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**Migrant Women and Youth:
The Challenge of Labour
Market Integration**

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Migrant women and youth: the challenge of labour market integration

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Abstract

The integration of migrant women and youth into the labour market depends upon institutional ramifications – in particular the immigration regime, the welfare model and the education system –, on supply factors – in particular the educational attainment level and occupational skills, language competence, ethnic origin and the proximity to the ethnic cultural identity of the host country –, and demand factors – in particular the composition by economic sectors, the division of work between the household, the informal and the market sector and the economic and technological development level.

Keywords

Migrants, immigration policy, Gender gaps, welfare models, foreign born, citizenship, third country origin, second generation, education system, labour market integration

Introduction[†]

European integration and globalisation promote the international mobility of capital as well as labour (Solimano, 2001). Pull and push factors, chain migration and immigration on humanitarian grounds structure migration and contribute to different migration dynamics over time and regions. In Western Europe, net immigration has become the principal component of population growth since the late 1980s. The proportion of foreign born (first generation migrants) is high and rising in EU Member States (MS), reaching levels which are as high as in traditional immigration countries overseas. In Austria, Germany, Belgium and Sweden for example the proportion of foreign born corresponds to that of the United States of America; Switzerland has even higher rates, namely 23.8 percent foreign born (2005), the

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same as in Australia. Luxembourg is a special case with more than a third of its population being foreign born. The percentage of foreign-born is around 10 percent in most Central and Northern EU-MS, and in some Southern European MS (Greece). The new MS in the East are also attracting increasing numbers of migrants, the leading country being the Czech Republic with 5.1 percent foreign-born in 2005 (Table 1, *Biffi, 2006, OECD, 2007*). Of the 485 million inhabitants in the EU27 in 2005, some 8.3 percent or 40 million are international migrants (*EC, 2007*)¹.

The role of the immigration regime for labour market integration of migrant women

The ethnic origin of the migrants in Europe as well as the skill composition and the capacity to speak the host language differ by EU-MS – a result of different immigration regimes and historical migration paths. In the 1960s and 1970s, the **temporary worker model** (CH, DE, AT, LUX) attracted mostly un- and semiskilled migrants from Southern European countries, with the exception of former Yugoslavia now EU-MS, and Turkey. **Ensuing family reunification and chain migration** perpetuated the inflow, mostly from the region of former Yugoslavia and Turkey. Consequently, the share of third country migrants is relatively high (61 percent of foreign born in Austria in 2007, and 76 percent in Germany)². The integration of first and increasingly second generation migrants, particularly of women, has become a challenge in view of changing demands on migrant skills and a failure to promote the education of migrant children adequately. The unemployment rates of foreign born women are double those of native born (11.3 percent versus 5.8 percent in Austria, 16.2 percent versus 8 percent in Germany, 4.7 percent versus 2.4 percent in Luxembourg, see Table 5.3 OECD 2008, most recent census data).

In contrast, the **Nordic Model** (DK, SWE, FIN, NOR) did not engage in recruiting large numbers of temporary workers from abroad in the 1960s and 1970s but trusted in free labour movement within the Nordic labour market. Only from the 1980s onwards did significant numbers of migrants of third countries settle in the Nordic countries, often with refugee background. Finland, and to a lesser extent Denmark, Norway and Sweden have particular problems of integrating migrant women, particularly if they are of third country origin (often refugees), with unemployment rates of foreign born women more than double those of natives.

The third immigration model is the result of **colonial ties** as in the case of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal. In these countries, immigrants often originate from

¹ According to EU-definition these are persons who have been residing outside their country of birth for more than half a year.

² Daten für Österreich von Statistik Austria und für Deutschland von Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden 2007: Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit, Fachserie 1/2.2

the former colonies and are thus largely from third countries. While these immigrants tend to be able to speak the host country language, they face marginalisation in the labour market often due to their ethnic minority background and low educational attainment level. Belgium has unemployment rates of foreign born women which are amongst the highest in Europe (26.4 percent versus 12.4 percent for native women, *OECD*, 2008: Table 5.3). Foreign born women in France have also considerably higher unemployment rates than native women (22 percent versus 14.1 percent). In contrast, foreign born women in the UK and Netherlands are doing comparatively well as far as unemployment rates are concerned (UK: 7.5 percent versus 4.5 percent; NL: 6.9 percent versus 3.5 percent), and Portugal shows hardly any difference in unemployment rates of foreign born and native women (Graph 1).

*Table 1: Foreign born as a proportion of the total population in selected OECD countries
In percent of total population*

| | 1992 | 1995 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2005 |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Australia | 23.0 | 23.0 | 23.6 | 23.1 | 23.2 | 23.8 |
| Austria | .. | .. | 10.4 | 12.5 | | 13.5 |
| Belgium | | | | 10.7 | | 12.1 |
| Canada | .. | .. | .. | 18.2 | | 19.1 |
| Czech Republic | | | | 4.5 | | 5.1 |
| Denmark | 4.0 | 4.7 | 5.7 | 6.0 | 6.2 | 6.5 |
| Finland | .. | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.4 |
| France | .. | .. | .. | .. | | 8.1 |
| Germany | | | | 12.5 | | 13.2 |
| Greece | | | | 10.3 | | |
| Hungary | .. | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.0 | | 3.3 |
| Ireland | | | | 10.4 | | 11.0 |
| Italy | | | | 2.5 | | |
| Luxembourg | .. | .. | .. | 32.6 | | 33.4 |
| Mexico | .. | .. | 0.5 | 0.5 | | 0.4 |
| Netherlands | .. | 9.1 | 10.1 | 10.4 | 10.6 | 10.6 |
| New Zealand | .. | .. | .. | 19.5 | | 19.4 |
| Norway | .. | 5.5 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 7.3 | 8.2 |
| Poland | | | | 2.1 | | |
| Portugal | | | 5.1 | 6.3 | 6.7 | 6.3 |
| Slovak Republic | | | | 2.5 | | |
| Spain | | | | 5.3 | | |
| Sweden | 9.6 | 10.5 | 11.3 | 11.5 | 11.8 | 12.4 |
| Switzerland | | | | 22.4 | | 23.8 |
| Turkey | | | | 1.9 | | |
| United Kingdom | | | | 8.3 | | 9.7 |
| United States | .. | 8.8 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 11.8 | 12.9 |

