



INSTYTUT POLITYKI SPOŁECZNEJ
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL POLICY

RAPORTY I ANALIZY
INSTYTUTU POLITYKI SPOŁECZNEJ

‘Difference’

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Ksenofobia w Europie
Formy dyskryminacji instytucjonalnej, politycznej i społecznej

Seria
RAPORTY MIGRACYJNE
nr 3/2003

Section I.

Introduction. The difference itself.

Human *self* is never static. Each *self* is permanently *on his/her way*¹. (Skarga, 1997, p. 196) This metaphor is valid in relation to everybody but its meaning is doubly accurate if it concerns migrants. In consequence older persons become different than themselves in their early period of life; and even the same persons in the same period but in another contexts think and behave differently (if they instantaneously take another life road...).

Philosophers remind that a human spirit cannot stand the *chaos of diversity*; the identity of men emerging from the inside helps to combat the fear of difference surrounding them everywhere² (Skarga, 1997, p. 132). The feeling of their own identity gives them strength to resist external threats.

Therefore individuals are changing from the beginning of their lives. But what means they use to enrich their own initial individuality? Another Bergson's metaphor seems useful: Human self is like a snowball running down and unconsciously getting new strata of different contents. Philosophers ask: where is the demarcation line between myself and the environment? Am I anything more than a slight deviation proper to exemplars of my biological species – or of my subculture? (Skarga, 1997, p. 273)³ This kind of philosophical questions provoked by their experience, may come to the mind of every migrant, even if his / her personality is very simple and plain.

Soon other questions come: if, however, I am somebody specific and different, which ethnic/cultural group am I the most alike, - am I better or worse, - do I have more or less? We should not forget about all these dimensions of difference which **do not** lead to discrimination or symbolic violence. Or which do not deserve any special protection.

Other important problems worth to be mentioned (if not to be deeply analyzed...) are the **differences between our eight countries; and diversity of some -teen (?) countries our respondents have come from.** If we use data published in the last Human Development Report 2003 we can try to count how many dollars and how many expected years of life “we win” due to migration. This measure is of course too simplified and exaggerated (rather *metaphoric*), but suggestive. Let us imagine that an Ukrainian wins 5100 dollars per capita (9 450 dollars comparing to 4 350 = 2,17 times more than in his/her country) and 4,4 years of life if he/she moves to Poland; and wins much more in Sweden. A Pole wins 14 540 dollars and 5,1 years of life if he / she finds himself / herself in France. Much more dramatic inequalities between Zimbabwe, Poland, Italy and United Kingdom are. Therefore migrants win **more**. Does more mean different and **better**? Do we have to pay for the more by losing our former identity? Or, on opposite, is the new identity an extra bonus offered to us? Another perspective: if we want to obtain more, are we forced to rely on our old identity? There are many complex combinations and reactions of all parties. Let us use an example taken from the Polish radio, as the final accord of that part of the chapter: an elderly Ukrainian, whose daughter made an artistic

¹Barbara Skarga, *Tożsamość i różnica. Eseje metafizyczne* (Identity and Difference. Metaphysical Essays), p. 196, Krakow 1997. This phrase sounds like a first verse of the gospel song *I'm on my way...*

² Ibidem, p. 134

³ Ibidem, p. 273

career in Poland, paid a visit to her. And he could not stand to stay in that country any longer, explaining to her daughter: *it too colourful, too rich around you, in the streets, it makes me upset if I remember the streets in Kiev.*

	Probability at birth of not surviving to age 60 (% of cohort)	Life expectancy at birth (years) (2001)	GDP per capita (PPP US\$) (2001)	Country Human Poverty Index (HPI-2) rank
Sweden	7.3	79,9	24,180	1
United Kingdom	8.9	77,9	24,160	15
Austria	9.5	78,3	26,730	
France	10.0	78,7	23,990	8
Germany	9.2	78,0	25,350	6
Italy	8.6	78,6	24,670	11
Cyprus	8.5	78,1	21,190	
Poland	15.6	73,6	9,450	
Countries of origin of immigrants (Examples)				
Ukraine	23,0	69,2	4,350	
Zimbabwe	89,9	35,4	2,280	

Source: Human Development Indicators, United Nations Development Programme

Section II.

The 'Difference' in the Focus Group Discussions

Introduction

In this section we would like to present some opinions of immigrants relating to their feeling of being *different* and the perception of them as *different* by the host societies according to their opinion. As our research has a qualitative character, in the analysis we are trying to avoid any quantitative generalisations, which means that we will not create eg. any national models of difference in eight European countries. The results of the research cannot be representative in the statistical meaning, so we decided to consider all the immigrants from eight European countries as one population of the immigrants in Europe and find out some general sociological mechanisms answering the following questions:

- Are immigrants/minorities perceived as *different* by the host societies? Are they forced to define themselves in terms of "us" and "them" or perhaps sometimes they do it on their own free will (feeling different identity)?
- What do adversity frames (us/them) depend on? How are they manifested? In what situations do they occur? What are the rhetoric and symbolic means of exclusion / inclusion? How the frames us/them have shaped the ways in which immigrants/minority groups perceive themselves?

Such a general approach does not mean, that we are not trying to refer to the contexts of specific countries. We will contextualize the responses but only in relation to the statements of our respondents, strictly avoiding national generalisations. Furthermore, in order to contextualize the responses, to all quotations we add the descriptions not only of a country, but of a focus group and a respondent.

The category of difference was manifested, directly or indirectly, by the majority of responses during focus group discussions. The responses, directly referring to difference made a vast resource out of which the above quotations were chosen. In the below analysis we decided to group the responses concerning difference according to three approaches. We start with the most empirical category of responses, it is these relating to everyday-situations of immigrants: **The perception of difference in its physical and linguistic aspect**. Then we would like to present a little more general category - **Stereotyping** concerning specific groups of immigrants in eight European countries. The next part, **Isolation and self-isolation within one's difference versus openness of and towards the host societies**, concerns the most general level - responses concerning openness of the host societies and of immigrants in general, above mentioned symbolic and verbal means of exclusion / inclusion; the real approaches and perception of different categories of immigrants in the eight European countries.

We realise, that our categorisation of excerpts and its logical order is not perfect and sometimes the responses can suit to more than one category. Obviously the above mentioned categories cross out with each other. Putting the excerpt in a specific category was sometimes our subjective decision, but we were trying to categorise the responses according to the issue on which, in our opinion, the stress was put.

