procedure is a kick off meeting (maximum 6 women) where the women are invited to bring their husbands/partners. During this kick off meeting (viewed by the women as the official start of their return to work process), the women and their husbands/partners are informed about the whole project by their case manager. Time is included for discussions and questions. It has been found that the husbands have been very supportive of their wives’ participation in the project and subsequent work experience and other work/training outcomes. This is attributed to their inclusion in the project from the outset. The thorough intake procedure has also included employing an official translator rather than using a family member. This has meant that participants, when interviewed (alone, as the husbands have come to the kick off meeting) have been able to be far more honest in their responses.

Another highly significant aspect of the project has been that every four to six weeks the women meet together in groups of five or six, as a form of peer support. They themselves decide what to discuss, learn processes for reaching these decisions, and decide on how they want to use the group. This usually involves both discussing and supporting each other in their work placements, as well as how to use the group to inform themselves better, e.g., about how to fill in official forms, how to learn about various workplaces by organising to visit police stations, employment offices etc. This has been very positive form of mutual support, about which the participants have been very enthusiastic.

**Outcomes.** At the beginning of the project, two years ago, a control group was established of 20 women also on disability insurance, with similar profiles to those who were to participate in the programme. It was not an entirely random control group as the first 20 appropriate insurance recipients were all placed in one of the pilot programmes and then the next 20 were assigned into the control group. The results, nevertheless, are telling. None of the control group (who received help from various other reintegration companies using their usual procedures) have obtained work after two years. In contrast, 27% of the 20 women used as the experimental group in the same area, in the first pilot, obtained employment within the same two years. Half of the experimental group participants are still undertaking training, either in mainstream education or in the project in special training, and it is projected that half of these should obtain work within the next year.
The Stichting (Foundation) AKROS – Vrouwen Atelier Mozaiek is an NGO in Amsterdam which is contracted by the government to assist migrant women with job search. They all have to be in receipt of welfare payments and be required to undertake the programme, to be eligible to participate in the one run by the Stichting (Foundation). A recent seven-month course provided training for 30 women of varied educational levels. They undertook 10 hours per week in a voluntary work placement and spent the rest of the week training at the centre in Dutch as a second language and in office skills including the use of a computer. The centre has on-site childcare and is able to place women in the work areas in which they express an interest. Of the 30 participants in the most recent course, 12 found employment, three by establishing their own enterprise, two went into training and 16 continued on in voluntary work experience.

Other Dutch projects

The Pavem Commission which is a high-level national commission established to assist migrant women integrate into Dutch society, socially and economically, has made agreements with 29 of the largest local municipalities. They have committed themselves to implementing programmes to progress this aim. The Commission is winding up in July 2005 after two years in existence. Certain municipalities are concentrating on reaching the migrant women most remote from mainstream Dutch society – those with few Dutch language skills, and almost no formal schooling or work experience. An emphasis has been placed on reaching out to them, rather than expecting them to come and seek out what help might be available to them to learn Dutch and work skills. Outcomes are not clear yet from many of these projects, but often they aim at moving the women involved some way towards work readiness, rather than directly into work.

One municipality (Nijmegen NL 3) commented on the strong positive response from women who were visited by outreach workers in their own homes and offered Dutch classes. Another (Breda NL 4) plans to run language classes from premises near the homes of the women most in need of these. The municipality will also link participants with Dutch speakers in their own area to practice language skills and to start to form Dutch social networks. It is also involving local migrant women in policymaking. One of the aims in doing this is to develop more appropriate programmes to enhance the labour market participation of women from different cultural backgrounds, as well as to aid their social participation. It is also intended to increase the participation of migrant women in policymaking. Nijmegen is running lengthy training and work readiness courses for long-term migrant women residents even where they do not receive social payments, which would normally exclude them from an entitlement to such help. Another municipality (Hengelo NL 5) is also focusing on facilitating the social participation of migrant women who are not in the paid workforce and have low education levels and Dutch language skills (185 are enrolled so far). The Dutch language training they provide is always done in conjunction with another activity ranging from sewing to sport. They too matched women with Dutch native speakers; they matched 40, that is to say, nearly all the migrant women asking for such a social contact, and had a good response from the Dutch population when seeking volunteers to assist in this. This project also involved the husbands in discussing what the project was doing which made a big difference to their attitude to their wives’ participation. Childcare is available at a very low fee for the duration of the activities.

The private reintegration agencies which have contracts with the UWV (the Dutch social security agency) to reinsert persons on unemployment or disability benefits into employment, also work with

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17 Description drawn from information provided by the Stichting (Foundation) AKROS – Vrouwen Atelier Mozaiek.

18 Descriptions drawn from information provided by the organisations concerned and the NGO E-quality, see at: [http://www.e-quality.nl/e-quality/home.asp?paginaam=home&metnaam=e-quality](http://www.e-quality.nl/e-quality/home.asp?paginaam=home&metnaam=e-quality)
migrant women in difficult economic circumstances, who have low educational qualifications, little work experience and who often lack fluency in Dutch. One (Co-Factor NL 6) described that a worker from the agency visits the women referred to the company at home. It was decided to do this as it removes the first hurdle to participating in what Co-Factor has to offer, in that they do not have to come out of their home and find their way to the office. It ensures they are seen and also that they are able to explain what their problems are. In addition, the worker can also see what the particular woman has to deal with in her social environment. It builds confidence and trust in the agency because the client is acting as the host and the worker as the guest. Another (Centrum BOA NL 7) emphasised the need to talk to each client about her hopes and the opportunities available to her, as well as what is realistically possible. The chance to practice her skills and Dutch in work settings are an important part of the training courses, and engender a sense of empowerment for the participant. This assists her in maintaining her momentum. Staying on these 1-2 year courses is very demanding of women who may never have been much out of the home before. Outcome rates for placing clients in ongoing employment are around 30-35%.

SWEDEN

Avanti (SW 1)

Avanti is one of the several women-focused activities offered through Huddinge Municipality’s Introduction Programme (IP). It was run as a pilot project initially, with special funds from the Swedish Integration Agency. It is focused exclusively on migrant women. It ran for the first time between January 2002 and June 2003. It catered for 24 women, of whom 17 completed the course. The women targeted for the project were those who had never had paid work in their country of origin and most had not expected to enter the workforce. The participants’ education levels were generally between 5-9 years of schooling, (2 had 12 years) and their age range varied from 25 years upwards, although most were women over 45. They all had poor Swedish language skills. Any non-EU migrant (not asylum seekers) who had received her permanent visa within the previous three and a half years was eligible to participate, provided she was in receipt of the government, means-tested financial assistance for IP participation. This meant that the income of the family had to be below a certain level. Childcare was not a problem for participants: this is available for all legal Swedish residents whose child is over 12 months of age. It is cheap for lower income levels.

Classroom based learning: The first group in this pilot project participated for approximately 52 weeks. They spent 20 hours per week on “classroom” learning with extra activities sometimes programmed in as well. In addition, they continued to attend the mainstream Swedish for immigrants (SFI) classes, for 15 hours per week. The programme at this stage involved work-related Swedish language tuition with additional input on work-related activities, such as how to prepare CVs and present oneself at interviews. A wide spectrum of information regarding life in Sweden was also included in the course,

19 Description drawn from information provided by the Programme Manager for Newly-Arrived Refugees and Immigrants of Huddinge Municipality.

20 These include 15-30 hours per week language training courses, delivered by Swedish municipalities with largely central government funding. Students complete the basic “Swedish for immigrants (SFI)” course within 6-24 months. Those attending can receive a means-tested financial allowance if attendance is part of the IP for migrants and if the participant is not self-sufficient. Self-supporting migrants (that is someone who is not eligible for the means-tested financial allowance) may also attend SFI classes free of charge. In Huddinge, work experience is included in the IP, although in some municipalities, it is not.

21 This is the same requirement for eligibility to participate in an IP.

22 The exclusion from Avanti of participants where no-one in the household receives the IP financial allowance, is under discussion.
including regarding housing, schooling and taxes which is similar to the mainstream IP as it is today. The more unique part of the programme content focused on personal development and motivation to assist participants’ in clarifying their expectations of their integration process and of their life in Sweden. As in the regular IP, individual plans were developed for participants to follow.

As part of this initial period, one week’s internship was arranged in the sort of work where previous experience and higher education levels are not necessary. In Huddinge, this included eldercare, working in the retail trade and restaurant work. After this week, the participants returned to the classroom situation and continued with more intensive Swedish language classes, oriented to the preferred job within one of these three fields. Much more learning about what to expect at the workplace occurred, including employee rights and responsibilities. Employers attended sessions to describe their expectations. All these elements were crucial in contributing to making the second period of internship work well for the participants.

**Internship:** after the 20 weeks’ classroom-based course, the half of the participants with better language skills were placed in an unpaid six months internship (though all continued to receive government financial assistance for IP participants). The other half of the participants became interns after 12 months in the classroom. Both groups had three hours per week of ongoing work-oriented Swedish language training during the work placements and were thus active for 40 hours per week. A project manager – who remained the same throughout – was assigned to support each participant during the classroom-based course and the work placement (which she/he found for the participant). This manager had contact with the employer and the intern, as and when required. For each intern, a personal mentor at the workplace was appointed. This mentor was trained by the project and received a small financial bonus for the role. In most cases, the mentor met the intern prior to the placement. Most of participants found the assistance of mentors helpful. The regular IP programme’s two internship managers have generally strong contacts with local businesses and other employers, including in the public service. This is an important factor in finding and matching internships to participants, though this is not always easy to do. Finding employers willing to provide internships can at times involve discussions with them as to what kind of local community is desirable, and challenging negative perceptions of migrants.

**Outcomes.** Of the 17 participants who completed the course, 9 obtained paid employment immediately after the internship ended. Some were kept on by the firms where they had been interns (the project managers made efforts to find internships where this could be a possibility – e.g., work in retail chains with multiple outlets all over Sweden). All the other participants wanted to continue working, that is to say, the original expectations of not being in paid employment had changed due to their experience on the programme. Their difficulties in finding work related either to language problems and the need for further work experience, or to difficulties in finding work in their chosen field. Three of those who did not find jobs at the end of the course, looked for work independently. Of the remainder, half were considered to need more language tuition. They therefore continued in the IP, spending half the week in Swedish classes and half continuing as interns. Shortly after this process began, two more obtained jobs.

A subsequent, rather more intensive, twelve-week programme was run for 13 women, full-time (40 hours per week and no parallel SFI classes). This was not as successful in terms of employment outcomes. Overall it was felt that the longer fifty-two week course is necessary if the classes and internships are to be productive. The longer period is needed to acquire the necessary language and work-related skills and to make the personal changes necessary to enable participants feel confident that they have a future in the workplace. Organisationally, it was considered that internships must follow on straight from the “classroom” part of the programme, without a break between the two.

**External evaluation.** This was conducted through interviews with participants and programme providers. It confirmed that the goals of the project were met. That is to say, work language skills were
significantly increased for all participants, as was knowledge of Swedish working life. Finally, it was clear to the programme providers that participants underwent an important attitudinal change. They attributed this to the provision of professionally taught motivational and personal development classes, where discussion and reflection on participants’ past lives and future plans were encouraged. They considered these classes to be the most important single element of the programme, and that simply offering work-related Swedish classes and internships is not sufficient to meet the needs of the women participating in Avanti.