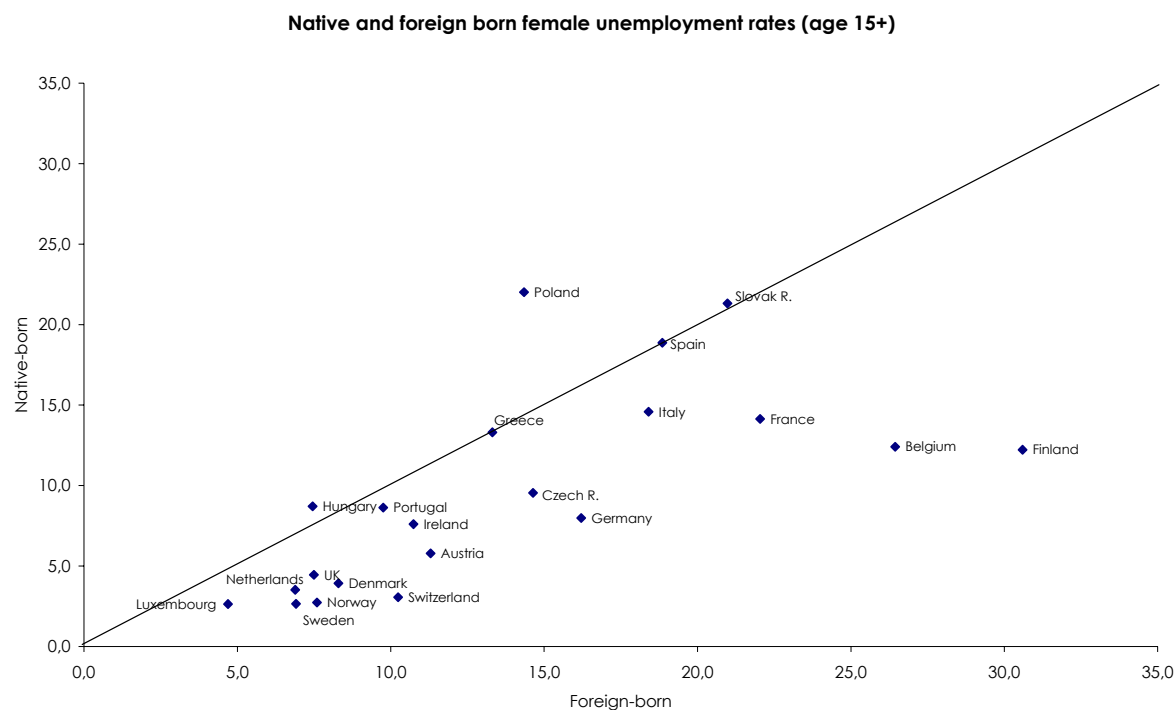
Source: OECD-SOPEMI, *OECD* (2005, 2007).

The new immigration countries in Southern Europe, which had traditionally been regions of emigration, and of the new MS in CEE do not have large differences in unemployment rates between native and migrant women. Does this mean that access to income and work is easier in the latter countries? Indications are that this is not the case, but rather that migrant women often work on the basis of contract work which does not allow access to unemployment and welfare benefits (residual welfare models). In addition, large **informal sectors** provide work for migrant women, often **illegal migrants**.

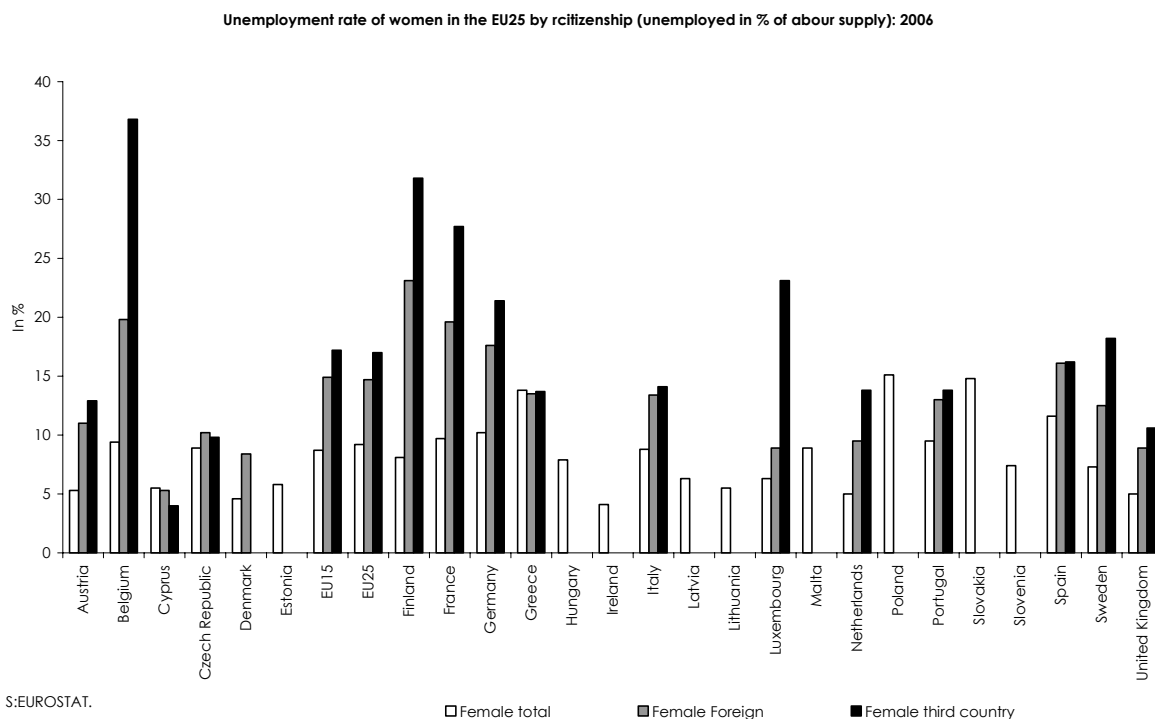
Research indicates that it is the **combination of different immigration and welfare regimes** which **account for different employment opportunities of migrant women in the various EU-MS** (Baldwin-Edwards, 2002, Adsera – Chiswick, 2004, Freeman, 2004). Educational attainment and employment opportunity of **migrant youth** in contrast are largely determined by the **education system and the role of social status of the parents** for the educational outcome of their children, in addition to the capacity to speak the host **language** (OECD, 2006A, 2006B).

