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## INTRODUCTION

The volume *Women in New Migrations. Current Debates in European Societies* offers an overview of research and debates concerning new female migrants within European national contexts. It is a product of the research project 'Integration of female immigrants in labour market and society. Policy assessment and policy recommendations' (acronym: FeMiPol) funded by the European Commission (within the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme: *Scientific Support for Policy*), conducted from 2006 to 2008. The project explored and analysed the impact of migration and integration policies on the position of new female migrants, as well as processes and practices related to integration. A starting assumption of the FeMiPol project was that in order to improve social integration, policies should attend to the agency of all actors involved. The project focused on both regular and irregular migrants employing an integration concept that takes into account the biographical dimensions of integration processes and is open to the transnational character of migration in globalised societies, considering processes of integration in both the society of migration and the society of origin. On the basis of this agency-sensitive biographical evaluation of policy, the project formulated recommendations for better policies, both on the national and the EU level, aimed at the integration of female migrants in a socially cohesive manner. The project paid specific attention to different forms of labour market insertion of female migrants, especially to migrant domestic and sex workers. The analysis covered eleven national contexts in Northern and Southern as well as Central and Eastern Europe: Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy,

Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the UK.<sup>1</sup> The volume stems from the revision of reports on 'The state of the art of research on new female migrants' delivered by the project partners during the first year of the project.

The project considered as 'new female migrants' those migrant women who have come to European countries since the beginning of the 1990s. One of the main characteristics of migration flows to EU countries, as well as worldwide, is the increasing presence and visibility of women. Foreign-born women in 2004 in the EU 25 countries have been estimated to comprise 52.4 per cent of all migrants and to amount to between 18.1 and 19.7 million (Ayres and Barber 2006). The *feminisation of migration* is even more intensive in the new EU member countries (the highest rate being 59.9 per cent in Poland) than in the EU 15 countries (where the lowest rate is 49.7 per cent in Germany; OECD 2008) while a large part of irregular migrants are assumed to be women.<sup>2</sup> However, the feminisation of migration is related not only to the proportion of women among migrants. It is also connected to the changing character of women's migration, which has become more and more autonomous labour migration and less migration of dependent family members (IOM 2008). The reasons for the feminisation of *irregular migration* (Anthias 2000; Buijs 1993) are various, such as the increasing demand for female migrant labour in informal domestic service and in the sex service sectors in European countries, and the wishes of migrant women to escape oppressive or violent environments,

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<sup>1</sup> The project employed a five-stage analysis: first, mapping and analysing policies affecting the integration of female migrants; second, identifying migration flows and mapping the processes of dispersion of female migrants; third, investigating the demand for the labour of female migrants; fourth, analysing integration processes in relation to the experiences and strategies of the female migrants; and fifth, evaluating the impact of the specific implementation modes of social policy on the integration processes of migrant women. For more information on the project and the results published in the Working Papers during its lifetime, see the project homepage [www.femipol.uni-frankfurt.de](http://www.femipol.uni-frankfurt.de).

<sup>2</sup> Irregular migrants in European countries are estimated to amount to between 5 and 8 million (GCIM 2005 and OECD 2003 respectively).

and to create a better life, in the context of the lack of formal channels of immigration (Morokvasic 1983; Phizacklea 1998; Campani 1999; Kofman et al. 2000).

New female migrants are diverse. A large number of them, especially those from the former socialist countries, are highly educated (Rudolph and Hillmann 1998). Some migrate on their own, for individual reasons or to support family left in the homelands; some migrate for work; some migrate for family unification or family formation; some are asylum seekers (Koser and Lutz 1998) or 'commuters' (Morokvasic 2003; Peraldi 2001, 2002; Schmoll 2003; Michalon 2003; Potot 2002). The ethnic diversity of the female migrant populations is also increasing, as global markets for services emerge and globalisation processes make travelling and communication easier. Many of the new female migrants come from the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe and from Latin America, Asia and Africa. To the diversity of motives for migration and ethnic origin we can add the diversity of legal status: some are EU citizens, many of whom are citizens of the new EU member states confronted with transitional restrictions in entering the EU 15 labour markets. The heterogeneity of female migrants fits in with the notion of 'super-diversity' coined by Vertovec (2007), used to illustrate the heterogeneity of migrant populations in the UK. Whilst there is diversity in female participation in the labour market, still there is a concentration in the service sector. The undocumented nature of some migrations is important in structuring positions in the labour market, in terms of the hidden informal economies within the service sector. In the era of globalisation, migrant women provide the flexibility that global capital needs in service sectors and, in some countries, in small manufacturing industries (Sassen 2001). Moreover, male members of migrant groups frequently use the labour of women for setting up entrepreneurial activities (Anthias 1983; Anthias and Mehta 2003; Apitzsch and Kontos 2008). Thus, new female migrants are located within a secondary, service-oriented or hidden labour market which reproduces ethnic and gender divisions (Anthias 2000).