*Wordpower*[^23] (SW 2)

The *Wordpower* project which ran from May 2002 to December 2004, involved migrant women in the town of Helsingborg who were mostly aged between 25-35 with poor Swedish language skills and (usually) low education levels (between 4-12 years schooling). Many had been in Sweden a long time (up to 12 years) and were very isolated. Its purpose was to improve their chances of obtaining employment by combining work experience and work-focused language training. Ninety-two women participated in the project, but there was a high dropout rate (about 15%) due to pregnancy. They were all contacted through the schools or preschools attended by their children and all expressed an interest in learning Swedish and in entering work. During the first year, participants began a Swedish language course for four days per week. Study visits to the post office, banks, museums etc., were arranged for them as well as introducing them to activities which they could undertake with their children, for example going to the ice rink. On the fifth day, the project arranged for them to spend one day per week in their children’s school, assisting there in various ways and practising their language skills. Many of the women were concerned they were too old to train to work and such concerns had to be regularly addressed. Building participants’ confidence in their abilities to meet the challenges of work was an important initial part of the course.

During the second year, they began to map out their work aims and obtained job search training. Work-related skills were more intensively taught related to their work placements (see below), e.g., some office skills such as basic computer training and also employer expectations (time-keeping, the need to speak out at work and understand that this is seen as appropriate). This also ensured that their language acquisition was work-focused. Also during this year, the monthly time spent on language practice increased to half of the course time. Those participants interested in working went for their language practice not to a school, but obtained (with the help of the project) work experience in workplaces. These were in work areas in which they were interested, e.g. retail work, hairdressing, eldercare and childcare. Two weeks per month were spent there and two weeks at the project.

Apart from teachers on the project, there was a mentor/supervisor (a paid employee). She mapped the women’s interests and then found employers willing to provide placements, introduced the women and established the arrangement. She then regularly visited a group of trainees. Each trainee kept a daily diary of what she had done and learnt. The mentor read this when she visited and gave her feedback on it. She also kept in touch with employers about any concerns they might have about how the placement was progressing. She observed trainees as they worked, so as to develop work relevant language exercises for the teachers to use. Over time, the project’s knowledge of the labour market and local employers increased significantly.

Social contacts with Swedish women were arranged (and these still continue) through their association Bilahodod. Interest in this has developed gradually with the help of local women’s voluntary organisations.

[^23]: Description drawn from information provided by the former Project Leader of the Equal *Wordpower* project.
Outcomes. Of the original participants, 24 are still in training as the group of 92 was taken in during two successive years, the second one being smaller than the first. Of the 68 who completed the first two years training, some 9 (13%) are now working (June 2005), but all in low-skilled jobs including cleaning and packing. Seven are in household help training or considering establishing a business to provide these services to elderly migrants. Some others have held temporary jobs and some 15% overall dropped out due to pregnancy. Language skills improved substantially in one particular group of 26 participants (some of whom had more than 13 years education and some, prior knowledge of Swedish). Of these, 11 (42%) obtained the employment office’s minimum requirement of language competency for work after 14 months and another three were nearly at this level.

Family commitments weighed heavily on the participants. As mentioned above, a number became pregnant during the project. Others had large families and a 30 hour per week programme placed heavy demands on them. In addition, although the project leaders had discussed the course with partners and other family members prior its start, the commitment of a significant number of them to the women’s participation appeared low, and this created some retention problems. Attempts to tackle this issue were not very successful.

A qualitative evaluation by means of interviews with participants and other stakeholders was prepared after its first year. Following this, improvements were made to the vocational-based language training provided and the office-based skills training. Teachers and participants discussed together their goals to clarify these and ensure the women felt fully involved in the direction of the course. The project only lasted 30 months in total. Those running it felt that they did not have enough time to put into practice much of what was learnt from their early experiences, which could have improved the course. Nevertheless, much positive personal change occurred for many participants in terms of increased self-confidence and language skills, e.g., the ability to discuss their children’s progress at schools directly with teachers without the need for partners or others to translate for them.

UNITED KINGDOM

Account 3 Women’s Consultancy (UK 1)

Account 3 Women’s Consultancy (Account 3) is an NGO founded in 1991 and has 20 staff. It is exclusively a women’s service but not specifically for migrants or ethnic minorities. Its location, however, in the East End of London, means that the majority of its users have an ethnic minority background and many are first-generation migrants. Over the past year, approximately 80% of the Centre’s clients were from an ethnic minority is. There is no monitoring whether a client is foreign-born, but it is likely that a substantial proportion of the clients are first generation migrants. Most clients would have less than a complete secondary school education.

The Centre provides a one-stop shop for the women in its locality on many matters of social and economic concern. It is situated on good transport routes and is well-known. Among the functions it is funded to provide is a range of welfare advice relating to housing, financial social assistance payments from the government, debt problems, health and education issues and family matters. On the same site it provides advice about its employment and training services; clients can be referred across the office to access these (and the programmes are also run in the same building), after having initially used the service for a social welfare problem. In fact, a considerable number of employment and training clients contact the

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24 See summary English version, downloaded on 8/07/05, at: http://www.in2work.org/pdfs/Evaluation%20of%20Equal%20Ordraft.pdf

25 Description drawn from information provided by Account 3 and from its website, downloaded on 8/07/05, at: http://www.account3.org.uk/html/aboutus.php
service initially for welfare advice. (Women in the employment programmes may also be referred for welfare advice where this is necessary, thus providing help with practical problems which might stand in the way of participation in job search and training).

The employment and training services have been delivered over the past few years through a variety of funding programmes and are all free. Job search assistance is provided through groups which provide help with application forms and CVs, role play interviews, etc. and also by way of one-to-one career advice from a qualified careers adviser. Confidence building is emphasised throughout all the assistance given to clients.

The Centre also provides a range of in-house training courses. These include basic skills and English as a second language (ESOL). These programmes are not provided as stand alone ones but are linked to the subsequent jobs/further training which participants intend to do. For example, part-time ESOL courses can be combined with part-time training courses. Training programmes provided are up to NVQ level 2 in information technology, childcare and, depending upon demand, driving instructors’ training. Courses such as training in working with those with special needs, first aid work, and food hygiene courses are also offered.

Work experience is regularly arranged by the centre either as part of its training courses, or is facilitated by for example, providing it through work placements at Account 3 itself and by providing a room one day a month to Volunteer Action, which arranges work placements. It is acknowledged as essential to subsequent success in seeking paid employment. The Centre also advertises itself to employers as having a pool of skilled, experienced workers seeking employment in a range of activities. It manages to place many of the graduates from its training courses, in jobs. This is assisted by its excellent contacts with local public and private employers.

Childcare is available free on site for all the courses provided. It is also available for clients on work placements. Once a client obtains paid work, Account 3 assists in identifying alternative childcare provision.

Career progression is encouraged by sending former clients information about opportunities to take up professional development courses and higher level qualifications at local colleges, and by inviting them back for events at which they can get such information.

Outcomes. Identifying factors for the success of the Centre, the independent evaluation commissioned in early 2003 specifically noted the one-stop shop service provision, the excellent creche, the availability of bilingual staff which reduces the stress of initial contact with the Centre, the women-only environment which many women and their male relatives feel more comfortable with, and the proactive outreach work. The evaluation comments that the Centre is “highly successful in attracting women from black and minority ethnic groups, and particularly those from Bangladeshi communities, a group identified by all major strategic and funding bodies in London as being at high risk of exclusion and underrepresented in the take-up of learning and training”. It also notes the continual readiness of the staff to be as flexible as possible to client needs on a day-to-day basis, and also to adapt their programmes to the emerging and changing needs of the community it serves.

26 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 qualifications are often sufficient to enable their holders to obtain work in the local job market.


28 Nearly 60% of clients for the 2004/2005 year were of Bangladeshi origin.
The project measures its outcomes by way of keeping records of which and how many services are accessed (e.g., number of job search training sessions delivered) and success rates in training courses and employment outcomes. The independent evaluation referred to above was very positive. It notes that, for example, between June 2001 and March 2003, 140 women participated in a number of in-house training courses with 62, (44%) moving into employment (half into working with children, about a fifth into administration and just under one-sixth into community development). The Centre’s report to the Learning Skills Council for the period October 2002 to June 2004 refers to 264 trainees enrolling in computer/administration and childminder/childcare related courses. Qualifications were achieved by 83.5%. In another project which involved employment search advice sessions from October 2003 to March 2004, 251 advice sessions were delivered. Thirty-five women gained employment which was 15 less than the target the Centre had set itself. A major reason for this was that the clients seeking help to get into work were lower skilled than anticipated, but 58 of these were guided into training opportunities which will enhance their employability. During the past 12 months, 150 women have completed childcare-related courses and 88 have been placed in employment. Overall between May 2004- May 2005, over 1200 women have used Account 3’s services and of these 596 have been assisted with job search and/or training (some of both these figures will be double counts).

The Centre sends out feedback questionnaires every six months. The response rate of 20% is, unsurprisingly, low but is mostly positive. If a client drops out of a course or does not return after a first appointment, they are all followed up and the reasons given discussed at staff meetings, which is a useful tool for keeping the quality of services provided under review.

**Ethnic Minority Outreach Project** 29 (UK 2)

The Ethnic Minority Outreach Project is an (ongoing) initiative by the Department of Work and Pensions and is intended to assist jobless persons from ethnic minority groups in finding employment and training. Initially, 52 projects (run by voluntary sector and private providers, i.e., not delivered by Jobcentre Plus, the public employment service) were established in five urban areas with high ethnic minority populations. An independent evaluation, undertaken by the Policy Studies Institute (Barnes et al., 2005) covering the first two years of the project, sampled 20 projects to provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of outcomes for the nearly 4,000 participants of whom 58% were Asian or Asian British and 24% Black or Black British. For the half of the participants for whom qualifications data was recorded, approximately half had no qualifications whilst for the other half there was a wide range up to NVQ level 4 or 5 30 (9% of those with data recorded). As part of the qualitative analysis, the study had a longitudinal aspect and project workers and some participants were interviewed in-depth up to three times. Interviews with other stakeholders were also undertaken.

The nature of the outreach was assessed as extensive and innovative, including arranging activities such as beauty courses to attract participants before introducing the idea of job search, using the media (including radio and SMS text messaging) and providing advice sessions at a range of organisations. Referring clients to other organisations which would provide appropriate training and language courses was an important aspect of outreach work. Clients were also helped to find work placements, childcare, and funding for courses, as well as given general support in job search. Many clients were visited in their homes or met at places nominated by them. Some projects worked with employers to facilitate the employment of ethnic minority jobseekers. One of the ways in which this was undertaken, was to offer training in diversity human resource management to employers so as to assist them in adopting strategies to recruit and retain ethnic minority jobseekers. Of the employers approached, most were small businesses.

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29 Description drawn from information taken from Barnes et al., (2005).

30 NVQ level 5 is equivalent to the end of secondary level education (UK A levels). (Some participants had degree level qualifications).
Although data on employment take up was missing for half of these, where recorded, 26% had taken on a client from the project.