Graphs 2-4 provide some insight into most recent unemployment rates of women and youth by nationality in the EU 25. While foreign citizens are a subset of migrants the differences in the incidence of unemployment between native and foreign women, of whom of third countries, and youth provide a good overview of the variation of labour market opportunities between MS.

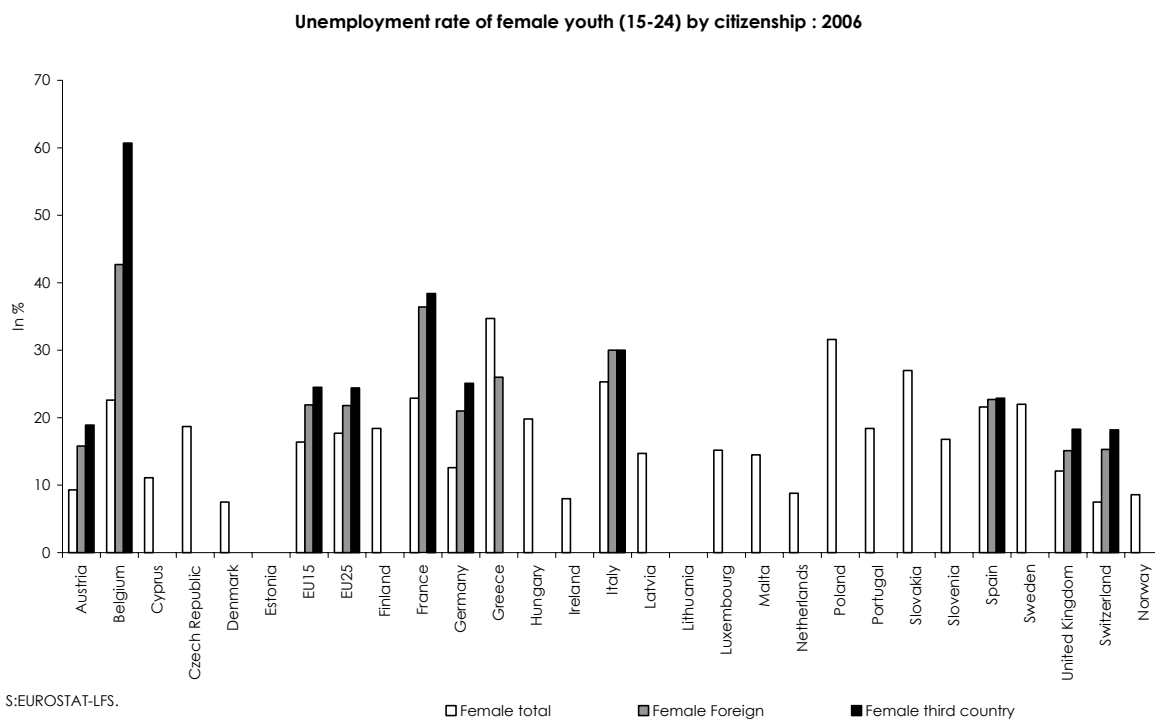
Graph 1:



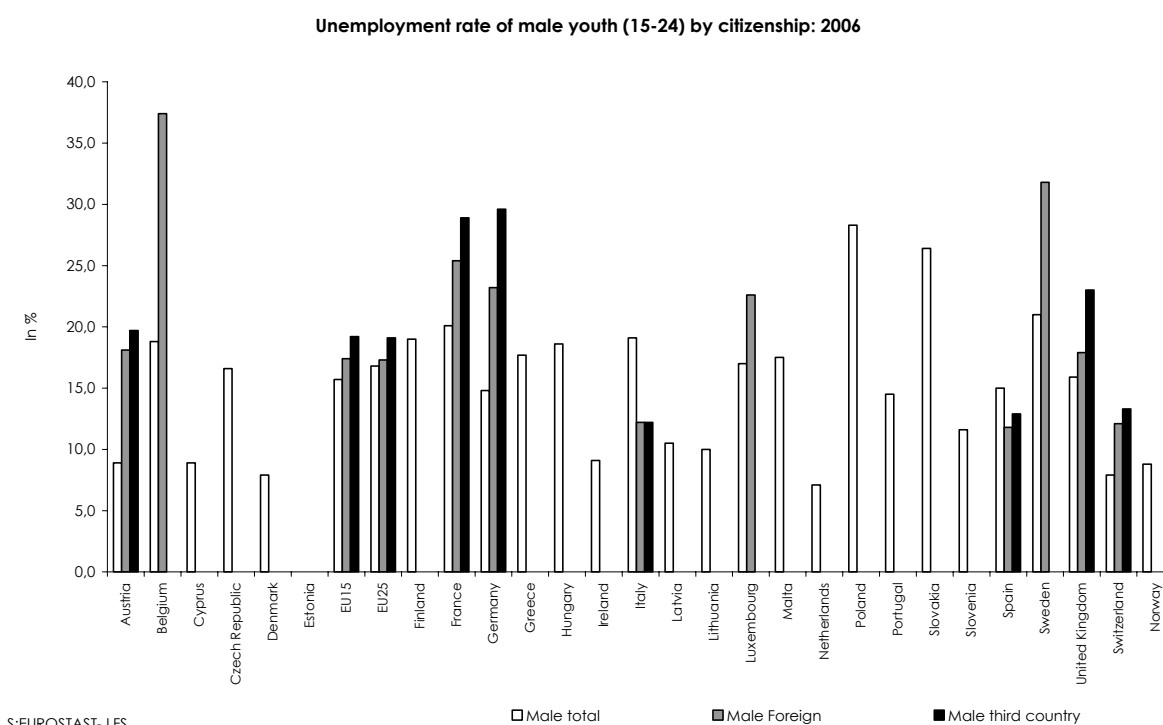
Graph 2:



Graph 3:



Graph 4:



Gender-balanced migrant stocks in the EU today

In Europe today, the migrant stocks are on average more or less gender-balanced, with some variation between MS (OECD, 2008). The employment opportunities of migrant women depend to a large extent on their immigrant status, which tends to define the access rights to the labour market. For example, asylum seekers may or may not access work (depending on national immigrant regime) while waiting for their case to be decided. In contrast, target workers (employer nomination scheme, intercompany transferees, seasonal workers etc.) are almost by definition employed. Settlers who are joining their partners (family formation or reunification) may adapt their employment behaviour to that of the host country, e.g. work in the formal or informal sector. The employment opportunities of migrant women differ between EU-MS as the employment opportunities of women in general differ as a result of various welfare models and economic development levels. In addition, the educational attainment level and occupational structure of migrant women may differ which has an impact on the employment opportunities of women.