1. The perception of difference. Physical and linguistic aspects.

The two most perceivable signs of difference are the appearance and spoken language (accent). In this section we would like to present how different appearance and speaking different language can affect the everyday-life, especially during incidental contacts eg. in the street, in the institution.

It is worth noting that some immigrants expressed a natural (neutral) feeling of difference according to their appearance, due to their anthropological features on the one hand, as a Vietnamese in Poland (ZG5) said:

ZG5: When I came to Poland for the first time, all seem to me very tall. In my country people are much shorter
(Poland, Zielona Gora; Open Group Z1;
ZG5: Origin: Vietnam; Sex: M; Months in Poland: 9; Occupation: Student)

and cultural – on the other hand:

Mod: and when they start speaking with you, do they hear, that....

ELE6:

[They recognise me by my teeth

(Poland, Warsaw, European Less Highly Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W6;
ELE6: Origin: Belarus; Sex: F; Age: 41/50; Years in Poland: 1; Education: Technician; Occupation: Babysitter)

The second of the above responses concerns gold teeth, which in perception of the Poles are characteristic mainly for some people coming from the former Soviet Union and the respondent – a woman in her forties from Belarus living in Poland (ELE6) – was aware of the this fact.

Actually the majority of responses concerning the appearance mostly referred to the perception of the colour of skin in the host society. Here comes the response of a 30-year old Cameroonian from Cyprus (I.1):

I.1: There are many black Cypriots historically but they don't have experience. (...) The problem here is that they are black and it is difficult for typical Cypriots to understand that someone can be Cypriot and black. I think the problem here is the colour. For being Cypriot and being Greek is not only the language and the religion. To them it also has to do with skin colour and also the hair type. It is easy for a Cypriot to just look and say by the way his hair is that he is not Cypriot. You have to be the way they look to accept you as a Cypriot. It's not just religion and language, it's the skin colour, the hair.

(Cyprus, Nicosia;

I.1: Cameroonian; Age: 30; Sex: M)

The following comment was made by a 38 year-old female community worker who moved to the UK from Pakistan 35 years ago (MF1), in the context of a discussion about the extent to which Britain welcomes migrants:

MF1: The feeling's more cold I think (.) at the beginning it was something new (.) it's like when children have a new toy and play with it and it's fun (1.0) I think we were new in the country because of our different clothes, different food, so it was nice, but then when you've got too much of it like becomes like 'Hold on a minute now this is getting a bit (.) it's supposed to be Britain you know (.) it's supposed to be a white country you know'

(England, Manchester; 'More highly educated' group;

MF1: 38 year-old female community worker who moved to the UK from Pakistan 35 years ago)

What immigrants found troublesome in every-day contacts was eg. being reminded about their difference by staring at them. For a respondent from Zambia (NELE7) living in Poland, the fact of raising interest among the Poles of his being different was so troublesome that he called it "intolerance":

Mod: When a man comes to such a country as Poland (.) another culture, customs, habits, people (.) what makes the largest problem (.) you mentioned the language, but what else

NELE7: humph... intolerance (1.0), for example in Warsaw it doesn't happen any more though it did (2.0) in Zambia it does not happen that people stare at you FROM one end of the street almost to the other end (↑) well (1.0) it reminds that you are STILL not at home (.) humph, such an interest (.) I don't know, is it mentality of the Poles or something (↓) (2.0)

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;

NELE7: Origin: Zambia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 10; Education: Doctor; Occupation: Unemployed)

One may suppose that it was a regular interest which has been constantly diminishing due to a more often presence of foreigners from Africa or Asia in Poland and it is not that strong any more: "In Warsaw it doesn't happen".

Actually in other countries, eg. England, where black people are more common the issue of an interest in the street when a person is black raised too. Here comes the discussion between a Ghanaian (CF2) a Pakistani (CF1) woman:

CF2: It's difficult to generalize [about migrants] people (.) I mean like people on the streets see a black person and think 'where are you from?' it isn't like that if you are white and from somewhere else

CF1: yes that's right I think a lot of what I get is not because we are migrants but more because we are black

(England, London, 'Less Highly' Educated Non-European Group;

CF2: Ghanaian female;

CF1: Pakistani woman

Some respondents seemed to accept the fact of being stared at, explaining it with a natural astonishment, as a 27-year woman from Ivory Coast in Italy:

NAPLES 2

7 (Ivory Coast) – '... The first time that I went to the gym, everyone looked at me. Some of them were good. But gradually, all those that looked at me got to know me and now we laugh and joke together.'

(Italy, Naples1; 'Non-European' with low level of education;

7: Ivory Coast; Age: 27; Sex: M; Years in Italy: 3

or a young student from Vietnam in Poland:

ST9: I was a little shocked and the Poles were shocked as well, because suddenly slanting-eyed appeared ((laugh)). It was such (1,0) just (1.0) I wouldn't say "shock" but astonishment.

(Poland, Warsaw; Students Group W2;

ST9: Origin: Vietnam; Sex: F; Age: 21; Years in Poland: 14; Education: Student in sociology)

The most traumatic phenomenon was the case of pointing one's finger at the *others* or even commenting, that happened a.o. during discussion between men in their thirties from Congo (NELE1) and Zambia (NELE7) in Poland:

NELE1: My colleague was walking in the street (.) and a mother with her child were walking in the street and she said: LOOK, LOOK a Negro ((pointing his finger imitating the mother, in a low voice)) as if something

[worse (↑) something queer (↑)

[

NELE7: It's a common phenomenon

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;

NELE1: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 13; Education: Engineer; Occupation: Odd jobs eg. French language teacher;

NELE7: Origin: Zambia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 10; Education: Doctor; Occupation: Unemployed)

A 17-year old girl in Austria (SCH-F3) and a woman from Sweden (SWLT4) – both of a Turkish origin – had or heard about similar experiences:

SCH-F3 for example once at the Donauinsel we (.) together (.) with her (.) and (0.5) ahm an Austrian woman with a bike and I think her son was with her (.) and she stopped and said look darling these girls are Tschuschen [bad word for Turkish people] they are foreigners we call them Tschuschen (.) we were looking like this we were really disappointed

Abstract 4 SCH

(Austria, Vienna; Secondary Professional School Group SCH;

SCH-F3: Austrian; Age: 17; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship)

SWLT4: A friend in my class, she is from Somalia, who lived in Småland, she said that there were only Swedes there, she moved from there, she and her family. They were not accepted, simply. They got racist comments and gazes/eyes (blickar) and such. SO they moved

(Sweden, Stockholm; Low Educated Group

SWLT4: Turkey; Sex: F)

It is worth noting that pointing a finger at *others* concerned not only the appearance, but nationality as well. Eg. in Poland a student from Russia said:

ZG1: I came and was looked at as if I was green, as if I came from cosmos. They just came, opened the class door and asked WHICH IS THAT RUSKA? So I felt very bad, for very long. They stared at me and what's more ((considering something))

**(Poland, Zielona Gora; Open Group Z1;
ZG1: Origin: Russia; Sex: F; Age: 21/30; Years in Poland: 8; Occupation: Student)**

Sometimes respondents seemed to exaggerate claiming that all talking about one's skin colour are willing to underline distinctions between *us* and *them*. A respondent from Zambia in one of the Polish groups (NELE7) was complaining about the fact, that eg. sport commentators notice that a football-player is black and *do not notice* the white ones.