The evaluation pinpoints a number of factors which contributed to successful projects. Recruiting bilingual workers who understood the situation of their clients, could speak their language, were sensitive to their culture and “whose personal commitment often far exceeded their contractual obligations” (Barnes et al., 2005, p.174) was crucial. Many providers used their own employer networks enabling them to meet specific employee needs such as those with serious language problems, those requiring a women-only workplace, or family friendly hours. Considerable personal support was provided to clients, including in some instances once they had become employed. The evaluation refers to the need to acknowledge employment retention and employment advancement issues when seeking to attach hard-to-reach groups to the labour market. It refers to a need to move them through what it terms the “grey area” of temporary, short-term and low quality jobs. It also pointed out the need for additional funding to assist the most disadvantaged jobseekers. For example transport costs, childcare help and sometimes the payment of a financial incentive for attending training.

Outcomes. From the point of view of the Department, outcomes were measured 13 weeks after a client was first in contact with a project. On this measure, just over 25% of the women clients (who made up just over 50% of project participants overall) found work and at least 8% began training. Inevitably, those finding employment were the more job ready e.g., those with recent work experience and/or marketable skills. Women who had been out of the labour market for some years engaged in full-time childcare, some of whom also needed English language training, were harder to place so quickly. The evaluation emphasises, however, that the projects were very successful in reaching many of those who were unaware of the opportunities for work and training, particularly for example, Indian and Pakistani women. It indicates that a proportion of clients were a considerable distance from the labour market and that it was not possible to enable them to access work within 13 weeks. Various providers emphasised that 10-12 months or even longer, was more realistic for achieving an employment outcome for many clients and produced records to indicate subsequent success with placing clients, even though these did not appear in the statistics mentioned above. In addition, outreach workers noted that clients showed marked improvements in self-confidence and other “soft” skills. These changes were likely to increase the chances of participating in training and employment successfully in the future.

Workplace Coordinators Programme (WCP)31 (UK 3)

The Cross River Partnership is a public, private and voluntary sector partnership established to promote physical and economic links between the poorer areas just to the south side of the Thames in London and the economically dynamic areas of central London. In 1999, it created the Workplace Coordinators Programme32 (WCP) to use this partnership to benefit the unemployed by finding jobs in the

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32 Skillsmatch also works closely with employers to help its clients find work. It is a job brokerage team established by a London municipality, with significant funding from central government, for the area of Tower Hamlets. This is an area of high unemployment, a high concentration of ethnic minorities and a high number of job vacancies in the finance, construction, hospitality, health, teaching (including teaching assistants), retail and administrative sectors. Skillsmatch not only provides support and training to jobseekers but offers local employers a free recruitment agency service. This aspect of their work involves a range of services one of which involves giving a variety of free customised pre-employment training to candidates both before and after they have been accepted for employment This is often in line with a particular employer’s requirements and wherever possible leads to an industry recognised certificate, e.g.,
growth industries of construction, finance, arts, hospitality/tourism and health, and to assist employers in those industries which have problems recruiting and retaining employees with the appropriate skills.

The WCP has focused on responding to the skills requirements of growing industries in central and south London. It was identified that despite high local unemployment, workplaces had difficulties recruiting staff. Some of the problems identified were that jobseekers had insufficient basic language and maths skills, lacked work experience, lacked “soft skills” such as interview skills and personal presentation, and faced employer discrimination. As a result, the WCP focuses on skilling up employees to meet local employer requirements. It does this by, for example, providing skills training (before job interview) in basic qualifications in first aid, food hygiene and health and safety certificates for a range of industries. “Soft skills” such as curriculum vitae (resume) preparation, interview skills and what to wear at interviews, are also covered. Language problems have not been a big issue but a programme of basic skills was implemented in 1999, focusing particularly on the needs of the hospitality industry. This course combines English as a second language and IT training, on a part-time basis. For some of the course the employer allows the employee to take paid time off work, and the rest is undertaken in the employee’s free time.

A key part of the work of the WCP is aftercare for employees. Intensive support is offered to enable the employee to remain in the job by giving them support and advice during the initial crucial period, e.g., on “soft skills”. Help is given acclimatising them to the work culture of the particular industry e.g., the health sector. Both the employee and the employer may be in touch with the WCP to resolve initial difficulties at work and employers gain a better personnel competence and understanding through working with the WCP. Clients often return to the WCP for career development advice which WCP provides by e.g., by advising him/her how to obtain qualifications to help career advancement.

WCP co-ordinators are skilled at helping employers access public training initiatives. They have worked in the growth industries where employees are in demand, so they can give a tailored advice to both jobseekers and employers. Physically, they are often located in the personnel departments of big employers participating in the scheme, or else they are in agencies that service several employers in one particular industry. This enables small employers to have access to co-ordinators who are specialised in their own field. The co-ordinators’ locations are also chosen so as to be accessible to jobseekers. Each co-ordinator has their own discretionary training budget and is the person who provides mentoring and career advancement advice after employment has been secured.

Childcare issues are expressly addressed. A survey of childcare needs was carried out by the London Development Agency in 2004, with several hundred participants chosen from a cross-section of the local population. It found that up to a third of parents were considering giving up work because of childcare problems. This issue is worse for the lowest paid and also has an impact on retention rates. There is a considerable childcare shortage, particularly of full-time places, in Lambeth and Southwark (the London areas where most jobseekers live). To address this need, Cross River Partnership has developed a project for encouraging the growth of the childcare industry. They put jobseekers in touch with registered childminders who work by caring for children in their own home, or by going to the jobseeker’s home. The focus has been on the availability of atypical hours childcare, anything from 5 a.m. to midnight. Funding for the project pays staff who work at developing childcare places and who help people access the available tax credits or benefits to help pay for childcare. They also work with employers to make them

in customer care or health and safety in food preparation. In the 2004/05 year, the agency found 524 local residents jobs, which they kept for a minimum of 13 weeks. Of these clients, 74% were from black and minority communities and 62% were women (a significant proportion of clients would have been foreign-born and many of those women).
aware of the childcare problems which employees face, and to give them the skills and knowledge to advise employees about childcare options and how to make applications for financial government aid for it.

**Outcomes.** Approximately 50% of jobseekers are from black and ethnic minorities (BME) and about 50% are women. In the key sectors of health, hospitality, arts & culture and finance & business, from 1999-2004, workplace co-ordinators assisted 579 people into work, of whom 424 (73%) were from BME groups. It is estimated that about 70-80% remain in employment though they may move to other jobs. During the same period, 591 employees were helped to progress in their careers (232 BME – 39%). There have also been significant successes in enabling women to enter the construction industry and obtain training leading to well-paid jobs in, for example, plumbing and carpentry. Many of those assisted into work by the WCP have less than complete secondary school education and benefit from further, vocational training. There is no set limit for ongoing work with clients, but a timeframe of 3-6 months is usual. Women particularly benefit from the WCP approach as it ensures employers have the understanding of their needs from the outset.
Migrant women into work: What is Working?

Alexandra Heron
Consultant
Survey of 15 work readiness projects

- 6 OECD countries:
  - Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom.

- Migrant women:
  - with less than tertiary education
  - arriving for family reunion/refugees/asylum seekers.
Why these projects?

- How were they chosen?
- Were they successful?

- Outcome measures used.
- Factors affecting outcomes.
Survey findings

• What appears to be good practice in successful projects?
  • What are the common themes?
  • What are the innovative practices?
Common features across many projects

• Supported work experience.
• Childcare support.
• Linking work experience with training and language acquisition.
• Confidence building.
• Links with the local labour market.
• Participation for six months or more.
Some projects provided

• Mentoring schemes.
• Engaging with participants’ families.
• Support during the initial period in work.
• Outreach work.
• Less traditional job opportunities.
• Diversity management training.
Recommendations

• Evaluating and implementing what is working.
• Mainstreaming what works.
• Language classes: availability and effectiveness for work preparation.
• Childcare: availability and affordability.
• Mentoring schemes.
• Promoting employment equity programmes.
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET:
DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

OECD and European Commission Seminar
Bedford Hotel, Brussels, 26-27 September 2005

IMMIGRANT WOMEN ON THE SWEDISH LABOUR MARKET – PAST AND PRESENT SITUATION

Wuokko Knocke

The views expressed are those of the author and do not engage either the OECD, the European Commission or the national authorities concerned.
1. To understand the present situation and future prospects for women immigrants on the Swedish labour market a short historical outlook is indicated. When Sweden after the end of WW II was struck by severe shortage of workers to its expanding industries, it was male workers who were welcomed and actively recruited from Finland and a number of Southern European countries. Women too came, either on their own initiative or together with their husbands or families. They knew that there were jobs available for them as well. This was true especially with regard to low qualified jobs in the industrial sector, in cleaning and health care jobs in the public sector. Occasionally recruitment schemes were also activated for women such as e.g. for women from Germany, who were expected to become domestic workers and women from the former Yugoslavia for jobs in the health care sector. An interesting fact is that women immigrants outnumbered male immigrants in the mid-1950s amounting to 55 percent of the immigrant population.

Marginalized women in low-valued jobs

2. It is even more important to note that women immigrants were economically active on the labour market both earlier and to a higher degree than Swedish women. In 1950 as many as 48,4 percent of foreign women were economically active as compared to 23,2 percent of the total female population. Yet, from their position at the bottom of the work hierarchy - 44,0 percent were industrial workers in 1966 - they had no possibilities to make their voices heard, nor did they have any platform or channels to represent themselves in the public discourse. They were made invisible in Swedish society and as part of the workforce, a fact that allowed for and perpetuated ethnic segregation on grounds of gender to the most menial, monotonous and strainful jobs. The results of this ethnic channelling of women to segregated job ghettos have been shown in high degrees of long-term sick leave due to repetitive strain injuries caused by work and redundancy due to early retirement. Gender, ethnicity and class, three socially organizing principles and unequal power structures intersected and served the needs of the Swedish economy and employers, while becoming an obstacle to advancement and career development for female immigrant workers: The big problem for us foreigners is that our foremen give priority to Swedes before us where possibilities for further training are concerned. It is there we see the biggest discrimination. We are not given any possibilities to moving ahead (female Yugoslav worker at Volvo).

3. The invisibility of women immigrants has favoured the shaping of socially constructed images and problem ideologies of the poorly educated, patriarchally oppressed ‘immigrant woman’, burdened by her culture and tradition. It is against this background that we have to critically analyse the present situation and future prospects for women immigrants on the labour market.
The 1990s – A lost decennium

4. This short document does not allow for a deeper or more detailed analysis of the devastating effects on immigrant women’s work situation of the recession and labour market crisis that hit Sweden in the 1990s. Labour force participation for immigrant women was 73,0 percent in 1981 as compared to Swedish women with 65,3 percent. In 1991 their participation rate had dropped to 67,1 percent compared to 81,7 percent for the Swedish female population aged 16 – 64 years. Let me just give an example of what happened to previously gainfully employed women. Women from the former Yugoslavia, with an overrepresentation in industrial jobs, had in 1988 an unemployment rate of 0,8 percent. By 1992 their unemployment rate had risen to more than 12,0 percent. This was before refugees from the civil war had started arriving in any bigger numbers or were sufficiently prepared to looking for jobs. While previously well established generations of women – and men - lost their jobs, more recent arrivers, especially those from outside of Europe (e.g. Somalis, Iraqis, Middle Easterners) were simply not considered employable. Cultural racism surfaced strongly as an argument against these groups. Both in general terms and particularly with reference to women, expressions of cultural racism and culturalizing arguments, pointing to ‘their culture’ - women by tradition do not work - as a reason for not being economically active although they were registered as unemployed and hence as job seekers. ‘The victim’ was being blamed as being herself the obstacle for employment. Vague criteria such as lack of ‘social competence’ and lack of being familiar with ‘Swedish social codes’ appeared on the agenda of the employers and were referred to even by labour exchange officers.