The **gender composition** of the various **entry channels of migration** differs and may change over time. A significant part of immigration continues to be labour migration, but family formation and reunification as well as immigration on humanitarian grounds have taken over as the most important driving forces for immigration in Europe in recent decades. **Country**

differences of the gender mix of migrants are partly the result of different migration regimes (Freedman, 2007, Dumont *et al.*, 2007), and partly due to different roles of migrants in the economic development (**temporary work, settlement, asylum, students, illegal migrants**). Family migration for settlement has become the most important entry category of permanent type immigrants in countries as diverse as Austria, Germany, Belgium, France and Sweden. But temporary work also continues to be an important source of migrants, e.g. as domestic helpers, care workers and seasonal workers. Further, in addition to family and labour migration and immigration on humanitarian grounds, increasing mobility of students is also a source of migrants. The United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and Austria³ (OECD, 2006: C3) in particular have experienced large increases in their international student population. Austria has one of the highest shares of foreign students in the EU with 19 percent in 2006 (2004: 14 percent), with a slightly higher share of females, only surpassed by the UK (2004: 16.2 percent of all tertiary students) and Switzerland (2004: 18.2 percent).

The role of the welfare model for labour market outcomes of migrant women

Different models of social organisation, which are historically grown and which constitute "incorporation regimes" have an impact on employment and earnings opportunities of migrants. According to Soysal (1994), each host country has a complex set of institutions which organise and structure socio-economic behaviour of the host population; these basic models of social organisation also structure labour market behaviour of migrants. Brubaker (1992) argues in the same vein, suggesting that different labour market outcomes of immigrants flow from basic differences in national models of 'incorporation', e.g. the French civic territorial model which grants citizenship rights to those born on its territory versus the German ethno-cultural model, which grants citizenship on the basis of ethnic origin (Aussiedler). This differentiation overestimates the role of citizenship in labour market integration, as can be seen in the case of Germany where 'Aussiedler', who received citizenship upon arrival, do not fare better in the labour market than migrant workers. Also, in the case of France, foreign born French citizens have considerable labour market problems.

However, in our view, it is the welfare model rather than *ius soli* versus *ius sanguinis* which plays a dominant role in the integration of migrant women into the labour market. The four basic welfare models in the EU, the Nordic, the Anglo-Saxon, the Continental and the Southern European Model, differ by the different roles and weights assigned to the (labour) market, the state, and the household for the production of goods and services. Countries which relegate a large portion of work, in particular social services, to the household sector by tax incentives or transfer payments (Continental and Southern European countries) have a lower employment rate of women than countries in which the state (Nordic countries) or the

³ Policy reform facilitating access to the labour market after successful completion of the studies may have prompted the increase.

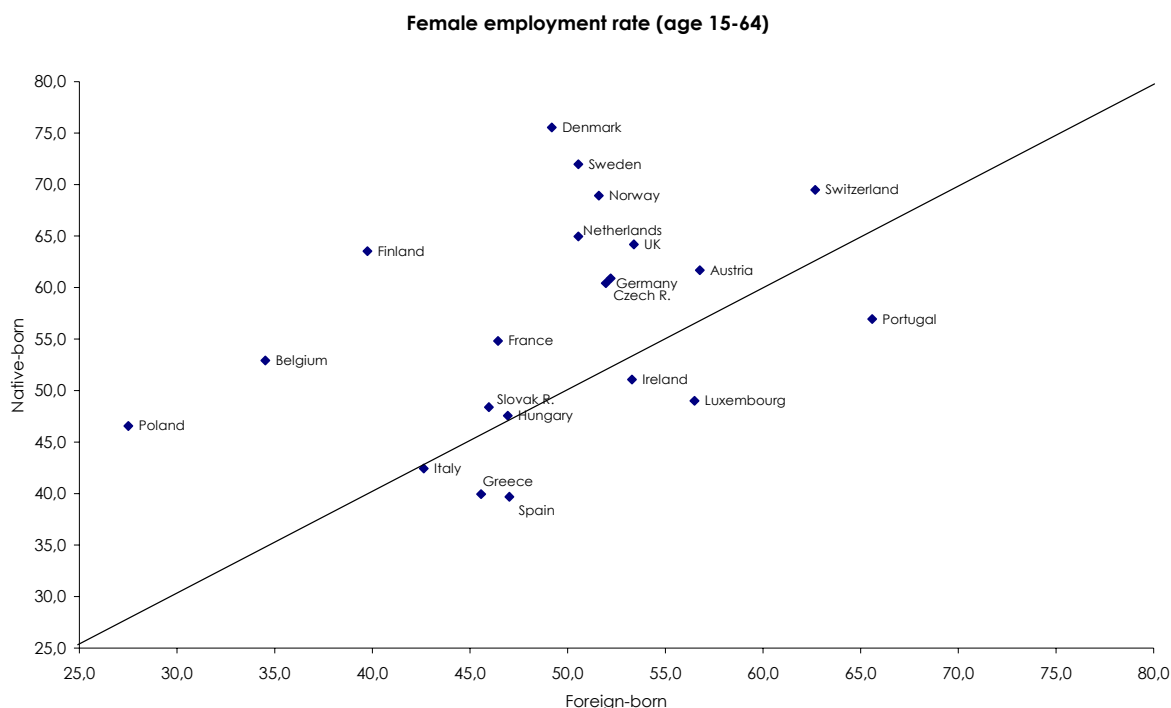
private sector (Anglo-Saxon countries) are the major suppliers of these goods and services. Thus, the role of migrant women is on the one hand determined by the labour market access rights stemming from the immigration model, and the welfare model on the other (*Esping-Andersen et al.*, 2001).