NELE7: Me, as a person who often watches TV, especially sports (.) hear foreign commentators and compare with our commentators (1.0) we have a colour TV set (.) why to remind (.) O! Olisadebe, a black foreword in a Polish team (.) and when Świerczewski has a ball they don't say (.) a white foreword (.) French commentators don't say : Oh!

((everybody laugh))

NELE5: It's an exaggeration ((moving hands in a gesture of denial, laughing))

**(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;
NELE7: Origin: Zambia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 10; Education: Doctor; Occupation: unemployed;**

NELE5: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 21/30; Years in Poland: 5; Education: Economy / Art; Occupation: Artist)

This statement may prove some over-sensitiveness of the respondent NELE7 as to his physical difference. Olisadebe is generally accepted and the best known Polish football player with a black skin. Due to a relatively small number of black persons in Poland a black skin player in a Polish team was unique up till not long ago, thus it seems quite natural that his difference focused attention. On the other hand one may imagine a similar situation, say when a single long hair player appears among the rest of the team consisting of players with a very short hair. Would it be anything wrong to say: a long hair Polish foreword... It may be interesting to note that another black skin respondent – from Congo (NELE5) – expresses a different opinion.

Some respondents claimed, that the fact that one *looked like* a representative of the host society made one's life easier, what was present eg. in the statement of the respondent of a South-African origin in Austria (ENE-M2) or in Germany (Leipzig-1, M4):

M2: I have an advantage (.) I look Austrian
((all laugh))

ENE-M2: Not being (0.5) black or any anywhere off from brown onwards you get different attitudes towards people like yourself you are very clearly one of the darkest (.) that's why you must like (unread.0.5) more promise than for example she would (0.5) she looks like she could be Turkish (.) nothing against (0.5) but just (unread.0.5) people might say she might be Turkish that is again a different label (unread.0.5) people have a different attitude towards them (0.5) and that's why for me I walk into a place (.) and as soon as I open my mouth then I'm not Austrian (.) but until that stage they wouldn't give me two two looks (0.5) and that makes it (.) easier handling the authorities (.) handling some in a shop (.) even with with colleagues (1.0) will you get in

there first (unread.0.5) people integrate you at least in the in the (unread.0.5) Austrian system because you have to since you have to work with them they have to integrate you (1.5) so that's my advantage now

Abstract 2 ENE

(Austria, Vienna; Educated Non-Europeans;

M2: Origin: South Africa, Nationality: Austrian; Age: 35; Sex: M; Education: graduate; Occupation: IT specialist / teacher)

Leipzig-1, M4: I also think eh from the way he looks as long as he eh didn't speak then he would have no problems at all he is taken immediately for a German that is really a point an important point that we are confronted with every day

(Germany, Leipzig1)

Another aspect of difference is the spoken language (accent). Respondents noted, that speaking the dominant language fluently made the distance to the dominant group much smaller. Furthermore speaking fluently the dominant language makes it possible to defend oneself when it is necessary. Here come the statements of a Polish man in Germany (Berlin, M1), an immigrant from Sudan in Austria (ENE-M1) and a Ukrainian woman in Poland (Lu11):

Berlin, M1: I've already noticed that the ones who speak fluently (-) fluently and well (-) eh let's talk about Germany (-) German they have it much easier than the ones who stutter (--). Then you are immediately (unread 1.9: all speak at the same time) immigration offices (--). Then you are immediately put into another a certain category (.) and then of course they allow themselves (.) the ones that deal with foreigners of course (-) like a [self-saver?] here and then (-) in the personality a well comments and stuff (.) it's because you can't defend yourself

(Germany, Berlin;

M1: Polish; Age: 56; Sex: M; Education: Construction engineer; Occupation: Social consultant)

ENE-M1: if you know the language ok ok (2.0) you can talk to anybody and they'll accept you as a person

Abstract 3 ENE

(Austria, Vienna

ENE-M1: Origin: Sudan; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 36; Sex: M; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Engineer

Lu11: By the first conversation, one can feel the accent and it is enough to make us different (.) for example for the first seven years I was feeling different (↓) (.) up to now I feel sometimes in this way, although I overcame it (↓) (.) but during conversation, for example in the office or so (↓) I even subconsciously give a person a minute or two for getting used to my accent (.)

(Poland, Lublin; Open Group L1;

LU11: Origin: Ukraine; Sex: F; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 5; Education: Musicologist; Occupation: Clerk)

The prejudice, that immigrants cannot speak the host language fluently can be also the problem, which can result in creating barriers to conversations with them, It was present in the statement of a 54-year old Greek in Germany (Cologne, M4):

Cologne, M4:[...] then yes of course I notice too that sometimes I I speak correctly and the other still didn't understand because he just assumes that he won't understand what I eh what I mean so (unread 1.0) it it's of course a prejudice ya that's clear but in general I think well here it is expected that you speak correct German good German and then there is the prejudice that the foreigner well they surely can't speak such good German and then they don't hear at all what the other says

(Germany, Cologne;

M4: Greek; Age: 54; Sex: M; Education: Social scientist; Occupation: Consultant)

A respondent from Mongolia in Poland (NEE7) noted, that in some public offices, if an immigrant speaks fluent Polish, he or she may be treated even more respectfully than the Poles. Perhaps speaking the host language in Poland by an immigrant is something different than eg. in England or in Germany. An English or a German language can be useful in other parts of Europe or even around the world, so it can be assumed, that one not only can but even should speak these languages in order to be respected in countries where they are being spoken. The Polish language seems to be difficult for foreigners to learn and it is useful only in Poland, so it seems that an immigrant, who has a good command of Polish, may respect Poland in a special way and deserves a special respect too. It is worth to point out, that the quoted Mongolian was speaking a perfect Polish, did look a little oriental (but differently than the most numerous group of the Asian in Poland - the Vietnamese) and had a very low *radio speaker's* voice:

NEE7: I would like to recall such a positive event, for here, we discuss things whereas life doesn't make only a white and black picture (.) I would like to point to such a context; in offices where foreigners come and meet problems while settling matters linked with their status as foreigners (.) however, there are offices to which both foreigners and the Poles come, for example treasury offices and here I must admit that one has a good command of Polish, and keeps smiling ((laughter)) he or she may count for a helping hand, thus there is a positive side (.) well, if I address a clerk and ask about or for something I meet even a MORE HELPFUL attitude while some Polish clients at the treasury office are still waiting

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European Highly Educated Group W1;

NEE7: Origin: Mongolia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 10; Education: Lawyer; Occupation: Manager of alternative medicine centre)

Linguistic strategies of making the distance smaller, such as changing original names into popular ones in a host society (especially when original names are difficult to pronounce for the natives, like in the following example of the Vietnamese living in Poland for 20 years (NEE5)) were also interesting:

NEE5: My name is Ngo, but in Poland I took the name Tomasz.

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European Highly Educated Group W1;

NEE5: Origin: Vietnam; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 20; Education: Mechanical Engineer; Occupation: Free lancer, own business activity)

On the other hand, in Germany a woman from Poland described an incident in a city hall in Germany, where she was suggested to change a name into “more German” and it was perceived by her as an act of discrimination:

Leipzig-1, F(Petersohn): Something happened to me once after the wall fell that I went to the city hall with my children’s passports because they didn’t have German citizenship yet back then and the official there said to me eh these names indicate foreigners and so I said do you have something against foreigners and then he said that I could change my child’s name to Thomas and Lucena to Lucie and then I said that when they change the names of all the Germans whose names are Maik and Jeanette and Jaqueline then I would also I would also eh change my kids names and this kind of thing is for me practically discrimination because eh a German he can be named Meike and but a Pole can’t be called Crystof eh that that troubles me (-) and that eh you constantly have to prove yourself

[...]

(Germany, Leipzig1)

As it shows, there are different approaches concerning the perception of physical and linguistic difference among immigrants, but this difference can be a serious obstacle during everyday contacts.

2. Stereotyping

The exclusion of selected groups often starts with framing or creating different stereotypes about them. According to W. Lippmann, the author of a notion ‘stereotype’, it means the narrow, simplified, and schematic picture in our head of a phenomenon and a simplified and schematic opinion about this phenomenon. It is the product of culture, which in advance defines the point of view / approach to this phenomenon⁴ (Bokszański, 2001, p. 32). The distinction between different categories of immigrants and associating the selected groups only in a negative way was present almost in all countries where the research was conducted. On the other hand the issue of favoured groups was tackled too.

In Poland, for example, the stereotyping concerns first of all people coming from the former Soviet Union. As immigrants claimed, for many Poles it does not matter where exactly one comes from – if she or he comes from the former Soviet Union, it is enough to classify her or him as a specific and uniform kind of the other. Furthermore the Poles often use a pejorative term “ruski” (see the following comments about verbal exclusion) to define all nationalities from Eastern Slavonic region as one unit. Such commonly mistaken conviction annoys immigrants not only because of its disrespectful, gauged connotation but also because of their feeling of ethnical, language and cultural distinction. The conviction that the Poles put all nationalities from the than Soviet Union into one sack was present in the statements of almost all respondents coming from the former republics of the USSR. The statement of the 15 year-old boy of an Ukrainian origin (YO3) is the example:

⁴ Z. Bokszański, *Stereotypy a kultura*, Wrocław 2001, p. 32

YO3: What makes me most ANGRY (with an irony) is when people mistake the country I come from and actually (.) for a part of people both Russia and Ukraine are all the countries of the then Soviet Union put into one BIG SACK with a name the USSR (.) but it doesn't make much problem, simply MAKES ME FURIOUS and I say I am from UKRAINE (↑) Though for them, in the majority of cases it has little meaning (↑) but I got used to it and recently I gave up being furious (↓)

(Poland, Warsaw; Youth Group W4;

YO3: Origin: Ukraine, Sex: M; Age: 15; Years in Poland: 4)

Immigrants from the former Soviet Union complained also about very negative associations, the Poles have about them such as:

- illegal activity or alcohol overuse, as a 16 year-old boy with Russian origin (YO2) said:

YO2: The Poles put Ukraine and Russia into one unit, they think that they all drink vodka and sell goods at market places (↑)

Mod: It is like here

YO2: To say frankly in the West they think the same about the Poles (↑) (2.0) [...] But these are only stereotypes (.) SOME people think so but the majority are normal and they know that it has little in common with the truth

(Poland, Warsaw; Youth Group W4;

YO2: Origin: Russia; Sex: M; Age: 16; Years in Poland: 13)

- prostitution, as a young women (babysitter) from the Ukraine (ELE4) said:

ELE4: If they see a young woman with an accent they immediately think that she has come not to work but for other purposes [*it refers to prostitution*]

(Poland, Warsaw, European Less Highly Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W6;

ELE4: Origin: Ukraine; Sex: F; Age: 21/30; Years in Poland: 4; Education: Gastronomy; Occupation: Babysitter / Housewife)

- or such things as civilisation underdevelopment, as another young babysitter from the Ukraine (ELE1) claimed:

ELE1: Ukraine is not in Africa (.) It is situated close to Poland (.) Ukraine did not escape far from Poland There are universities a children are asking - do you have television The is lack of knowledge

(Poland, Warsaw, European Less Highly Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W6;

ELE1: Origin: Ukraine; Sex: F; Age: 21/30; Years in Poland: 4; Education: School psychologist; Occupation: Babysitter)

Actually respondents often noted, that these stereotypes were usually the effect of ignorance and in closer contacts, there was no impact of stereotypes on the attitude of Poles towards them.

On the other hand, some respondents noted, that the attitude of the Poles towards the Western Europeans was totally the opposite. The statement of a Russian man in his thirties working on a bazaar (ZG2) is the example:

ZG2: Listen, if I was a German you would kiss me the beneath my back (↑) because you want to enter the EU so much that simply you love the Germans, the British, the French so much. And everything which is over the Eastern border is just a rubbish to you (↓)

**(Poland, Zielona Gora; Open Group Z1;
ZG2: Origin: Russia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 8; Education: Technician; Occupation: works
on bazaar)**

The “reverie” of the Poles to the West and an accompanying disrespect to people from the East frequently appeared in the statements of the visitors from the East (though from the West sometimes too).