Active labour market measures

5. What has to be pointed out in this context is that Sweden has a long tradition of active labour market measures for activating and training those who are unemployed. With regard to immigrants, both women and men, language training (Swedish for immigrants) is offered to all newly arrived immigrants/refugees at municipal level. To help their entrance onto the labour market different types of labour market training, activating projects and programmes as well as practice at a workplace level are organized. Priority was in the 1990s to recent arrivers, although a great number of naturalized immigrants were suffering from unemployment (SOU 2004:73, p. 85). There has however never been any guarantee that labour market measures or workplace practices are leading to employment or a firm position on the labour market. Even highly qualified women - and men- tend to end up in unemployment or in short-time or substandard jobs that do not correspond to their credentials or previous work experience. A frequent pattern is that immigrants end up in a ‘merry-go-round’ of labour market measures, different types of projects, periods of unemployment and new measures or projects again. Research has proven that employers, when offering a period of worklife practice, use immigrants as well as young women and men of the so called second generation as cheap labour, instead of offering a regular job (Knocke & Hertzberg, 2000; Franzén & Johansson, 2004).

The present situation in view of expected labour shortage

6. The end of the 1990s and early years of 2000 saw a general improvement of the labour market situation. This also implied an improvement of the labour market situation in terms of activity rates for Sweden’s immigrant population, which however has not come close to the rates of the 1970s or early 1980s. Recent figures for the foreign-born population indicate an activity rate of 62 percent for foreign-born men and 57 percent for foreign-born women. These differences are not due to any substantial differences in educational levels between the foreign born and domestic population, with the exception that there are more foreign-born than Swedish women with low formal educations.

7. As shown by different reports from the National Board for Integration although activity rates have improved since the 1990s, immigrant women have, irrespective of region of origin, lower activity
rates than Swedish women and are more often unemployed. They are also more often than foreign-born men employed in low-qualified jobs, i.e. jobs that request not any kind of qualifications. A conclusion drawn by the Board is that the labour market is segregated both according to gender and ethnic background.

8. A paradoxical feature is that prognostics both from Statistics Sweden and the National Labour Market Board are pointing to problems of severe shortage of labour due to the demographic situation, i.e. an aging population, in a number of branches and sectors of the labour market.

9. This is the case for some industrial sectors and the building sector. But the recruitment problems that are already acute and will become very problematic over the next few years are finding both qualified and lower level personnel for health and elderly care jobs in the public sector as well as the private sector.

10. This has led to that municipalities, who are responsible for childcare and the care of the elderly, and county councils, which organize and manage health care have started acting in view of the shortage of personnel. A number of so called ethnic diversity projects have been started on municipal and county council level in co-operation with labour exchange offices to train and educate unemployed immigrant women for lower-level nursing and care jobs. This confirms their role as a labour force reserve and buffer which is mobilised and activated in times of labour shortage (Integrationsverket, 2004; Knocke et. al.2003). One can of course on the one hand argue that it is positive with measures that prepare unemployed immigrant women for employment. We can on the other hand observe an ethnic channelling of women immigrants into the public care sector’s low-status hierarchies, where they will be in a vulnerable position with regard to the strainful and heavy character of their jobs. No career ladder or prospects for further training or advancement are considered in the diversity projects. The women are also running the risk of losing their job in case of a new recession or cut-downs in public sector spending due to the labour law regulation of ‘last in, first out’. Diversity projects are organized for foreign-academics as well - not targeting women in particular – to be at least on temporary basis hired for administrative jobs, where they are expected to replace the aging Swedish employees. All arguments for mobilising and activating the labour force reserve of immigrants refer to the demographic situation. Quite often too is argued that in health and elderly care and other sectors such as education employees coming from ‘a different culture’ are important to see to the needs of patients, clients, parents etc.

11. The precarious, vulnerable and continuously invisible labour market and worklife position of women immigrants is also conceived as a serious problem by NGOs, such as the Cooperation Body for Ethnic Associations in Sweden, representing 16 National Immigrant/Refugee Associations. The Cooperation Body has taken the initiative to map the obstacles and difficulties women in these associations are meeting with regard to employment. Focus will be both on obstacles being put up by different actors on the labour market (employers, labour exchange officials, trade unions etc.) and on deficiencies that the women themselves perceive as problematic. Depending on the outcome of the study and based on the needs articulated by the women, courses and training will be organized to give the women better chances to enter the labour market. There have been any number of programmes and projects organized by all kinds of actors over a great number of years. A major problem has been that they have been planned from above, ignoring the needs voiced by women and too little efforts of matching training and education on that basis.

12. Speaking from the perspective of the Swedish government there is great unanimity that labour market integration for foreign-born women and men has to be improved and structural barriers dismantled. An important step at government level has been to move away from the denial of structural and institutional discrimination on the labour market, instead placing combating of discrimination high on the agenda.
SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY


Summary of discussions
Introduction

Reflecting on the potential of migrant women and men for our economies and societies and on what is needed for them to better integrate into the labour market and society as a whole has emerged as an urgent issue in the light of the economic and social challenges faced by the European Union and other industrialized regions. The global perspective, the increased competition between regions to attract investment, work and labour and changes in migration patterns should also be taken into account.

Migrant women make an important contribution on our labour markets and societies, but their role and place has been neglected in the migration debate. They also face specific problems to access the labour market and more generally to integrate into host societies. Their economic and social needs are not necessarily well reflected in existing instruments and policies. For all these reasons and following a first joint conference in 2003 on the economic and social aspects of migration the European Commission and the OECD agreed on the necessity to further explore the specific situation of migrant women.

The seminar on "Migrant women and the labour market: diversity and issues" (Brussels, 26-27 September 2005) was organised as a first attempt to analyse the place of women in the migration flows, of their role on the labour market and of policies implemented recently to improve their situation. Attention focused on migrant women's integration into the labour market, which should be considered as one of the key aspects of a much broader process which also concerns education, the learning of languages, housing, health and social services, civil and political rights and more generally the social and cultural environment.

Getting a better understanding of facts is a key condition to develop appropriate policy responses. It is all the more so when dealing with such a complex and sensitive issue as migration. The first objective of the seminar was therefore to improve our knowledge of the feminisation of the migration flows and of the main features of female immigration in the OECD countries. The analysis then reviewed the current situation of migrant women on the labour market and its possible developments. Lastly, particular attention was paid to examining and assessing policies and programmes aiming at facilitating the integration of migrant women into the labour market.

The present summary was drawn up on the basis of the contributions and discussions during the seminar.

1st Part: The situation of migrant women in the OECD countries

Are migration flows more feminised?

From the beginning of the 1980s, and more particularly during the 1990s, the literature relating to international migrations put the emphasis on the feminisation of the migration flows, a topic little developed hitherto. A new approach also emerged regarding migrant women as full economic agents. In reality however, the feminisation of the migration flows seems less marked than what arises from the literature.

Between 1960 and 2000, the share of women in the total number of immigrants by large regions of residence only slightly increased from 46.6% to 48.8% (according to the Division of the population of the United Nations). However, in 2004 in the OECD area, the proportion of migrant women in the total of persons born abroad was slightly higher than that of men. This is the case in the majority of the OECD Member States (with a maximum of 53% in Japan) with the exception of Portugal, which shows only 37%.
A more detailed analysis of recent migration flows based on the population of female migrant having lived in OECD countries for less than five years shows a more marked feminisation. In 2004, this phenomenon was particularly significant in Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Greece and Canada. Comparing the share of women among all the immigrants who had arrived during the last ten years in 1994 and in 2004 confirms this trend towards a feminisation of migration flows. For instance, in Austria in 2004 women accounted for 56% of the arrivals recorded for the last ten years, against 48% in 1994. In Spain, the share of women who arrived during the last ten years out reached 86% out of the total of the immigrated female population. This share amounts to 74% in Italy and to 58% in Greece. In Southern European countries this situation can be explained by the increasing recent entries and by the substantial demand for labour in traditionally female sectors (domestic services, childcare and care to elderly people).

The increasing importance of family migrations in several OECD countries during the last thirty years has contributed to the feminisation of flows. There is also a trend to the feminisation of work permits recipients in certain sectors of the economy. Thus, in 2003, nearly as many migrant women as migrant men entered Canada under the skilled workers’ recruitment scheme. In the United Kingdom in 1995 a quarter of the new work permits concerned women and this share rose to a third in 2004.

Both the quality and the availability of statistical data greatly vary across countries and are far from satisfactory. They however demonstrate a slight feminisation of the migration flows towards OECD countries during the last decade, with a variable intensity according to economic sectors and countries of origin. The debate and literature seem therefore to have overestimated the real tendencies of the feminisation of migration.

The situation of migrant women on the labour markets of OECD countries

The seminar confirmed that migrant women are at relative disadvantage compared with non-migrant women but also compared to migrant men, in other terms that they face a double disadvantage.

The participation of women in the labour market varies widely according to the host country. It is relatively high in Portugal, in Switzerland, and in Canada, and weaker, close to 45%, in Denmark and in Belgium. However, in the majority of countries, migrant women's activity rates are systematically lower than those of migrant men and of autochthonous women. Outcome in terms of employment and of unemployment are not more satisfactory. Migrant women are proportionally more at risk of being unemployed than autochthonous women and, except in a few countries (Switzerland, Norway, Portugal, Canada), their employment rate is below 60% (objective of the EU Lisbon Strategy regarding women's employment). In addition, the gap in employment rates between autochthonous and migrant women increases with the level of diploma obtained. One can therefore talk of a "double disadvantage" for foreign women in their integration into the labour market.

The distribution across sectors of the jobs filled by migrant women is rather close to that of autochthonous women. Nevertheless, a few sectors attract a relatively larger share of migrant than of autochthonous female labour force. This is the case in particular in health, social and domestic services, in catering and hotel, and, to a lesser extent, in education. Migrant women are clearly over-represented in household services (approximately four times more) and in catering and hotels (twice more). In these sectors, the gap between migrant and autochthonous women increased during the last ten years. In 1994 in Spain, 27% of foreign women were employed in domestic services against 7% of autochthonous women. In 2004, this percentage passed to a third and 4.6% for foreign and autochthonous women respectively. The trend is similar in Greece, Italy and France. In high-tech industries the share of migrant women remains extremely low, but the same applies for autochthonous women. In general, migrant women are more often employed in low skilled jobs than autochthonous women. They are more frequently exposed to downgrading, i.e. to having an under qualified job in relation to their training level. The latter characteristic illustrates the
difficulties encountered by immigrants in the recognition of their diplomas and of their vocational experience. All these features are more marked in the case of migrant nationals of non-member countries of the OECD.