It can be seen from Graph 5 that the Nordic countries, the Anglo-Saxon countries, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg and the Czech Republic have about the same employment rates of migrant women (foreign born), even though the employment rates of native women differ significantly between these countries. Switzerland and Portugal have even higher employment rates of foreign born women. Obviously, the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries including Netherlands have the highest female labour force participation rates due to a high degree of marketisation of household services, while the Southern European countries have the lowest rates. Continental European welfare models take up an intermediate position as far as female employment rates are concerned. The juxtaposition of different immigration models upon this set of welfare models helps explain the different labour market outcomes of migrant women. It is interesting to note that in the Southern European countries (Portugal, Greece, Spain) as well as Ireland and Luxembourg, foreign born women have higher employment rates than native women. In these countries migrant women are either highly skilled professionals or target workers with temporary work contracts with limited residence rights and access to welfare.

While the immigration model determines who may settle and have access to the labour market and under what conditions, the welfare model structures the division of work between market and household work of the host society. Table 2 gives a short overview of the structural aspects of the welfare model. The degree of integration of the population of working age into gainful employment declines as one moves from the North to the South of Europe, together with the proportion of women in employment and the share of the public sector in total employment. The Anglo-Saxon model tends to differ somewhat in that it has a comparatively high degree of integration of women into the labour market but a fairly small public sector. This is due to the transfer of household services to the private sector together with non-profit institutions rather than the public sector.

An important consequence of the different division of labour between the household and market sector, through a complex system of taxes and benefits are not only differing degrees of integration of women into the labour market but also differing degrees of poverty and income inequality.

Graph 5:



Many of the services (as well as production of consumer goods) which have been outsourced from the household sector to the market sector tend to remain almost exclusively a female employment domain.

The Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon welfare models and the social security systems of the Continental European have a system of social protection, which is employment centred. Work is not only the source of income but also the means through which the social dividend is distributed. Thus, integration into the labour market is vital for the wellbeing of the individuals. Work related income and services are complemented by public sector services, like health care, which can be accessed by every resident. Labour market outcomes differ significantly between men and women in the various welfare models; the gender differences are more important than the differences between immigrants and natives, particularly after a certain period of residence (with the length of stay resulting in convergence to behaviour of natives). Given gender and immigrant status, important predictors of labour market outcomes are age, educational attainment level, marital status and length of stay in the host country.

Table 2: Indicators of the European Welfare Systems

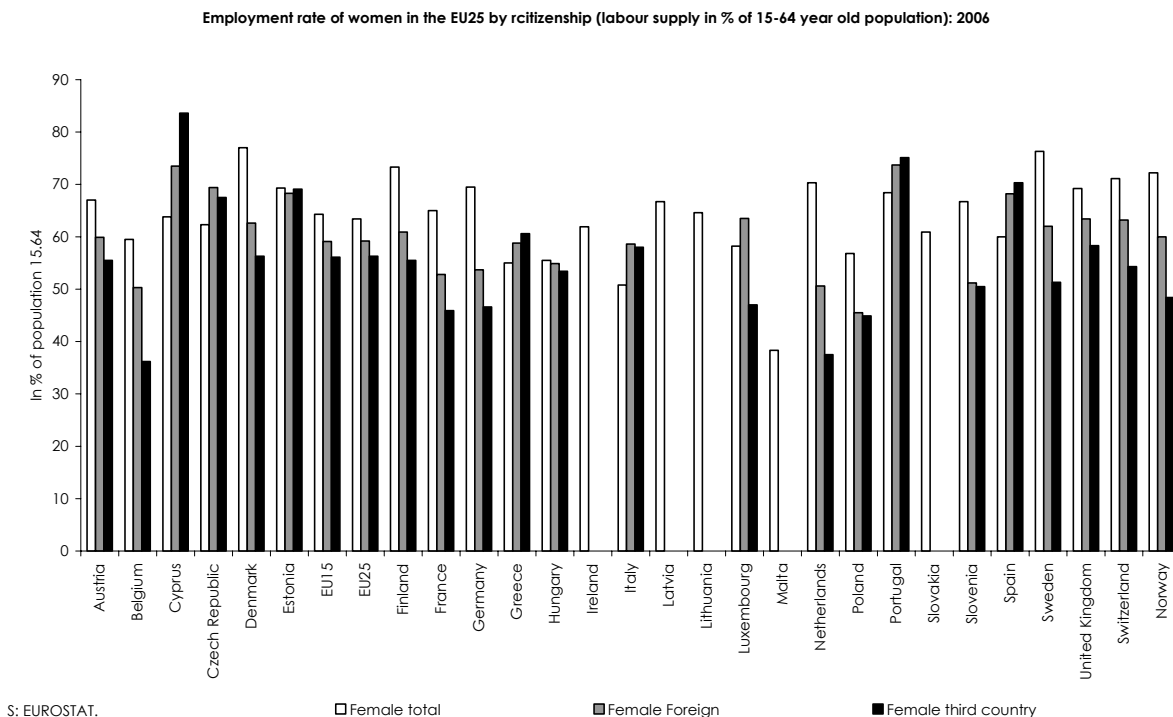
| | | Scandinavian Model | Continental European Model | Anglo-Saxon Model | Southern European Model |
|--|--------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Total employment (in percent of population 15-64) | High | X | | X (UK) | |
| | Middle | | X | X (IE) | |
| | Low | | | | X |
| Female employment (in percent of total employment) | High | X | | X (UK) | |
| | Middle | | X | | |
| | Low | | | X (IE) | X |
| Employment in the public sector (in percent of total employment) | High | X | | | X |
| | Middle | | X | | |
| | Low | | | X | |
| Social expenditures in percent of GDP | High | X | | | |
| | Middle | | X | X (UK) | |
| | Low | | | X (IE) | X |
| Poverty | High | | | X | X |
| | Middle | | X | | |
| | Low | X | | | |
| Income inequality | High | | | X | X |
| | Middle | | X | | |
| | Low | X | | | |

Source: Esping-Andersen et al. (2001), Biffi (2004), Atkinson et al. (2001).