It is interesting, that in Western countries the Poles (perhaps as these coming from the East) were perceived in a similar way as immigrants from the former Soviet republics in Poland. There is an excerpt of a conversation between a 62-year old woman (retired teacher) from Luxembourg (EE-F2) and a 49-year old man (singer) from Hungary (EE-F5):

EE-F2 Italians are (.) they won't get any problems here and so won't the Hungarians

[

EE-F5

yes yes

EE-F2 but for Polish people it's definitely more difficult

Abstract 4 EE

(Austria, Innsbruck; Educated Europeans EE;

EE-F2: Luxembourg; Age: 62; Sex: F; Education: Pedagogics; Occupation: Retired teacher;

EE-F5: Hungary; Age: 49; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Singer)

A Polish student in Vienna (LEE-F2) had a similar opinion:

LEE-F2: There are such who are very nice and speak with us ask There are such who ask if we really drink so much and it is all what they know (.) about Poland and furthermore that we steel cars (.) eeee

(Austria, Vienna; Lower-educated Europeans;

LEE-F2: Polish; Age: 24; Sex: F; Occupation: university student)

Below you will find a conversation (in Innsbruck) on the same topic but related to a comparative approach. The participants were educated Europeans – of a Swedish (EE-F4), a Hungarian (EE-F5) and a German (EE-F3) origin – in their fifties:

EE-F4 the Poles have a bad reputation in Sweden probably worse than in Austria AND THAT EFFECTS EVERY SINGLE PERSON (1.0) things like this do exist (.) things like this really exist (.) Swedish people rather have the image that they are easy to fool, but incredibly honest yes (.) but I never suffered from this image (.) I can put my gloves anywhere or my purse and I find it again (.) if I don't find it a Polish person has taken it ((laughing)) it's somehow like this and it rubs off on (1.5) the Hungarians are regarded as neutral

[

EE-F5

yes yes and I think

[

EE-F3

but do you really think that this still is true today

EE-F4

in Sweden everybody thinks like this about Polish people

[

EE-F3

REALLY

[

EE-F4

it's good to get them for cleaning or picking strawberries in the southern parts of Sweden where I come from but after that we don't want them anymore in

- our country (.) eeh (.) and and if something is stolen people always say this was a Polish person
[
[
EE-F5 yes yes
[
EE-F3 really(.) even today
[
EE-F4 but this is more likely in Sweden than it is here [in Austria] (.) because of geographical closeness and there is a ferry running
[
EE-F5 and this I also experienced in the theatre (.) I say Polish people are not that popular eh and (.) eeh and then my Polish college she is a VERY good friend of mine and she is very nice said that she feels ashamed of coming from Poland because this is very bad for her and I honestly must say they are not popular in the theatre and eh (1.0)
[
EE-F4 it rubs off on
[
EE-F3 yes yes
[
EE-F3 ((laughs)) yes yes it's easy for us NOW

Abstract 2 EE

(Austria, Innsbruck; Educated Europeans EE;

EE-F4: Origin: Sweden; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 57; Sex: F; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Retired teacher;

EE-F5: Hungary; Age: 49; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Singer

EE-F3: Origin: Germany; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 51; Education: Commercial school; Occupation: Housewife)

In Germany there were voices concerning stigmatisation of Turks and Poles (which was expressed by a Cuban 28-year old teacher in Leipzig (Leipzig-2, F1)) and a special respect towards the representatives of other European countries (the response of a 41-year old Croatian with a higher degree in Stuttgart may be an example (Stuttgart, M4)):

Leipzig-2, F1: ((sighs)) there are like the man who left said ((sighs)) ahh the foreigners there are foreigners and foreigners (--) I get the feeling that there is of course (--) elsewhere it is exactly the same (-) there are bad people there are good people BUT (-) what do people see only the bad ones (-) not only not also the good ones they see more the bad ones than the good ones (-) when a foreigner like a Turk Cuban Cuban whatever eh eh steals something (-) ah look ((pound on table: pound pound)) a Turk ((pound pound)) he's a Cuban but they don't see when a Turk works as a teacher or works eeh as a doctor they don't see that hmm Turk Cuban or I don't know Pole hmm it's not good fff they're not good nah they're foreigners ffft go away they don't see the good only the bad

(Germany, Leipzig2;

F1: Cuban; Age: 28; Sex: F; Education: Teacher; Occupation: Teacher)

Stuttgart, M4: Well you as a Dutch person probably see it differently but for Germans Dutch people are not foreigners at all (.) Norwegians aren't either (.) a Belgian is eh also not a foreigner (-) so (-) they they are just not foreigners in that sense (.) because foreigner is really more of a negative term

(Germany, Stuttgart;

M4: Croatian; Age: 41; Sex: M; Education: Electrical Engineer; Occupation: Supervisor)

In Cyprus, according to some responses, there are negative prejudices concerning Turkish Cypriots. A 47-year old Turkish-Cypriot Man (1.7) claimed:

I.7: These are not Turkish-Cypriots, they are gypsies. And on occasions they do thing later reported in the media as done by 'Turkish Cypriots' and we Turkish-Cypriots get into trouble. Sometimes people hear stories [of bad things done] and they say immediately that Turkish-Cypriots [are to blame]. They should first investigate before drawing conclusions. Their attitudes are different from us.

(Cyprus, Limassol;

I.7 Mihalis– Turkish-Cypriot, Age: 47; Sex: M)

Another group in Cyprus particularly vivid as to the issue of stereotypes were the Pontian Greeks, as one Pontian (I.5) said:

I.5: On television there is never anything positive about us. We are all bad, thieves, and evil people! I know there are bad people in my community, but isn't there a single nice person? Isn't there one, just one positive example? Never – we never see such a person on TV. This is why people see us as they do.

(Cyprus, Paphos;

I.5 Democritos – Pontian; Sex: M)

It was interesting that the Indian, Filipino and Srilankan domestic workers in Cyprus spoke about associating them with prostitution, just like women from the Eastern Europe in Poland. An Indian woman (F3) formulated it in the following way:

F3: There was this man passing by in his car and told me "hey beautiful, where are you going? If you come with me I will give 20 pounds". Another time there was this old man he couldn't even walk and told me "you look very sexy are you coming with me?". And Cypriots, not all of them, think that if they give you 20-30 pounds you will sleep with them.