The great differences in labour market participation according to the country or the region of origin of migrant women may reflect individual characteristics, in particular the training levels and the state of the labour market in the countries of origin (see infra). However, one cannot rule out that the poorer situation of migrant women on the labour market is also partly due to discrimination.

The development of migrant women's labour market situation shows however that some progress was made during the last decade. The employment rates of women born abroad increased throughout the period in all countries except Germany and Austria, but this progress was not sufficient to fill the gap between migrant and autochthonous women (in particular when it comes to labour market access). Moreover, the increase in the employment rate of migrant women was mainly related to low-skilled job, contrary to what occurred with regard to autochthonous women.

Several factors can have an influence on the situation of foreign women on the labour market and explain its characteristics and development. The duration of stay constitutes an important positive factor. With the duration of stay, both male and female migrant are catching up with the autochthonous where access to employment is concerned, although this development is slower for migrant women than for men. The level of education is also a decisive element. It encourages migrant women's access to employment, although in a less obvious way than it does for national women: the gap between the two groups in terms of employment or activity rates increases with the educational level.

Knowing the language of the host country is an essential factor for migrants' integration into society and the labour market. The level of knowledge of the language seems to significantly affect the probabilities of finding a job, of keeping it and of having access to better paid jobs. Many migrant women, in particular those who arrived to join their families, lack opportunities to speak the language of the host country hence, have more difficulties in mastering it.

Other factors seem to play negatively on the labour market situation of migrant women, for example, the family structure, which constitutes a more discriminating element for migrant than for autochthonous women. Having a young child affects much more the activity rate of migrant women than that of national women. Foreign women clearly encounter more difficulties in reconciling working and family life, probably due to a more difficult access to childcare or to its relatively higher cost.

As employers do have a preference for professional experience and skills acquired in the host country, the lack of it is a further handicap. In addition, the longer the time lapse between the arrival in the host country and access to the first job, the more migrant women are likely to encounter difficulties in getting a job.

Migrant women are often penalised because of their lack of human and social capital in the host country, which is particularly important in countries or sectors where job search often goes through informal networks and personal links. The attitude towards employment of women which prevails in their country of origin or social background can also play a role. Attitude and work opportunities depend also very closely on the reasons of migration (work, family reunification or humanitarian reasons). Lastly, the higher level of unemployment of migrant women, all things equal, can be due both to ethnic and gender discrimination.

In summary, the situation of migrant women on the labour market is characterised by the accumulation of disadvantages specific to women and to migrants. The convergence in terms of participation and of employment during the last decade was low or zero according to the countries. The situation improves after
a few years of residence but important gaps remain. Discrimination problems come in addition to downgrading and work-family balance, which constitute central problems for migrant women.

**Women's migration pathways and integration according to their geographical origin.**

The ways in which migrant women integrate into the labour market of the host country vary widely, as underlined previously. Additional differences can be connected to the history of migration and to the geographical origin of migrant women. To approach these issues, four principal groups of migrant women present in Europe were examined: Latin American, Moroccan, Turkish and Asian.

**Latin American women**

Immigration from Latin America to Europe is highly feminised, with women representing 61% of the total population from this region (2001, Eurostat). Four types of immigration from Latin America, that affect the distribution by gender and the integration into the labour market can be distinguished. The first type is migration for political causes. It developed especially in the 1970s from Chile and Argentina towards Northern and Western Europe. This type of migration is less feminised (male-female distribution is more balanced) but in general women are more qualified.

The second type concerns migration for economic reasons. In this case, the objective of migration is integrating into the labour market, and in particular certain sectors (domestic services, childcare, caring for elderly, etc). In the 1980s and 1990s this type of migration developed much towards the south of Europe from Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and the Dominican Republic but lately it has also moved towards Northern Europe. It is a highly feminised migration: women often are the heads of the household (while families remain in the country of origin) or "pioneers" for the family reunification. The Roman Catholic Church and the migration policies of the countries concerned both played an important role in this migration (for example, the Spanish and Italian policies of regularisation of undeclared domestic work).

The third type is family reunification, with migrants coming especially from Venezuela, Argentina, Jamaica, Chile and Uruguay. This type of migration is less feminised than the second one and reflects former colonial links (e.g. Jamaican migrating to the UK).

The last type is return migration, which concerns the descendants of former migrants (Italian, Portuguese, Spanish) settled in Latin America. This population is on average more skilled and it is strongly inclined to business creation, thanks to the capital accumulated by the ancestors, to the social capital still present in the country of origin and to a generally more favourable legislation, having regard to the family links with the host country.

**Migrant women from Morocco**

The European countries knew two waves of Moroccan migration. The first, after the Second World War, concerned in particular France, Belgium and the Netherlands. This involved primarily male and low- or unskilled migrants. Women followed within the framework of family reunification. They remained for the majority confined in the household space and were dependent on their husbands. Today we have the third generation resulting from this migration wave. Grandsons of former Moroccan migrants are today citizens of the host countries. In Belgium for example 60% of the population of Moroccan origin is naturalised.

The second phase in the mid-1980s has to be put in the context of the economic crisis in Morocco and of the programmes of structural adjustment imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The social expenditure reduction resulted in severe impoverishment of the weakest categories and in particular of women as shown by the arrival in Europe of often skilled divorced, widowed and single women or...
students. Difficulties in obtaining work permits and the impossibility to benefit from family reunification pushed some of these women into clandestineness and into clandestine work, generally in the domestic services. Compared to the nationals, the majority of these women remain "foreign to the country" of residence and are confronted with inequality of rights.

Moroccan women suffer from a triple vulnerability on the labour market, related to gender, to nationality and to social origin. Compared to Moroccan male migrants or to autochthonous women they experience lower activity rates, lower positions on the labour market (with regard to working conditions, wages, contracts, working time) and higher unemployment rates, especially the younger ones. In France, a Moroccan woman has twice as high a probability of being unemployed than a Moroccan man or a French woman. They have lower qualification levels, are concentrated in specific sectors of activity (domestic services, personal services, catering-hotel, industrial cleaning and health care) and often in informal/undeclared work. Access to independent employment remains very difficult (due to administrative obstacles, poor access to financing and economic information). The level of education and the duration of the stay have however a positive effect on activity and employment rates. Some Moroccan women face discrimination at recruitment. There are also cases of self-exclusion from the labour market of Moroccan women who do not want to abandon certain identity signs, like the veil.

*Migrant women from Turkey*

There were three phases of migration from Turkey towards Western Europe: between 1961 and 1974 mainly for economic reasons; between 1974 and 1980 because of the family reunification; and as from 1980 for various reasons, including family reunification, constitution of families, political asylum and irregular migrations. In 2005, 2.5 million Turks were living in the European Union, almost half of them being women.

In Turkey, women's activity rate (27% in 2003) and educational level (in 2001 approximately 20% of women were illiterate and almost half had only primary school education) are very low. Turkish immigrants in Europe have systematically lower activity and higher unemployment rates than the average of the migrant population and women are in an even more unfavourable situation. Even if the situation differs from country to country, in general, Turkish women's employment is concentrated in services, in some manufacturing sectors and in domestic work. These are sectors which generally require a low-skilled and low-paid labour force. Those Turkish women who do work have in general a low level of knowledge of the language of the host country.

*Women from Asia*

The most important groups are the Chinese, the Indians, the Pakistani, and women from Bangladesh and the Philippines. Within these groups there are great differences with respect to language, culture and religion which add to other characteristics like skill level or reasons for migration. Asians are the dominant group in the host countries (Australia, Canada, the United States and New Zealand).

Indian women arrived with important waves of migration to the OECD countries and more particularly the United Kingdom in the 1950s and 1960s. Migration was especially for family reasons in the case of unskilled women and for employment in the case of skilled women working as nurses, doctors or employees in information technology. Today in the United Kingdom 50% of female doctors of foreign origin come from Asia. The second generation counts many professionals, which is the sign of a convergence process with the autochthonous when it comes to success on the labour market.

The situation is very different for Pakistani women and for those from Bangladesh. They have a very low activity rate and very few among them are skilled. The majority of them migrated for family reasons and
often came from rural regions marked by a traditional social context. The fact that they are Moslems is sometimes perceived as a factor, which increases their difficulty to integrate but the other characteristics mentioned above appear to be more determining.

Migration from the Philippines is characterised by a very strong feminisation and by very high female activity rates. Filipino women work in particular in domestic and personal service sectors and as nurses. Today in the United Kingdom women from the Philippines represent the first ethnic group among nurses. Having been the first to migrate for domestic work in Southern Europe, Filipino women now rather move towards Northern European countries.

Migration from China tends to increase, in particular when it comes to skilled women and students.

2nd Part: The role of migrant women on the labour market: current situation and future prospects

Migrant women meet the social needs of receiving countries

Traditionally, in particular in Europe, the role of the migrants consists in providing labour force in specific sectors where the supply of autochthonous labour is no longer sufficient. Until the beginning of the 1970s, this mainly concerned the manufacturing sector. Following the closure of the European borders to work migration as from the middle of the 1970s, countries were very reluctant to admit that there was a need for migrant labour, especially for the low-skilled. The only exceptions were seasonal work and highly skilled jobs, in particular in the new technologies. In these individual cases, countries set up quota or work permit policies. Lately, as the need for skilled labour is being felt, a new tendency emerges, for example in Australia and in the United Kingdom, which consists in encouraging foreign students to remain in the host countries after the end of their studies.

Women are however largely excluded from these types of policies, which mainly concern sectors traditionally dominated by male labour. On the other hand, their principal role on the labour markets of the OECD countries is to meet social needs. In many cases this means responding to a substantial demand of labour in the domestic and personal care sectors, abandoned by the national workforce. The domestic sector for instance has been completely given up by the autochthonous and they do not intend to go back to it in the future. A vacuum therefore remains, which is almost exclusively filled by migrants. In certain host countries, an increasing number of women continue their active life while having children and do not wish to stop their career. Consequently social needs are not met, such as childcare, domestic work, care for the elderly, etc. Female migrants, whose departure often constitutes the central point of a survival strategy of a whole family in the country of origin, are massively concerned by this "globalisation" of domestic work.

The substantial demand in domestic and personal services is not always sufficiently recognised by the host countries. Moreover, in most countries, the public sector, and in particular the social and health services are closed to migrants (for example, in Germany and France, whereas in the United Kingdom they are open to migrants). Migrant women are therefore to be seen in the informal domestic sector, where they are exposed to a lower legal protection and where they have fewer legal employment opportunities. They are more vulnerable to bad working conditions or to injustices concerning working time, leave, etc… Moreover they remain largely invisible for the statistics. The domestic sector remains one of the least regulated in spite of the fact that there is a great demand, a situation which seriously penalises migrant women. The OECD countries reaction to this problem has been twofold. The majority of them did not officially recognise the importance of the needs in domestic service and did not adapt their policies accordingly, allowing clandestine migrations and remaining in clandestinity to increase. Other countries, in particular Italy and Spain, recognised the existence of a substantial labour demand in the domestic sector.
They therefore carried out regularisations of women employed in these sectors, on the basis of specific entry quotas. According to the International Labour Office (ILO), these regularisations have two very important consequences: they reduce the social cost of migration because they enable migrant women to return to their country of origin to visit their families; they increase the economic gains from migration thanks to an increased possibility of making savings, both through monetary transfers and through savings with a view to returning to the country.