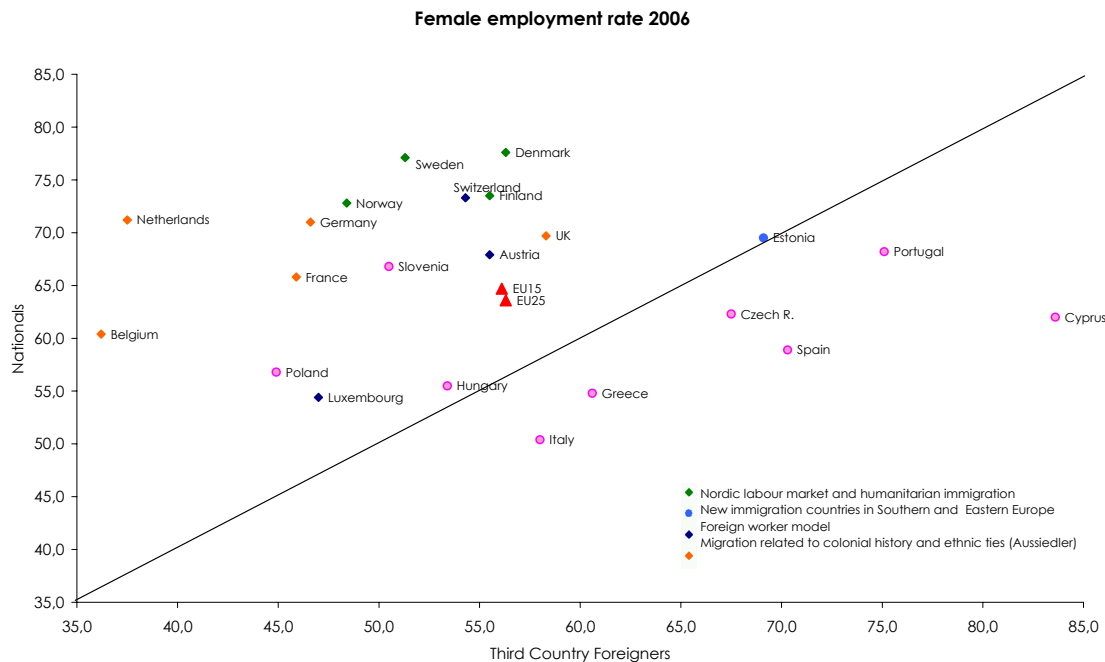
Employment rates of women by citizenship

Graph 6 indicates that the employment rate of women of third countries is on average lower than of all women. Employment rates of migrant women of third countries tend to be particularly low relative to all women in countries with former colonies (France, Netherlands, Belgium), the Nordic countries with a relatively large recent refugee intake (Norway, Sweden, Denmark), and Germany. In contrast, the new immigration countries in Southern and in Eastern Europe tend to have higher employment rates of third country migrant women relative to all women. This may be the result of institutional regulations of the immigration regime (e.g. temporary work contracts) as well as low employment rates of native women as a result of the male breadwinner welfare model. (Graph 7)

Graph 6:



Graph 7:



Earnings differences

Adsera – Chiswick (2004) point out that earnings of immigrant women (and men) are lower upon arrival than those of natives, particularly for foreigners born outside of the EU. The countries with the lowest differences between earnings of natives and migrants are found in Germany and the highest in Sweden (period of analysis 1994-2000, data from the European Community Household Panel – ECHP). For EU-born women there are no earnings differences in Germany, followed by the UK; the highest earnings differences of EU-born women relative to natives are found in Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg and Italy (over 50 percent lower). Women born outside of the EU face even larger age gaps relative to native women; again it is above all the Nordic countries, Southern European countries but also the UK with above average earnings gaps. In contrast, non-EU women in Austria tend to have on average higher earnings than native women. This is somehow surprising due to the bipolar skill composition of non-EU women; on the other hand, Austrian married women are to a large extent part-time workers with limited career orientation, which may account for the difference.

According to *Adsera – Chiswick (2004)*, earnings increase with the level of education, whereby the returns to education in the EU tend to be higher for women than men.

Earnings differences between native women and immigrant women decline with cultural and language proximity. *Chiswick – Miller (1995)* find that this is also true in other immigration countries. Earnings of migrants tend to converge after around 18 years of residence.

The findings of *Adsera – Chiswick (2004)* are corroborated by *Nekby (2002)* on the basis of a larger data set for Sweden; they confirm that integration of migrants into the Swedish labour market is less than satisfactory. No immigrant group entering Sweden in the late 1980s and early 1990s could attain the employment levels of natives, not even after 20 years of residence. While immigrants from other Nordic countries and Western Europeans are faring best, with 15 to 30 percent lower chances of being regularly employed, East Europeans and Non-Europeans have particularly lower chances. While the wages on the job do not differ much between the immigrants and natives, the lower employment security reduces lifetime earnings and career opportunities of migrants.

The role of the education system for labour market outcomes of migrant youth

Youth unemployment rates are on average twice as high as total unemployment rates in the EU. Transition from school to work is, obviously, difficult – in some EU-MS more so than in others (Graph 3 and 4). Countries with a strong vocational orientation of their educational system tend to have lower youth unemployment rates than countries with basically general education streams. Thus the low youth unemployment rates in Austria, the Netherlands and Denmark tend to be the result of the importance of education streams which combine school based theoretical learning with applied on the job training. In contrast, countries like

France and Italy have school based full-time education, which hardly allows for part-time gainful employment alongside. However, in the face of increasing globalisation of markets and rapid technological and structural change, the employment and earnings prospects of persons with medium vocational skills, e.g. apprenticeship education, are deteriorating. Only a system of continued education and training can ensure good employment prospects over the life cycle.

The continued rise in youth unemployment indicates that the industries and enterprises which tend to be entry ports for youth into the labour market are facing economic difficulties. Questions posed to youth as to the reasons for their job loss in the labour market surveys of 1995 and 2003 in Austria suggest that conclusion. An increasing number and proportion of youth say that they lost their jobs because of plant closures or enterprise restructuring. While 15 percent of the job losses for male youth were the result of plant closures or economic problems in 1995, the share rose to 27.4 percent in 2003. For female youth, this was not the major reason for job loss as they tend to work to a larger extent in the services industry which was not affected by massive downsizing and restructuring (7.5 percent of all job losses in 2003) but rather the termination of a temporary work contract. Increasing job turnover as a result of more flexible employment relationships (temporary work, contract work, casual employment, freelancing) together with LIFO employment practices also contribute to higher youth unemployment. Migrant youth is doubly affected by these developments: on the one hand they tend to have a lower educational attainment level, particularly in countries like Austria and Germany, on the other the high demands on the host language proficiency cannot always be met.