(Cyprus, Nicosia; 'Non-European' Less Highly Educated Group FG2;

F3: Indian; Sex: F; Months in Cyprus: 9)

In Italy there was a statement about the blacks who were associated with Maroccans and they were often often perceived as thieves. So, according to the opinion of a 28-year old man from Marocco (Milano1; 6), we can talk in this case about a similar mechanism of framing as this in Poland referring to immigrants from the former Soviet Union:

MILANO 1;6 (Morocco) – 'It has been said that if we behave well with them, the Italians will behave well with us. Those that came many years ago, have integrated. Those that have come afterwards do heavy work ... Now, everything has changed. 25 years have gone by and Italians still see the Moroccan thief, impudent etc. ... They never see the worker, and out of ignorance, if someone is a bit dark, they say that he is a Moroccan. By Moroccan they mean a thief, the Moroccans steals and is lazy ... they do not make any distinctions..'

(Italy, Milano1: 'Non-European' with high level of education;

6: Marocco; Age: 28; Sex: M; Years in Italy: 1)

Another type of stereotypes related to the cultural and religious backgrounds. It concerned first of all the Arabs, especially after the September 11th and the war in Iraq. Here are the statements of the Iranian from Germany (Berlin, M4), the Lebanese from Sweden (ÖWYL1), the Iraq from Poland (NELE6) and the excerpt of discussion among respondents of a Turkish origin from Austria (LENE-M2, LENE-F2, LENE-F3, LENE-M1):

Berlin, M4: [...] but someone from such a religious place let's say (.) for example from the Orient (Italian man: yes) has great difficulties finding an apartment here at all even for example when you have the financial means

to pay (.) first of all it's a prejudice (Italian man: exactly) because September 11th has become such a catchphrase
(Germany, Berlin;
M4: Iranian; Age: 45; Sex: M; Education: University-entrance Diploma)

ÖWYL1: And I believe it depends on that too, or sometimes they may come from Russia or so... from some West European country. They are immigrants too, but in a different way. They look a little bit different for instance, so... Especially now after Iraq, or I don't know. Now people don't want to take the risk of letting in a lot of people looking like Arabs, and Iraqis in Sweden feels like, prejudices against Islam has increased a lot I think (ÖWYL2 says Yes, and ÖMYI5 and ÖWYI4 nod in agreement).

(Sweden, Ostersund; Youth Group;

ÖWYL1: Lebanon; Sex: F)

NELE6: you are terrorists (↑) he heard (↑) something and (.) thinks that all people who live there are like this (↓) in every society are good and bad people (.) from the other hand I met such people who want to initiate discussion (↑) they want to know who we are what is our culture

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;

NELE6: Origin: Iraq; Sex: M; Age: 41/50; Years in Poland: 6; Education: PhD in Economy; Occupation: Works in Kebab Bar)

LENE-M2 they [the Austrian society] are not satisfied

LENE-F2 because of our religion

LENE-M2 we as Muslims

LENE-F3 they fear

Mod what

LENE-F3 they fear

LENE-M1 the religion is not the reason they also hate Yugoslavians and Yugoslavians are Christians

Abstract 1 LENE

(Austria, Innsbruck; Lower-educated non-Europeans LENE;

LENE-M2: Turkish; Age: 58; Sex: M; Occupation: Unskilled worker

LENE-F2: Origin: Turkish; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 13; Sex: F; Occupation: Secondary school

LENE-F3: Turkish; Age: 27; Sex: F; Occupation: Unskilled worker

LENE-M1: Origin: Turkish; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 50; Sex: M; Occupation: Waiter)

There were also some statements concerning framing in the aspect of matching one's origin with a specific religion or values, characteristic for a specific culture, according to a stereotype. The two interesting quotations come from the statements of a young Kurdish women from Cyprus (I.6) and an Iranian man from Sweden (MMHI6):

I.6: If you are Muslim they call you *Turk*; if you come from an Arabic country they call you Arab. (...) I am baptised Christian, I was christened when I came here. Nobody ask. As soon as you say that you are from Syria you are immediately a Muslim, you are a Turk.

(Cyprus, Paphos;

I. 6: Kurdish; Age: 23; Sex: F)

MMHI6: "Wrong color, wrong religion, wrong accent, wrong language. Education is being down-classed and if you come from Asia you are ... woman... eh oppressing women. You become Fadime's father [who shot his own daughter, which the media reported a lot about], if something is wrong at Muslim schools I have to pay although I am against discrimination... But, yes, "where are you from, why are you treating your... your women, why do you beat?" What you, you, you. I am I, but it...

(Sweden, Malmo; Highly Educated Group;

MMHI6: Iranian; Sex: M)

3. Isolation and self-isolation within one's difference versus openness of and towards host societies

Some immigrants are feeling isolated from the host society founding it (or its culture) closed or even xenophobic in general. Here come some quotations from an unemployed Cypriot in England (MM3), HR Specialist (ENE-F1) and translator (ENE-M3) of a Sudan origin from Austria and Bulgarian from Cyprus (M1). In the first case, it is interesting that the respondent draws on dispositional differences that 'youths' pick up on and abuse:

MM3: People see you're different you know, you are a bit different from them, maybe how you walk, how you sit, how you look at them, you know. You can get abuse. This happens to me with maybe teenagers, youths

All: Yeah ((nods))

MM3: My perception of British culture is that it's very xenophobic, very, very much closed to diversity, you know the general British public I feel there is this huge hostility to diversity

(England, Manchester; 'More highly educated' group;

MM3 is a Cypriot man who holds an undergraduate degree, has been in Britain for 8 years and is currently unemployed)

ENE-F1: I lived in Germany in Spain I lived for a quite long time also (.) so to me is Austria somewhat closed (0.5) society is (unread.0.5) foreigners (.) in Germany it's much more open you can interact with all the people and you can interact (unread.0.5) you don't feel okay fear but here is also it's some said people are (unread.0.5) but what you hear about (.) around you you don't trust to some extent (.) because there's no interaction ahm when there's no interaction there's a barrier and you can't cross this barrier (0.5) because of some circumstance you need everybody to (.) to pass from one side (unread.0.5) media you can't (unread.1.0) ah head or shoulders (.) therefore I feel simply (unread.0.5) more restrict (.) rather than Germany of course there's functionally all kind of (unread.0.5) very open society towards African and Mediterranean that's because of the historical background (.) ah this how I feel the Austrians to me (unread.0.5) more closed

