



Recommendations for Europe - Results of the forums

Forum 7: “Migrant Elders - Research in Europe“

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Migrant Elders – Research in Europe

Results from Forum 7



Moderator: Dr Josef Hilbert, Institut Arbeit und Technik

Introduction: “Elderly migration – state of arts in Europe”

Dr Sándor Illés, Hungarian Central Statistical Office

“Ethnic and Migrant Elders: Research in Bulgaria”

Prof Anna Krasteva, New Bulgarian University

“Participation of elderly transnational migrants in local politics and urban development. Expressions of European citizenship practice?”

Dr Michael Janoschka, Spanish National Research Council

“Minority Elders in the Netherlands“

Dr Chan Choenni, The Netherlands Ministry of Spatial Planning, Housing and The Environment

“Migrant elders in the EU – Population and data sources“

Dr Wolfgang Seifert, Statistical Office of North Rhine Westphalia



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Key points of presentations (I)

- difficult to find comparable data for all EU-27 countries; lowest common definition is the “foreign born concept” (only first generation!), in 2007 6,3% of all European Citizens aged 60 + were foreign born (in total 6.8 million), higher amounts of women (Wolfgang Seifert)
- A better typology of notions and concepts is needed (Sándor Illés)
- little European-wide research on migrant elders is general (Chan Choenni)
- little existing research in the Netherlands is outdated (Chan Choenni)
- disadvantaged life situation not true for all groups, great variety of groups; importance of ethnic infrastructure and community (Chan Choenni)
- Hindustani elders: small-scale study shows quite good life situation (lesser loneliness, satisfied with income, extended networks, differences between widowed men and women, health problems of men, few interethnic contacts, adaption of modern values) (Chan Choenni)



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Key points of presentations (II)

- remarkable phenomenon: increasing migration of retirement and amenity-led migration to the coastal regions of the Mediterranean; major changes concerning social and political participation of these groups of migrant elders, migrants from northern countries founded their own parties in many Spanish municipalities and are active in local councils (Michael Janoschka)
- no research on migrant elders in Bulgaria, very low shares of migrants in Bulgaria, two largest majorities Turkish and Roma, new immigration mainly urban apart from British retirement migration to rural areas, largest immigrating groups from Russia and former SU and other European countries and USA (mainly highly qualified and young); three types of groups of elders: groups without elders (Chinese), groups with elders (Arabs and Russians) and groups of elders (British) (Anna Krasteva)



Migrant Elders – Research in Europe

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Necessity of more and better comparable research in Europe?

- Yes!!!!
- High interest and willingness to co-operate in the context of a European Research Network

Why?

- Statistical shortfalls on international and national levels
- Little representative data
- Differing concepts and definitions of groups of migrant elders
- Lack of comparable research at a European level
- Issues of Ageing and Ethnicity not covered in existing academic networks such as IMISCOE
- Some countries can benefit from the advanced state of research of others
- Increasing importance of the topic, rising numbers of migrant elders across Europe



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In what areas is research required?

1. **Basic research – filling gaps** (the situation of migrant elders in new EU member states such as Bulgaria, updated research on migrant elders in the Netherlands, improvement of statistical databases)
2. **Research on concepts, forms and typologies** (concerning the different groups of migrant elders)
3. **Research on the impacts of migrant elders on host society** (how have they influenced the host society, aspects of social and political participation)
4. **Theoretical Research** (constructions of identity, transnationality of migrant elders, roles of European, urban and local citizenships)
5. **Practice-Oriented Research** (combination of research and practical social action for instance to improve the social, cultural and political integration of migrant elders)

Outline of an European Research Network



Orientation / General Approach

- a change of paradigm: focus on competencies and social potentials rather than on deficiencies
- multi-disciplinary as well as practice- and application-oriented
- consideration of heterogeneity of the group and gender issues
- main focus: integration of migrant elders and their equal access to all social, cultural and economic and political spheres
- theoretical approach: concept of active ageing (WHO)
- definition: Active Ageing “allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well being throughout the life course and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capacities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they require assistance”.



Outline of an European Research Network



Goals (scientific / academic level)

- enquiry into the present state of research concerning migrant elders in Europe, exchange of research results and identification of research gaps, scientific justification for the formulation and implementation of a research agenda
- accomplishment of comparing, multi-disciplinary, practice- and application-oriented research in the field of „Active Ageing of Migrant Elders“ in Europe
- development of mutual (research) projects, for instance, within the scope of concrete research programmes of the EU
- evaluation of practice-oriented projects
- co-operation with other existing academic networks in the field of migration and integration research

Outline of an European Research Network



Goals (practical level)

- **set up of exemplary cooperation projects with welfare associations, housing associations and local authorities in particular regions**
- **implementation of research results**
- **identification and exchange of good practice**
- **installation of a European-wide expert pool concerning the topic of migrant elders**

Outline of an European Research Network



Goals (political level)

- **political consulting and consulting of decision makers in different fields and at different levels**
- **sensitising relevant key players across different political, economic, social, welfare and voluntary levels concerning the potential of migrant elders**

Participants

- **researchers from as many European member states as possible**
- **20 - 25 persons from different academic, practice-oriented and private institutions**
- **15 interested researchers so far (3 Great Britain, 1 Bulgaria, 6 Germany, 1 Switzerland, 1 Hungary, 1 Netherlands, 1 Spain, 1 Italy)**

Outline of an European Research Network



Products I

- an annual conference
- publication of an in-house journal “Active Ageing of Migrant Elders across Europe“; two editions per year (spring and autumn)
- edition of an in-house publication series (irregularly)
- annual award for junior scientists (winter)
- publication of a newsletter (approximately four editions per year)
- initiation of country-specific campaigns that are addressed to policy and decision makers and promote an awareness of the life achievements of migrant elders

Outline of an European Research Network



Products II

- **smaller issue-oriented activities, such as workshops (for instance, concerning health) that also prepare for the next annual conference**
- **adoption of guidelines, checklists or standards for the implementation of recommendations for policy and practice**
- **development of strategies and modules which provide qualifications for decision makers**

Duration

- **2008-2012**

Outline of an European Research Network



Action Programme

- **2008: Set-Up Phase**
- **2009: Set-Up and Foundation Phase**
- **2010: First Year / Key Aspect „Housing“**
- **2011: Second Year / Key Aspect „Political and Social Participation“**
- **2012: Third Year / Key Aspect „Income and Health“**

Funding

- **state government of North Rhine-Westphalia**
- **third-party funds**
- **Sponsorships**
- **EU**

Outline of an European Research Network



Next Steps

- **First workshop in North Rhine Westphalia at the end of 2008 on possible contents**
- **2008/2009 set-up and formation phase**
- **identification and designation of researchers**
- **enquiries and elaboration of the “Code of Practice and Behaviour“**
- **development of a catalogue of criteria concerning the admission of additional researchers in the network**
- **development of criteria regarding an internal quality management**
- **elaboration of adequate organisational structures**
- **identification of funding possibilities**



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