The urgency of recognizing and regularising the domestic sector is all the more important as bilateral agreements or work permits which give legal employment opportunities tend to concern mainly sectors where male labour is predominant. Bilateral agreements should also be better balanced in terms of gender, in order to guarantee more rights to women. Policies providing them with better employment conditions should furthermore be drawn up. Some women in particular, Moroccan and Turkish have started to organise themselves; so did the Malaysian nurses without identification documents. The trade unions in the host countries are becoming aware of these problems and have started acting accordingly.

Migrant women and business creation.

As it is the case in France, the vast majority of migrant women who join the labour market do so as salary-earners. It is interesting however to take into account the experience of other women, often highly qualified, who found their place on the labour market as entrepreneurs.

There may be two approaches to migrant women's entrepreneurship. For some, especially the skilled ones, starting a business is the main reason for their migration. For others, who came mainly for family reasons, creating a business becomes their ultimate project once they have raised their children or if they encounter difficulties in accessing jobs.

Business creation can also be a solution against downgrading for skilled women who face problems with the recognition of their diplomas and, in general, against various obstacles which make the access to the labour market very difficult. It can be a solution too for women who do not have a work permit. Creating a business encourages women's emancipation and job creation, something that can create a virtuous circle.

In general migrant women who start a business encounter all kinds of difficulties. First of all, the administrative procedures are normally very complicated and discourage those who do not have a good knowledge of the administrative "mills" of the host countries. Secondly finding the start-up capital and in particular accessing to credit raise difficulties. Lastly, an insufficient proficiency in the host country language constitutes a serious impediment.

Some common features emerge when business is created by migrant women. These companies are concentrated in the service sector and they are of a smaller size than those created by their male counterparts. In France, policies were set up to encourage migrant women entrepreneurship, including sponsorship, modules on business creation in the integration courses for newcomers, a guide to business creation, of tools to simplify access to credit (micro-credit…), the competition "talents des cités", which aims at giving merit grants to young people from the suburbs.
The role of women in relation to the future needs of the labour market

Two approaches are possible to try to understand what role migrant women could have in relation to future labour market needs. The first consists in comparing the situation of women who immigrated recently with the situation of those who arrived much earlier and in this way identify trends and draw out their future implications. The second consists in analysing the employment situation of age groups leaving and entering the labour market in order to identify the sectors where there will be "demographic imbalances", i.e. sectors, which will be abandoned by an ageing autochthonous labour force and where there consequently will be job vacancies. The role of the female migrants in this scenario has to be defined

Women having migrated recently have a higher educational level compared to those having arrived earlier and also with autochthonous women. Among new migrants, all origins together, 24% (39% of those from OECD countries, 22% of those from other countries) have tertiary education and training levels against 16% of autochthonous women. When considering only migrant women in employment it can be noted that they are over-represented at the lowest and highest educational levels in comparison to autochthonous women. There is no significant change in relation to migrant women having arrived much earlier.

The first years following their arrival, migrant women are over-represented in "low-skilled jobs" and under-represented among professionals, technicians and managers. However, when considering women having arrived earlier, a certain convergence between migrant and autochthonous women appears. In other words, if in the short term the role of migrant women consists mainly in filling the vacuum left on the labour market by the autochthonous, over time a convergence occurs between the occupations and level of education of migrant and autochthonous women. The same can be said about sectors.

Recently arrived migrant women are over-represented in catering and hotels and in domestic services but under-represented in trade, in real estate and financial activities, in the public sector, in education, social services and healthcare. As seen with occupations, women having arrived earlier show a distribution across sectors, which is closer to that of autochthonous women. This would indicate that the concentration of recently arrived migrant women in certain sectors tends to diminish with time.

By using the second approach (the demographic imbalance), one may get a picture of the sectors where there will be important labour shortages in the next future. Sectors to consider are those where there is an excess of elderly people (50-60 years) in relation to young people (20-30). "Ageing" sectors and occupations are health, teaching, agriculture and fishing, drivers, small retail trade and low-skilled services. The fact that recently immigrated women are over-represented in small retail trade and to a lesser extent in health services is a first confirmation of this trend.

As far as highly qualified jobs are concerned, there might be a certain demand in some of them (health, education) but it is likely that there will also be a stronger competition with the autochthonous and therefore a smaller convergence process.

In conclusion, if current trends are maintained, in the short run migrant women will meet the immediate needs of the labour market, which generally are in sectors using low-skilled labour. Thereafter they will follow the general trend in a convergence process with autochthonous women. In the future there will be an increasing need for certain skills (in particular in the “ageing” sectors) but this will require a better and quicker integration of the newcomers. This could be achieved through selection and training before the departure from the country of origin and on arrival in the host country.
3rd Part: Policies and programmes for the integration of migrant women on the labour market

OECD countries suffer from labour shortages in specific sectors like information technology, health care and domestic and personal services. This reflects a lack of investment and of training in certain sectors (information technology, health), but also the fact that autochthonous labour tend to leave sectors like domestic services, childcare and care for the elderly, which have developed due to both the increased female participation on the labour market and the ageing population.

Given the increasing need for migrant labour, it is necessary to better integrate the immigrated population, not only on the labour market but also in the society of the host country, in order to guarantee social cohesion. This integration process has also to take account of the specific requirements, which arise from the ageing of the European societies. Policies and programmes for the vocational and social integration of migrants have to meet these multiple needs.

The integration process is more difficult for women because they often work in informal or little regulated sectors or in part-time and temporary jobs. Migrant women are not so well covered by official statistics, have more difficulties in benefiting from the rights and guarantees granted to other workers, including the provision of social services. The latter aspect is particularly important with respect to the ageing of migrant communities and to their growing needs in terms of healthcare and pensions. It is urgent to think of a welfare system which does not neglect immigrated workers and to develop migration policies, which are sensitive to the question of migrants' lifelong learning. Integration policies should of course seek to improve women's access to the labour market as well as to social security and provide them with instruments (for example legal ones) to improve their working conditions. They should also try and improve the communication on migration issues in order to fight prejudices and negative images which make the integration of migrants more difficult.

A number of issues can be examined in this context: How can employment, training or business start-up programmes be adapted in order to increase employment opportunities for migrant women? What can be done to reduce obstacles to migrant women's access to employment? What are the necessary measures to reconcile work and family life? How could matters related to employment security, the recognition of qualifications and training opportunities in the sectors with a high concentration of migrant women, like domestic services or healthcare, be better reflected?

The OECD and the European Commission undertook an empirical and comparative study on projects aiming at better integrating migrant women on the labour market, and more particularly those having education corresponding to the secondary level and having immigrated in the OECD countries generally for family reasons (Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom). In spite of major differences between the projects reviewed (size of the project, importance of the targeted groups, implementation), a number of key characteristics emerged.

In general the projects were seeking above all to facilitate and accelerate the integration into the labour market in order to obtain a vocational experience in the host country, and, if possible, both vocational and linguistic training. The final aim was also to increase women's level of qualification and their understanding of functioning of the labour market. Some projects aimed at more specific training, such as personal development and self-confidence, which are key elements to enter the labour market. A major part of these projects required a rather long involvement on behalf of the recipients, often more than six months.
Even if there were major differences, all projects dealt with the question of childcare for the recipients, in order to ensure their participation. The two more widespread approaches consisted in providing a childcare service within the project itself or in helping women to make the best use of public childcare services.

Projects were based on a thorough understanding of the labour market in which they took place, i.e. of the nature of the jobs available and of skills required. Close links with local employers were established. Several projects also aimed at training the employers and at their awareness-raising, in particular when it came to the likely effects of a diversity policy in the company, especially in management positions. Actions towards women most isolated socially made it possible to affect disadvantaged communities of migrants. They were sometimes implemented via social events sometimes they addressed women directly or via children's school, and generally involved recruiting and using bilingual intermediaries.

In addition to training and aid for integration into the labour market, other support set up under certain projects included: sponsoring, social support and counselling by social services, involvement of partners and families in the projects and financial aid to transport costs.

The principal difficulties encountered by women concerned the high involvement required in terms of time, being in direct contact with a different culture and a little known language and their as well as their families' expectations of women's role. The latter can be very different from those which prevail in the host country, in particular due to a very difficult financial situation, integration problems of the children in a new context and to the weight of domestic chores.

It is clear that helping to provide or to seek employment opportunities is crucial both to motivate women to follow training, and to allow them a better access to the labour market once the programme is finished. Integration projects give not only professional experience in the host country but also self confidence. The effectiveness of language courses is a fundamental variable for the success of the programmes and it seems that the best results are obtained when the courses are very closely linked with vocational training and integration and when supports are sufficient, in particular in terms of childcare. In addition, sponsoring yields good results and should therefore be used more frequently. The projects which obtained the best results are those which were built on a good knowledge of the local labour market and employers. A better evaluation of these projects appears necessary in order to identify best practices and to do a "mainstreaming".

A totally different approach consists in acting towards women who plan to emigrate, in a kind of preventive integration policy (as the one carried out by the International Organisation for Migration). This involves programmes generally resulting from bilateral agreements, which have several aims, in particular to contribute to the cooperation between receiving and sending countries, to meet temporary shortages of labour in specific sectors, to combat clandestine migration, and finally to facilitate the access of migrating women to the labour market. A further objective of such programmes is the better management of the temporary and family dimension of migrations, by arranging return and reintegration.

A programme between Poland and the Netherlands with the aim of developing the skills of Polish nurses emigrating in the Netherlands, and a programme between Sri Lanka and Italy aiming at selecting, training and integrating home assistants could be noted as examples. The positive aspect of these programmes consist in training and information before departure, in particular with respect to language and procedures, which allows migrants to be more qualified and less vulnerable, and to use legal immigration channels via access to the labour market of the host countries. Possible obstacles include the lack of recognition of diplomas, of professional experience and employment conditions. In addition, the social costs of migration are often underestimated, the family prospect for women migrating neglected and psychological support measures insufficient.
Several countries were subject of an individual examination, showing contrasting approaches and results.

The Italian case

Women have always constituted a large part of the population who immigrated to Italy, for both family reasons and for work. Nevertheless, Italian legislation often ignored them. Regarding work related migrants, the regularisation operations, except the last, were intended for workers under contract, and mainly benefited sectors with male employees. Family reunification is permitted after two years of stay of the spouse, which raises numerous problems for women who have to wait in the country of origin. There is a trend towards a feminisation of immigration to Italy: 60% of the immigrants having lived in Italy for at least 15 years are men, but 60% of the newcomers in 2001-2002 were women. The reasons for female immigration have also changed in recent years and work is becoming the principal reason for entry, especially since the regularisation of 2002.