Abstract 1 ENE

(Austria, Vienna; Educated Non-Europeans ENE;

ENE-F1: Sudan, Age: 32; Sex: F; Education: Graduate; Occupation: HR Specialist)

Mod: Did they anything clearly objected the fact that you you well you're black and

ENE-M3: I I actually I didn't feel that but you don't feel that they are ready to go (unread.0.5) to know you

(Austria, Vienna; Educated Non-Europeans ENE;

ENE-M3: Sudan, Age: 32; Sex: F; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Translator)

M1: In 1974 in Limassol they used to scare their children to eat their food by saying "eat your food before the refugee takes it from you", now they say "eat quickly before the Pontian takes it from you"... Even if get citizenship I will always be a foreigner here. [FG3, M1 Aggelos, 46 yr old, Bulgarian]

(Cyprus, Nicosia; 'European' Less Highly Educated Group FG3;

M1: Bulgarian; Age: 46; Sex: M)

Some were searching for a reason of such situation in a broader cultural context. The following statement was formulated in response to the suggestion that the extent to which Britain is an open society which welcomes migrants. Here are the statements of a 27 year-old Turkish woman who has been in Britain for 15 years and works for an organization that provides support for new migrants

and asylum seekers (MF11) and of a Cypriot man who has been in Britain for 8 years and is currently unemployed (MM3). Both hold undergraduate degrees:

MF11: As you said before English culture is very different (.) here it is very different I suppose it's the system where individuality is very important so it's not just for migrants it's for local people as well neighbourhood relationships don't exist and people don't speak with each other if you run out of sugar or milk you can't just go and knock on your neighbour's door it doesn't work like that

MM3: When I first came here I had a HUGE (↑) culture clash (1.0) I suffered for years because (1.0) going shopping and at the queue, you know, you look at people and try to make some eye contact and smile and they look away like you've kind of HURT them

(England, Manchester; 'More highly educated' group;

MF11 is a 27 year-old Turkish woman who has been in Britain for 15 years and works for an organization that provides support for new migrants and asylum seekers.

MM3 is a Cypriot man who has been in Britain for 8 years and is currently unemployed. Both hold undergraduate degrees.)

It is interesting that in the following exchange between a Ghanaian female (CF2), and a Chinese male (CM1), Britain's parochialism was equated with its spatial identity as an island. This extract comes from a conversation in the London focus group for people without degrees, and emerged as the response to a suggestion about British culture at a general level.

CF2: I don't know maybe what you say is right (.) I think that that it could be to do with the island Britain is an island and they don't really look at what the rest of the world is doing as much

CM1: [That is definitely true because when I was in other places they know more about what is going on elsewhere

(England, London, 'Less Highly' Educated Non-European Group;

CF2: Ghanaian female;

CM1: Chinese male)

There were also opinions, that one could be treated well eg. in the street but as an immigrant was still socially excluded, as a highly educated man coming from Barbados in one of the Swedish groups (ÖMHBa8) said:

ÖMHBa8: More broad and spread than in Stockholm, and even southern Sweden, based solely on the fact that immigrants are strange and few here. And one does not come in many situations where one should be included, since people are not counted. As an immigrant you are not counted on, you do not count; you do not get access. You are met fairly well on the street and in public settings, but are not included.

(Sweden, Ostersund; Highly Educated Group;

ÖMHBa8: Barbados; Sex: M)

Some respondents often felt perceived *a priori* as worse, less skilled, enforced to constantly prove that they could manage same as the others do. The authors of the following statements were a 39-year old woman coming from Mali living in France (F) and an engineer in his thirties coming from Congo living in Poland (NELE1):

F: In Africa, we respect everyone. We can come and join you for a meal without asking you beforehand. In the courtyard, we are sitting, everyone eats. Someone comes, he's hungry, he washes his hands, he comes and eats with everyone else. But here, we are being minimized, you always have to prove something, that you exist, that you know how to do this or that, or that you know how to read, or that you know how to write. A human being cannot be reduced to that. There is more to him/her.

(France, Paris; FG6;

F: of Mali, Housework; Sex: F; Age: 39).

Mod: You teach French

NELE1: yes, I give private lessons

Mod: on your own account

NELE1: Yes (.) the beginning when you want to get a pupil is very hard because it is lack of trust (.) Black (↑) teaches French (↑) they look on us so untrustworthy (1.0) We can do it as well but I HAVE TO prove it CONVINCED that I can do it (.) we have to try more ((speaks silently)

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;

NELE1: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 13; Education: Engineer; Occupation: Odd jobs eg. French language teacher)

There were also statements concerning “more official (institutional)” categorisation (segregation) and labeling as the whites and the not-whites. The first statement formulated in England by a 28 year-old South African MA student (MM1) emerged in the context of a conversation about the barriers constructed by the categorization of migrants as to their ethnic background. It was a recurring theme in the whole discussion. The second discussion (also in England, between a 30 year old Ghanian woman (MF9), a Ghanian man (MM2) and the same South African (MM1)) appeared in the context of a more general discussion about institutional discrimination and the insensitive and offensive nature of categorization of migrants as to their ethnic background:

MM1: Britain pretends to the international community that it accepts us all within this society, but deep down within the system itself you will find that the barriers are there (2.0) the categorization wherever you go, let's say you go to the hospital, that categorization itself is part of the discrimination you will find: 'Black Caribbean, Black African' at the end of the day black people are just the same. When it comes to whites coming from Africa they are not labelled as white Africans, they just go into the same category as whites

(England, Manchester;

MM1 is a 28 year-old South African MA student)

MF9: When I moved to Manchester that's when I saw the difference between a BLACK and a WHITE society (.) First of all they gave me a house and the questionnaire, like this gentleman said

MM2: [yeah

MF9: They had 'Black this' 'Black that'

MM1: ['black other' ((laughs))

MF9: First I ticked 'Black Other' than I ticked 'Black Norwegian' ((laughter)) Well it said 'black other' so I put one down (.) this was '96 (.) and the housing officer said 'Are you NORWEGIAN?' I said 'What?' it says 'Black Other' so I thought I had to put something there. You can see I'm Black (.) I'm African, I've got my accent, so you don't need to know that. They gave me this house, and next door was a Black African the rest there, everyone along the line was black and I was surprised because I lived among white, came to Manchester and lived among blacks. I went to the officer and said 'Is this segregation here?' When I look up this side: all

white people there, when I look up that side it's all black people who live up that road. I said I think this is segregation he said 'No'. Why do you want to know my background? You want me to live among Black Africans and then we'll be deprived among the official system.