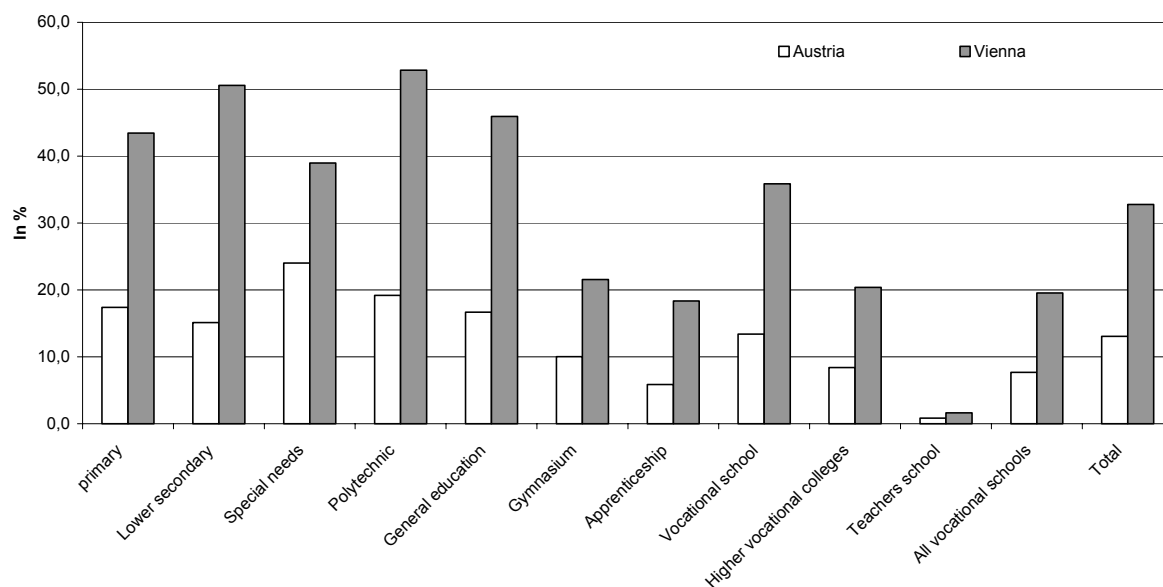
In Austria, at the time of the census in 2001 50.3 percent of the 20- to 24-year olds from third countries had at best finished high school (highest educational attainment level) compared to 13.5 percent of natives. This may be partly the result of a different educational behaviour of immigrant youth, but it is also, at least partly, the result of the sudden increase in the numbers of immigrant youth in the early years of the 1990s. The share of foreign children in compulsory education doubled within a couple of years, which caught the education system by surprise. While the share of foreign students had risen only slowly between 1980-81 and 1989-90, namely by 2.2 percentage points to 4.5 percent, the share doubled within a couple of years to 8 percent 1992, a result of refugee and migrant worker inflows in the wake of the break down of Yugoslavia and the fall of the Iron Curtain. From the mid 1990s onwards, inflows slowed down such that the share rose only slowly since then to reach 9.4 percent 2002-2003.

The inflow of migrant youth was not evenly spread across all regions of Austria but rather concentrated in large agglomerations. Where the inflow was particularly pronounced, e.g. in Vienna, the ability of schools to adapt to the new demands was not sufficient to ensure equal learning opportunities of migrant youth. Thus, the educational attainment level of youth with refugee background from former Yugoslavia and other migrant youth entering Austria in the

1990s tended to be below average not least because the education system could not cope with the sudden rise in the numbers of migrant youth with special needs (Biffi – Bock-Schappelwein, 2003). These special needs arise in relation to the limited German language skills of migrants. The Austrian school system could not come up with adequate support for migrant youth, in particular children from former Yugoslavia and Turkey, who had difficulty following classes and often ended up in special needs schools. Graph 8 indicates in what element of the school system the inflow of migrant children with a first language which is not German was particularly pronounced. This is important information for policy makers who want to promote the integration of migrant youth and improve their educational skills.

Graph 8:

Share of pupils who do not have German as their first language (in % of all students) in Austria and Vienna 2004/05