In Italy, the main sectors of employment of migrant women are domestic services and services to the elderly. The increase in the female activity rate of Italian women and population ageing, combined with insufficient public services for both childcare and care for the elderly resulted in a substantial demand of labour in the domestic sector. This demand has long been met in an informal way. With the regularisation of 2002, the government became aware of this specific need for labour and opened the possibility of regularisation not only to workers under contracts but also to domestic workers and to badanti (providing care to persons). Migrant women largely profited from this opportunity: 300,000 work permits were granted to women on this occasion. Although this regularisation allowed many women to leave their situation of irregularity, invisibility and vulnerability, it also led to strengthening the concentration of migrant women in the domestic sector (a sector without employment contract). At the time of the regularisation of 2002, only 14% of the demands based on the existence of an employment contract, but 78% of the demands for domestic work and 86% of those for the badanti concerned women.

Public policies and several private initiatives contribute to this important concentration in a few sectors. The quota system for immigrant workers' entry, which is based on employers' demands is biased and favours male dominated sectors. The training programmes before departure also tend to be more favourable to men. There are very few cases of training for "feminised sectors" and initiatives to train women in non-traditional sectors are even rarer. Employment opportunities are mostly to be found in the domestic sector, but at the same time they make integration slower and more difficult. To start with, working in this sector generally involves employment with residence, which allows little contact with the society and makes the conciliation of family and working life even more difficult. Secondly, in these sectors, jobs are found through informal networks, through the word of mouth or the intervention of parishes or community networks. Therefore, the intervention of the employment services is very limited. Initiatives aim primarily at increasing migrant women's social capital (often through adhesion to associations).

The Swedish case

The economic crisis in Sweden in the 1990s had very serious effects on the immigrated population. Two phenomena combined and worsened the situation of the immigrants on the labour market: immigrants of longer date, who until this moment were well established and very active, lost their job whereas more recent immigrants, especially those who had arrived for humanitarian reasons and from countries outside the European Union, were considered difficult to employ. Discrimination at recruitment became a real problem.

As from the end of the 1990s, the economic situation in Sweden improved. The activity rate of immigrants increased, without nevertheless going back to the level reached before the crisis. Women in particular show
a disadvantage in terms of activity and unemployment rates both in comparison to autochthonous women and to immigrants. This situation is rather paradoxical given the evidence of growing labour shortages in certain sectors resulting from population ageing. There is a substantial demand for skilled and low-skilled labour in services like health and care for the elderly, both in the public and in the private sectors. Nevertheless, difficulties with access to employment persisted for migrant women.

Sweden has a long tradition of active labour market policies aiming at training those outside the labour market. Regarding immigrants, these policies focus on learning the language, on vocational training and on employment programmes, but they often give only provisional solutions. More recently, to address labour shortage in the health services, childcare and care for the elderly, municipalities and counties in charge of these sectors set up ethnic diversity projects. Their aim is to train in cooperation with employment agencies, unemployed migrant women for low-skilled jobs in the health and personal services sectors. The positive aspect of such policies is that they prepare migrant women to enter the labour market, but at the same time they maintain immigrants in their role of labour reserve in the event of shortages and push women towards low-skilled sectors, with low wages, little protection, without giving them any chance of vocational promotion or diversification (the diversity projects do not envisage further training).

Many NGOs carry out actions in order to integrate migrant women into the labour market but these initiatives are conceived without co-operation with the immigrants themselves. Lastly, the government decided to put the fight against discrimination in the centre of its policy agenda, which result in new campaigns and policies in this domain.

The example of Canada

In Canada, migrant women record high participation rates close to those of the autochthones. The participation rate of women born in Canada is 62%, against 66% for the migrant women who arrived in the 1980s, and 60% for those who arrived in the 1990s. This is due to the fact that Canada gives priority to settlement migration and that migrants know that they can settle permanently in the country. There are, however, great differences in the participation rates, depending on the country/region of origin and on the type of employment (full-time or part-time).

The charter of rights and freedoms, adopted in 1982, constitutes a powerful instrument to protect immigrants' rights and to encourage their integration. This text gives the same statute to immigrants (permanent or temporary) and citizens, with the exception of the right to vote, to be elected and the right to work in the majority of the public services.

Several initiatives which aim at a better integration of immigrated women were set up. Even if they do not concern women exclusively, they are adjusted according to their needs. The principal initiatives concern language programmes, the creation of a web site aiming at informing potential migrants on the situation of the labour market in Canada and on the opportunities offered, and specific programmes by sector (e.g. the "nursing projects" to help migrant women to become trained nurses) and a broad campaign against racism.

An important objective is the fight against vulnerability on the labour market to which migrant women are particularly exposed. The Canadian labour law is applied on the basis of declarations and complaints of the persons concerned. This constitutes an obstacle for many migrant women who are afraid to reveal their situation. "Sponsored spouses" in particular are reluctant to complain about their "sponsor" by fear of losing their rights in the event of divorce or separation. Changes were made in order to reduce this risk. From now on, after three years of "sponsorship", the spouse has the right to remain on Canadian territory, even in the event of a broken marriage. Another initiative aiming at reducing migrant women's vulnerability is the programme for "home carers ": after two years they obtain a permanent status.
Lastly, another field of action, where it still remains a great deal to be done, is to simplify the process of recognizing migrant women’s prior learning, training and previous experience. In the case of non-recognition of diplomas, courses are set-up to upgrade foreign prior learning with Canadian standards, so that immigrants do not have to start their training from the beginning again.

**The example of the Netherlands**

In the Netherlands, integration problems mainly concern Moroccan and Turkish women. Their activity rate is hardly 30% (although it is only 18% in the rural areas of Turkey, a starting point, which must be taken into account). Only 10% of Moroccan and Turkish women made a success of their integration course, if one considers thereby the fact of being independent economically, of having relations with the autochthones and of knowing Dutch. There is a very strong link between knowing the language and participating in the labour market. In order to improve the linguistic skills of the immigrants but also to improve their social integration, the Netherlands put in place a new training programme to learn Dutch and the values of the Dutch society, including 600 hours of compulsory education for all new comers and for the immigrants already living in the country but lacking sufficient knowledge of Dutch. Beneficiaries must pay part of the cost themselves.

Other initiatives aim at improving social cohesion, in particular a national initiative for social inclusion and the fight against discrimination and some active urban policies aiming at promoting social diversity in the cities. Regarding women's participation in the labour market more specifically, the Netherlands setup a high level Commission in order to work out policies in this area. Moreover, projects for sponsorship, for support by other members of their communities and for networking women with companies were created.

**The EQUAL programme and other initiatives from the European Commission**

EQUAL is an initiative of the European Commission which aims at combating any type of discrimination on the labour market and in accessing it. It is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and is implemented by the Member States through 27 national programmes and follows an experimental approach.

Between 2001 and 2006 a total of 3.2 billion Euros was allocated to EQUAL. EQUAL projects have to respect several criteria: they have to envisage partnerships (in each project various actors have to be involved); they have to be trans-national (each project has to have at least one partner in another Member State); and they have to contribute to a mainstreaming process (e.g. capitalisation of experience, exchange of good practices and impact on public policies). They also aim at the beneficiaries' empowerment (active participation).

Regarding equal opportunities, EQUAL has a dual approach. This involves on the one hand allowing better reconciliation of private and working life and on the other hand advocating professional desegregation, in order to better address crucial issues for women. Between 2001 and 2006, 480 million Euros were earmarked for specific actions supporting equal opportunities.

Several EQUAL projects concern migrant women. For example, a German project addresses migrant women who are unemployed or migrant women whose training is not recognized by the German education system by providing them pre-training. During this pre-training, women follow German courses and develop computer skills. Still in Germany, migrant women who have a teaching diploma or a vocational training are invited to be the interface between their community of origin and the German educational and employment systems. To this end, they receive training, which enables them to become trainers or advisors in institutions or NGOs. In Sweden, projects have been set up to train female migrants in business creation.
These businesses are meant to meet the needs of immigrants who have reached the age of retirement and wish to benefit from certain care services adapted to their culture and to their language.

The European Social Fund itself does not follow a target group approach but for the 2000-2006 period a total of 1.5 billion (or 20% of the budget for this period) was earmarked for the promotion of equal opportunities. Several EU Member States (e.g. Belgium, France, Spain, Greece and the Netherlands) have included projects and measures to support migrants' access to the labour market (counselling, guidance, training, employment support etc…) in their ESF programme.

Improving migrants' integration is also addressed by two European policy coordination processes: the European Strategy for Employment and the Social Inclusion process. The need to take into account the additional labour supply that results from immigration, to combat discrimination and to promote access to employment of immigrants is clearly spelled in the European Strategy and Guidelines for Employment in relation with the overall priority of attracting and retaining more people in employment and increasing the labour supply. The potential contribution of migrant women cannot be ignored in relation with the overall objective of achieving an EU female employment rate of at least 60% by 2010. Increasing investment in human capital through better education and skills is another priority of the European Strategy and Guidelines for Employment and should also address migrants. The social inclusion process is based on a set of common objectives for the fight against poverty and social exclusion, in which immigrants are recognised as a group that can be particularly vulnerable and that can face specific problems of integration.

Analyses of EU Member States' employment and inclusion policies show that language learning remains a focus point of integration policies and measures, but there is also a gradual recognition that this is not sufficient and that broader approaches, encompassing other dimensions of integration are needed. Analyses also show that a lot still needs to be done to address and overcome discrimination (not only against immigrants) in relation to accessing the labour market but also more generally. Last but not least, there is a lack of gender mainstreaming in the objectives, outline and implementation of measures.

Promoting a holistic approach to integration is also the direction followed by the Commission when working out the framework for a Common Agenda for Integration. The first step was to establish eleven Common Basic Principles, which will guide Member States in developing their relating policies. These principles As the Common Agenda, these principles aim at a more comprehensive approach to integration, taking into account all key dimensions like employment, social inclusion but also fundamental rights and culture. They also insist on the mutual character of the integration process, which needs to involve not only the migrants but also the host societies.

**Conclusions**

Women's migration is not a new phenomenon: already in the 1960s women represented almost half of the migrant population in the OECD countries and in their majority they had done so for economic reasons. Following the restrictions on migration for work purposes in the majority of the OECD countries as from the middle of the 1970s, migrations for family and humanitarian reasons became predominant. Most women who migrate for family reasons have a relatively low educational level and their rate of participation in the labour market after their arrival is very low. A significant share of them is in low-skilled jobs. As from the 1980s, the flows of migrant women became much more diversified with respect to reasons for migration, regions of origin and skill levels. The patterns of migration are thus changing and this may be more striking for women than for men.
The seminar confirmed that migrant women were at a relative disadvantage when compared with their male counterparts but also with autochthonous women. A large source of skills and human resources is left untapped.

Nowadays, women who immigrate to OECD countries are on average more skilled than autochthonous women. However, they are overrepresented in unskilled jobs and in certain sectors like catering, hotels and domestic services. Inflows of low-skilled women continue and the activity rate of migrant women is in general low (except in South European countries). Unemployment is high in comparison to autochthonous women and even women who have recently immigrated often suffer from a serious downgrading of their skills with respect to the jobs they occupy. There were improvements in the activity and employment rates of women having immigrated during the last decade, but the gap with those of autochthonous women remains large, including for highly skilled women.