Current scientific and policy debates on new female migration emerged out of the earlier debates on gender and migration as a critique of

gender-blind mainstream migration research. Moreover, these debates are interconnected with general debates on gender that came out of the feminist movement. As Mirjana Morokvasic observed some time ago, mainstream migration research had either focused on migration in general terms or made assumptions that migration was a male phenomenon, with men being seen as heads of families and breadwinners (Morokvasic 1984). Gender-aware migration research, on the other hand, attempts to overcome the shortcomings in knowledge about women in migration. It offers an insight into the core of women's migrations, exposing the 'domination matrix' and its multiple layers (Collins 1990) and makes the diversity of female migrant populations visible. The aim of this book is to offer overviews of the emergence and development of scientific and policy debates on female migrants within new migratory flows to European countries, highlighting the debates within different national contexts.

As the contributions in this volume reaffirm, scientific debates are mostly not nationally limited. They are not contained by national boundaries but cut across them (see Anthias and Cederberg, as well as Morokvasic and Catarino in this volume) and are adapted to local conditions in a process of discussion and learning. Despite globalisation and Europeanisation of national migration and integration policies (Faist and Ette 2007), as well as Europeanisation of research through targeted support of transnational research projects, the national social, economic and political conditions remain a powerful basis of scientific production. Local and national interpretations of processes of transnationalisation of science, in line with national traditions, structures and preferences lead to the strengthening of national debates (Griffin 2005). Migration and integration take place in particular ways in each country, given specific social, economic and historical conditions. Hence, the national context constructs different conditions for migration and integration, while language and cultural specificities and barriers between European societies, as well as conceptual and methodological barriers (Kuhn and Remoe 2005), create different conditions for research and debates. Moreover, specific discourses on women's lives and gender relations embedded in the national contexts and shaped by their cultural

social and economic conditions strongly influence research on female migrants.

The contributions in this book show the complexity of the interconnectedness between feminist and migration discourses resulting in different outcomes as far gender and migration issues are concerned (see Campani; Morokvasic and Catarino). Thus, analysis of the nationally based discourses on migration and integration offer an insight into the functioning of different societies, as well as their openness and closure towards new female migrants. Similarities and differences in different national contexts thereby become visible.

Since the earliest critiques of the male bias in migration research (Morokvasic 1984; Phizacklea 1983) a range of studies have deepened the understanding of gender and migration, constituting a continuum of increasing awareness of the importance of gender issues for studying migration. A range of work has given an overview of transnational debates on gender and migration (see among others Anthias and Lazaridis 2000; Kofman et al. 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; Donato et al. 2006; King et al. 2006; Catarino and Morokvasic 2005). In fact, much of the tradition of research on migration, integration and gender was developed in transnational discussions and is referred to in the contributions of the volume.

Focusing on the debates on female migration within specific national contexts, the contributors ask how these debates emerged and under what conditions, what are the main concepts and themes that these debates have engaged with, and what are the main gaps in research. Moreover, some of the authors deepen the focus on the national context by using it in relation to other national cases (see Campani; Catarino; Liapi and Vaiou). In the case of non-English-speaking countries, the aim is to offer scholars the possibility of becoming acquainted with relevant material that is usually not easy to access, as it is conducted in the national languages. In particular, in the countries where immigration is a recent phenomenon, as is the case in the Southern European and the Eastern European countries included in this volume, the authors have used various sources of aggregated and other data (documents, statistical data) made available by institutions and organisations dealing

with migration. They have also used results from qualitative research, providing in this way a comprehensive state of the art study on female migration research in these national contexts. In this way, embracing macro and micro analytical patterns, the contributions also deliver a broad outline of the social position of new female migrants in different European countries, their distribution within economic sectors and the migratory patterns that emerge.

This volume clusters the papers along the major divisions in European migration and integration phenomena, across the two axes of North and South, and old and new market organised societies: the old immigration countries in Western and Northern Europe the UK, Sweden, Germany and France, the Southern European countries Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Cyprus, with the specific conditions debated so far as the Mediterranean migration model (King 2001), and the Central and Eastern European countries Poland and Slovenia, shaped by the ongoing social transformation dynamics. These axes of organisation are coincidental with distinct social policy models in respect to regulations of migration and labour markets, as well as efficiency of the state in meeting child- and other family-care needs, thus influencing the demand for domestic and care work absorbing female migrants.

Family reunification remains the main formal immigration channel for women. Nevertheless, the interest of researchers focuses on the migrant women employed in domestic work and care as well as in sex work. The contributions reveal similarities and differences between the national contexts concerning the debates on labour market insertion and the social integration of migrant women. The authors agree that despite the rich literature on migrant women, research on migration is still gender-biased and migrant women are constructed mainly in terms of their reproductive role, which has far-reaching consequences on their social representation and the social policies directed at them. Indeed, a central aspect picked up by most contributions is the power of stereotypes and victimisation of migrant women. The idea of migrant women as being passive victims of culturally based violence and discrimination may also influence even feminist analyses.

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