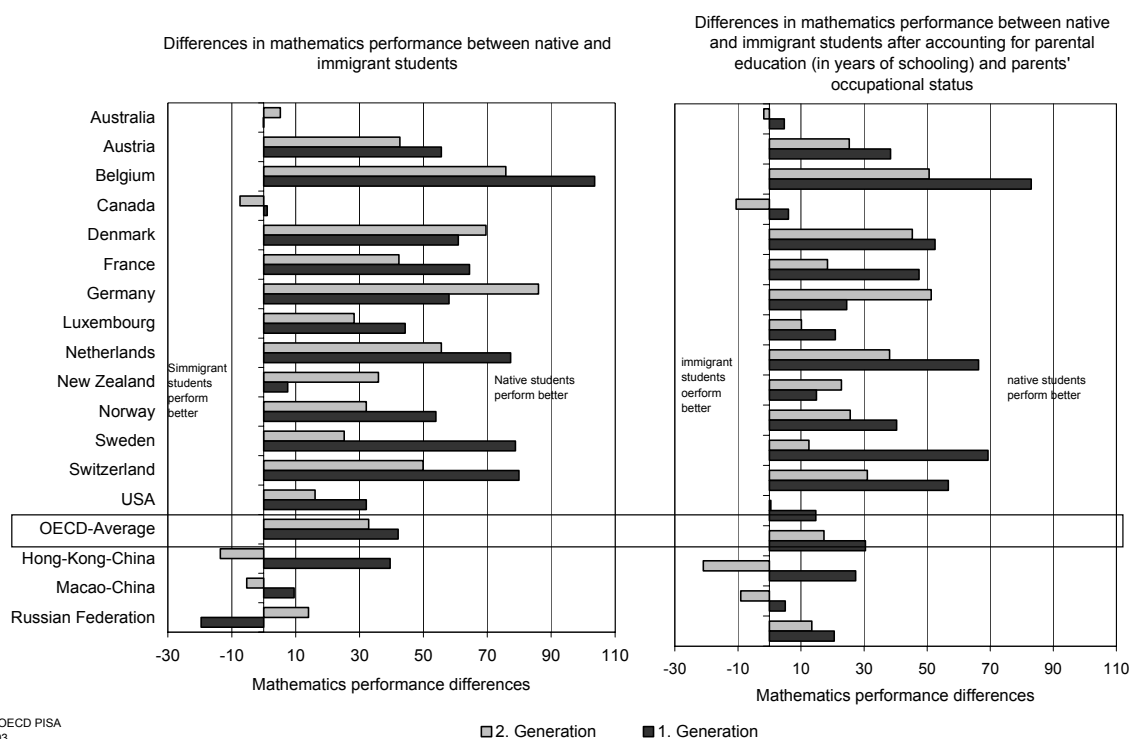


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Another aspect which contributes to the slow improvement of the educational attainment level of migrant youth is the high correlation of the educational attainment levels of youth with those of their parents. This is to say that social mobility through education is slow and limited in Austria particularly in comparison with Nordic countries. This is the picture one gets from a special EU survey in the year 2000 (Iannelli, 2003). According to the report by Iannelli, 52 percent of Austrian youth have the same educational attainment level as their parents, 26 percent go beyond and 22 percent fall behind their parents' educational achievements. The pronounced selection of the Austrian education system by social status is particularly harmful for migrants with low educational background as they have limited capacity to give their children proper guidance in matters of education.

The question to what extent the education achievements differ between the first and second generation of migrants and the natives can be judged by the OECD's Programme for International Students Assessment – PISA 2003 (OECD, 2006B). The survey allows to distinguish between three subgroups of 15 year old students – first-generation students (foreign-born students with foreign-born parents), second-generation students (students born in the country of assessment with foreign-born parents), and native students (students with at least one parent born in the country of assessment). Students born in the country who have one foreign-born parent (children of "combined" families) were included in the native category, as previous research indicates that these students perform similarly to native students.

Graph 9:



It can be seen from Graph 9 that first generation migrant youth have the greatest difficulties in coping with the requirements of the school system, the foreign environment and often a foreign language such that their performance in mathematics on average in the OECD is worse than that of native students and usually also worse than that of second generation migrants. In the majority of the 14 OECD countries included in the PISA study 2003, the gap between first-generation and native students is more than 62 points: equivalent to a performance difference of a full proficiency level. Belgium has the most pronounced difference between first generation migrants and natives. In contrast, there is no significant performance difference in mathematics between first-generation and native students in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Macao-China. In these countries, immigrants tend to

be at the upper end of the skill level, which tends to have a positive impact on the educational performance of their children (skilled migration programmes).

Comparing the performance differences of first-generation and second-generation students gives some insight into the effectiveness of a country's school system in promoting the educational performance of students, independent of social or immigrant status. A priori one might expect that second generation migrants do not have any performance differences relative to natives as they have spent their entire school career in the host country. However, in three of the OECD countries – Belgium, Denmark and Germany – the disparity is greater than one proficiency level, while in Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland the disparity is just below one proficiency level. Germany is the country with the largest disparity. Second-generation students lag behind their native peers by 93 score points, which is equivalent to one and a half proficiency levels, and are worse performers in mathematics than first generation migrants. Second-generation and first-generation students who speak a language at home other than the language of instruction are at a disadvantage compared to native students and migrant students who speak the host country language at home. The gender differences within the second-generation and first-generation student groups are not significant in most countries and follow the same pattern as native students.

As far as the socio-economic status and educational attainment level of the parents of immigrant youth are concerned, the majority are at a significant disadvantage compared to their native peers. In most cases, the pattern is similar for the families of both first-generation and second-generation students. Differences between families of first-generation and second-generation students may reflect upward or downward social mobility but also changes in the composition of immigrant groups that can be caused by fluctuations in immigrant inflow and admission patterns over time. Graph 9 shows that in general, if one corrects for the educational attainment level of the parents, differences in mathematics performance between migrant youth and natives decline.

In view of the declining demand for unskilled labour, the relatively large proportion of youth with a low educational attainment level, often of migrant background, is a problem both for the individuals as well as society at large. Good education does not only reduce unemployment but contributes to the competitive edge of the economic system and thereby to the welfare of all.

The role of institutions for economic success

The economic outcomes of migrant youth and women are the result of interactions between institutional incentive structures, market opportunities and strategic decisions of migrants. In that sense the legal circumstances of entry have an impact. Labour market access is constrained for asylum seekers and temporary workers from third countries; also family

members who join their kin in the country of settlement may have restricted access to the labour market either due to certain waiting periods or labour market testing.

The vulnerability of migrant women is partly flowing from the entry category, partly from the educational attainment level and occupational skills⁴. As in the case of male migrants, women tend to have a bipolar skill structure. While highly skilled professionals seem to be doing as well as natives, low skilled migrant women or ethnic minorities (BIVS, 2005) are often marginalised or altogether excluded from the labour market.

While women from outside the EU tend to have on average a lower degree of integration into the labour market and higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts as well as natives or citizens from another EU-MS, we are not to assume that the experience of immigration is more positive for third country origin men than women. Literature indicates that immigration, while difficult, opens up opportunities for women, which often are not accessible to women in their countries of origin. *Foner* (1978) studies Jamaican women in London, *Pessar* (1984) Dominican women immigrants into the USA, and *Schrover* (2006) immigrant men and women in the Netherlands.

While immigrant women may occupy jobs with limited employment and income security and often hard working conditions, their settlement in the EU allows them to break with traditional roles and patterns of behaviour and thereby gain self-determination. This is not to deny, however, that the labour market outcomes of migrant women are on average unsatisfactory, as the study of the situation of migrant women in Austria (*Fassmann*, 2007) and other EU-MS indicates (*OECD*, 2005, *Dustmann et al.*, 2003, *Spence*, 2003).

Research into youth labour markets indicates that it is not only the labour market which represents a challenge for youth but also the education system and its capacity to adapt to the increasing diversity of the students and the changing skill needs to raise the employability of youth.

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⁴ *Pedraza* (1991) points out that in order to be able to promote integration and participation one has to understand how ethnicity, class, and gender interact in a process of migration and settlement.

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