Migrant women are particularly, but not exclusively, employed in the domestic sector and personal services. The demand for labour in these sectors as in healthcare will increase in the years to come due to population ageing and to the growing labour market participation of autochthonous women. The OECD countries are very much in favour of recruiting highly skilled migrants to meet the needs for labour in certain sectors, but they are also very reluctant to accept that there is also a demand for low qualified migrants. This attitude is due to the fact that the latter type of migration is perceived as generating negative effects on public finance and on social cohesion, due to the integration difficulties encountered by these People.

Although the labour market situation of migrant women remains difficult in the OECD countries, many female migrants are making a significant contribution to the labour market. Whole segments of the economy could hardly function without their presence. For migrant women to draw the maximum of their migration experience and for the host country to get higher benefits from their presence, the OECD countries have to mobilise themselves to make sure that migrant women's participation is encouraged and that it takes place in an appropriate social and economic environment. For this, a number of suggestions were made during the seminar:

- All limitations to labour market participation of those women who migrated for other reasons than work should be eliminated.
- Migrant women should be guaranteed the same access to public services as autochthonous women
- In several countries the development of an informal domestic sector, which attracts many irregular immigrants seems to be the consequence of a lack of recognition of the labour needs in this sector. But childcare and caring to the elderly are too important to be left to informal arrangements. Opening formal and legal ways of economic immigration specifically for this sector (e.g. bilateral agreements) would be an important step to ensure an appropriate labour supply, while guaranteeing better protection of migrant women who work in the domestic sector.
- The non-recognition of diplomas obtained in their home country is a problem for all migrants, but is particularly serious for those, often women, who do not enter with the guarantee of a job, for instance those migrating for family or humanitarian reasons. The guidelines for quality in cross-border higher education developed by OECD and UNESCO represent an important initiative in this direction and should be encouraged. Furthermore, the procedures for recognition of qualifications should be generalised and ways to prove one's vocational skills, for example through tests, should be offered.
• Traditional training can help, but other support, in particular to help developing social contacts and links with their environment, could be as efficient in facilitating or encouraging migrant women's access to the labour market.

• Several studies showed the importance for migrants to have a professional experience as early as possible after their arrival in the host country with a view to facilitating their future participation to the labour market. In the case of women, who often enter for reasons not directly related to employment and who do not have networks allowing them to know the local labour market, access to the first job appears very difficult. Hence, the importance of programmes which provide them with information before their departure or which assist them in entering the labour market (sponsorship, for example).

• Starting a business concerns a limited number of women, but it can be an alternative to working as an employee, in particular in countries where migrant women encounter difficulties to enter the labour market and for highly skilled women. In that respect, general policies encouraging women's entrepreneurship can be very helpful.

• The poorer performance of migrant women on the labour market can be due to discrimination, though this is in general very difficult to prove. It is therefore very important that the authorities exercise constant control on the possibilities of discrimination, that they find means to eliminate discriminatory practices and set up policies to increase employers' awareness and to combat stereotypes. Examples in this direction are the diversity policies, already set up by certain OECD countries and also under the EQUAL programme initiated by the European Union.

• Special efforts have to be made in the creation of language learning programmes and to make childcare available and affordable for migrant women, since this constitutes two of the most important instruments to help them accessing the labour market.

• Last but not least, in order to better follow the development of the labour market situation of immigrants, improving the quality of statistics would be desirable. Particular attention should be given to data broken down by gender, in particular when it comes to the reasons for migration and the effect they have on labour market participation.
MIGRANT WOMEN AND THE LABOUR MARKET:
DIVERSITY AND CHALLENGES

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Conclusions
by
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1. We have heard many interesting presentations over the past two days concerning the situation of immigrant women in the labour market in OECD countries, and the situation is complex and diverse, both with respect to the countries of origin of immigrants and the conditions and outcomes in the countries of destination. In addition we are dealing with both complex issues: migration and gender. Let me start by recapping some of what we have learned before proceeding to areas where there seems to be room for improvement.

What have we learned?

2. We have seen, first of all, that the migration of women is not a new phenomenon and that already in 1960, almost half of the immigrant stock in OECD countries consisted of women, many of them labour migrants filling jobs in shortage areas in the same way as their male counterparts. With the limitations to labour migration introduced in most European countries at the time of the first oil crisis, family and humanitarian migration became more prominent, and at least with respect to family migration, women have been overrepresented in the migration flows. These flows in the past consisted largely of women with little education, with low labour force participation following arrival and with a certain proportion of them occupying low-skilled jobs. Since the early 80s the flows of women immigrants have diversified considerably with respect to skill levels, region of origin and reason for migrating.

3. Currently, the flows of women immigrants consist of persons who are more highly educated than the native-born population, whether they come from OECD countries or from the rest of the world. They are nonetheless overrepresented in low-skilled occupations and in certain sectors such as hotels and restaurants and the household sector. There continue to be significant movements of low-educated persons and labour force participation in general tends to be low, except where migration has been strongly labour-driven, such as in the countries of southern Europe recently. Unemployment is high compared to native-born women and recent arrivals are often overqualified for the jobs they are doing. Although there has been some improvement in the participation and employment situation of immigrant women over the past decade, the differences relative to native-born women remain large, especially for highly educated women, and represent a significant waste of human resources.

4. We have seen that women immigrants are particularly but not exclusively present in the household sector, especially in caring for young children and the frail elderly and doing domestic work. In some cases, migration for these purposes has been irregular and/or the work itself is informal, with low wages, little social protection and limited chances of career progress. It is expected that care-related migration will only continue with aging populations in OECD countries, a growing need for nurses and other health professionals and with more women in OECD countries entering the labour force. OECD countries seem eager to recruit and accept the presence of highly skilled migrants to offset domestic labour shortages, sometimes to the detriment of human capital development in countries of origin, but there is a reticence to acknowledge that there is a demand for low-skilled migration as well. This form of migration is viewed as having adverse consequences on public budgets because of a more difficult integration in the economy and society of host countries. (In the words of one participant, countries want the services provided by immigrant women but not necessarily the immigrants themselves, at least not on a permanent basis.)

What needs to be done to improve the situation

5. With this general description as backdrop, what needs to be done to improve the situation of immigrant women in receiving countries? In many cases, the policies apply to immigrants in general but are especially pertinent for immigrant women from developing countries.

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6. First of all, it is clear that any remaining restrictions on participation in the labour market by long-term immigrants entering for reasons other than labour should be removed and that access to public services needs to be made available on the same basis for immigrant women as for native-born women. Such restrictions in the past have probably been responsible in no small way for the limited participation of many immigrant women in the labour market. Measures that restrict labour market access or training opportunities can only result in a deterioration of human capital and a situation in which non-participation by many immigrant women becomes an established pattern.

7. The development of an informal household care sector that attracts irregular migrants in many countries would appear to be a consequence of the absence of readily available and affordable care facilities and the reluctance to acknowledge the presence of an unsatisfied domestic demand in this area. However, care for children and older workers is too important to be left to such informal arrangements. If public provision or financing of care-facilities is not possible and host country workers are not working in the sector, then migration channels need to be opened up, for example through bilateral agreements, to ensure an adequate supply under a more formal organisation of the household care sector, that would ensure a minimum social protection for immigrant women in this area.

8. The issue of the recognition of qualifications obtained in countries of origin is a general one for all immigrants, but it is an especially pertinent one for persons entering under family reunification or humanitarian provisions, where there is no job awaiting the immigrant upon arrival, as is often the case for immigrant women. The OECD / UNESCO efforts to jointly develop guidelines to ensure relevance and quality provision in cross-border higher education in both developed and developing countries are welcome. In the interim, procedures for the recognition of qualifications need to be generalised and streamlined and practical and expeditious ways for immigrants and immigrant women to demonstrate their competencies on the job or on a trial basis need to be developed. This might include, for example, work experience that would provide women immigrants first-hand contact with host-country work practices as well as breaking down stereotypes among employers concerning new immigrant groups. The Canadian prior learning assessment system also offers a model for examination in this area.

9. Studies have shown the importance of work experience soon after arrival for later participation by immigrants. For those arriving with no assured job (and again this is often the case for immigrant women), little knowledge of host country practices and few networks that can be tapped for job information, programmes that provide information to potential immigrants before arrival and assistance to immigrants by pairing them with native-born mentors or intermediaries are cost-effective ways of fostering early knowledge of how the society works and of building contacts within the host society.

10. Although entrepreneurial activities are an alternative to paid employment that would seem to be sought by a limited number of immigrant women. It seems to have become an option for immigrant women in some countries in situations of blockage in the regular labour market. Here the usual policies to encourage entrepreneurship are pertinent. The Istanbul ministerial declaration on fostering the growth and innovative and internationally competitive SME’s recommended, among others:

- To proactively disseminate OECD activities related to the development of women’s entrepreneurship
- To develop a robust and comparable statistical base on which SME policy can be developed.

11. The unfavourable labour market outcomes of some immigrant women may in some cases be the consequence of discriminatory practices. This is always difficult to demonstrate, but one symptomatic indication that there may be problems for immigrants particularly from developing countries, is the presence of adverse labour market outcomes for children of immigrants, who have been raised and
educated in the host country and who should not suffer from the problems of language and adaptability of human capital faced by new arrivals. Public authorities need to exercise a constant vigilance with respect to the possibility of discrimination, to ensure that unacceptable discriminatory practices are eliminated, to encourage a broader awareness of the problem among employers, but also to dispel false perceptions and stereotypes. One way of achieving these objectives is through diversity programmes, which are already established in some OECD countries and also part of the EU Equal programme on equal opportunity.

12. Participation by immigrant women in host countries in general tends to be more frequent than is the case among women in their respective countries of origin but remains in many cases significantly below that of native-born women. It is important to clarify the reasons for non-participation, whether there are patterns in the countries of origin, how much language and cultural differences matter, whether this is a matter of choice, of a lack of information or of affordability or availability of adequate child-care facilities, or a phenomenon of self-exclusion in response to discrimination or a difficult integration process. Here the recommendations of the OECD’s Babies and Bosses project are especially pertinent as well as measures to increase mastery of the host country language.

13. No list of this kind would be complete without some mention of improvements in statistics, which are the essential tools to monitor the labour market situation of immigrants and to diagnose eventual problems. Labour force surveys, despite sample-size limitations for small population subgroups, remain a rich and varied source of current information on the immigrant population. A current Eurostat / EU Commission initiative to create an immigrant module for administering in 2008 and at the same time to improve the coverage of the immigrant population needs to be encouraged. In addition, as this seminar has clearly demonstrated, there is a need to identify statistically the reason for migration by gender, both with respect to the flows and to labour market outcomes, not least because the latter seem to be strongly dependent on the reason for entry.

14. In closing then, I would like to say that although the labour market situation of immigrant women in many countries does need to improve, there is room for hope in this area. We have heard of many problems in the last two days, precisely because we are here to identify ways to address problem areas, particularly regarding immigrants from developing countries. But many immigrant women arriving in OECD countries do participate significantly and productively in the labour markets of OECD and European Union countries. Indeed in many areas, our economies could scarcely function without their presence. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the health and care sectors. If immigrant women are to benefit from migration and our own societies to benefit from their presence, the skills and the energy of these newcomers, we need to ensure that their participation is encouraged and that it can take place in an appropriate social and economic environment. That is the minimum that is necessary.