(England, Manchester; Highly educated 'non-European' group;

MF9: 30 year-old Ghanaian woman;

MM2: 30 year-old Ghanaian man;

MM1: 28 year-old South African MA student)

A 28 year-old South African man (MM1) in the same group presented a different perspective. Below you will find his comment to the above discussion by presenting his reasons for wanting to live in the same area with other migrants:

MM1: Even myself as a black person when I apply for housing if they ask me which place I want to live I obviously look for an area where most of my people are because of the situation which effect us in the society of Britain including race attacks (.) automatically I feel more secure when I go to black communities not because I want to be there but because of protection

(England, Manchester; Highly educated 'non-European' group;

MM1: 28 year-old South African MA student)

There were statements reflecting the feeling of total exclusion as well, as eg. this of a 16-year old girl in Austria:

SCH-F2: they believe we are no human beings

Abstract 2 SCH

(Austria, Vienna; Secondary Professional School Group SCH;

SCH-F2: Austrian; Age: 16; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship)

Another mean of exclusion is a verbal stigmatisation of difference (the use of specific words, names etc. describing *others*) in everyday-discourse underlying the distinctions us / them. Some of these labeling words may be found offending, some have only bad connotations for the immigrants.

A very good example of a word, which can be offending for some groups of immigrants, but at the same time may be used in a neutral sense by the host society is the Polish word "Murzyn". It is very hard to translate this term into English. Literal translation is "Negro" but the connotations of this word do not have to be so negative as in English. In Poland this word has been functioning in the language (or was functioning up till not long ago) as neutral, having no negative colouring. Even in academic text books (in sociology, social psychology) this term is used to define persons with a black skin. Therefore the Poles using this word may be totally unaware of the fact that it may be perceived as insulting. But in fact, quite a lot of black respondents in Poland were very disappointed with describing them using this term, as a respondent from Congo in his thirties in Poland (NELE1) said:

NELE1: the very word Negro is an insult for us (↓) the Poles don't understand it (.) for us a Negro means a SLAVE (2,0) in other countries such words are incorrect (↑) and in Poland, I don't know (.) I can't understand it (.) we prefer when they call us the Blacks or the Africans (.) ok. (.) there are 5 races (.) yellow, white, red and there is a Negro (.) a Negro is none of the colours (1.0) it is linked with the idea of a slave (.) it is insulting ((he speaks in a low but a firm tone))

Mod: You mean that the Poles have not acquired such a correctness yet

NELE1: They don't want to understand it (↑) yet
(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;
NELE1: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 13; Education: Engineer; Occupation: Odd jobs eg. French language teacher)

But even among black persons participating in the interviews this question was disputable, as another man in his twenties from Congo (NELE5) opposed:

NELE5: I would like to come back to what Mr George said (.) I would say that (.) the very word Negro or Black in not bad (.) I mean the word (.) it depends upon the context, in what meaning people use it (.) I, for example have colleagues in Poland, we are making jokes sometimes (.) and when they call me a Negro (.) I call them the Whites (.) and when we say hallo, when we meet (.) the words the Negro, or the White is somehow ok. (.) the very word not bad (.) depends in what a meaning

NELE1: He is making jokes with you (.) right (↑) (.) in any context is bad (speaks in a low voice)
(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European 'Less Highly' Educated (or practising less professional jobs) Group W5;
NELE5: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 21/30; Years in Poland: 5; Education: Economy / Art; Occupation: Artist;

NELE1: Origin: Congo; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 13; Education: Engineer; Occupation: Odd jobs eg. French language teacher)

Quite similar situations concerning people with a black skin occur in Cyprus, where similar responses to this aspect made up also a substantial number. Here are the statements of a 17-year old boy from Kenya living in Cyprus (M3) and a British-Cypriot 20-year old woman (F1):

M3: They call me "mavros" (.) many times (.) When I'm walking down the street, in the coffee shop (.) in their language they call me names.

(Cyprus Nicosia; Youth Group FG 4;
M3: Kenya, Age: 17; Sex: M)

F1: There is a Cypriot and an Indian guy where I work and the Cypriot calls him "re mavre" in a friendly way and the other one laughs (.) and I tell him why do you call him mavre? Why don't you call him by his name? You call me by my name, so call him by his name; his name is Sabouh (.) And he goes to me "he's laughing what's your problem?" and I say to him "this is not right and he laughs cause he can do nothing about it".

(Cyprus, Nicosia; Youth Group FG 4;
F1: British-Cypriot, Age: 20; Sex: F)

Actually disrespectful words do not have to refer only to the skin colour. Eg. also in Cyprus, Greek-Cypriots who come from abroad, such as British born Cypriots are called '*Charley*' or '*Billy*' if they come from Australia or the UK. The implication of being a 'Charlie' or 'Charlousa', for females, is that these persons, whose Cypriot parents have emigrated abroad, particularly to the UK, have been Anglosised having lost their Greekness/Cypriotness, they have been '*de-Hellenised*' (from the perspective of the Greek-Cypriot nationalists) or '*de-Cypriotised*' (from the perspective of Cypriotists), or have retained a backward peasant/ villager's Greekness/Cypriotness and have thus become *complete* '*Charley*' (τέλια⁵ Τσιάρλης), or worse, they have been totally 'corrupted' having abandoned or lost their national characteristics to 'qualify' to be called the term of abuse for the *rowdy* and *yobbish* Englishmen, *complete* or '*total Billy*' (τέλια Μπίλλης).

⁵ This is the Cypriot dialect of the term 'total' or 'complete', which in demotic Greek is εντελώς.

F1: Each country has its own stereotypes. Cypriots have a lot of stereotypes, we think that Cypriots are that way, we classify people from England, I mean Greeks coming from England. I say that because I come from England and I've been stereotyped, they give us, they call us names. Everyone knows us by, eeee, you know (laughs) they call us 'Charlies' because they have this name in England. When I speak Greek I have this accent and they can understand that I came from England and people make jokes about it but it doesn't affect me.

(Cyprus, Nicosia; Youth Group FG 4;

F1: British-Cypriot, Age: 20; Sex: F)

Another example from Cyprus is the word "Pontian" or rather "Rossopontio" (i.e. Russian-Pontian), as a 32 year-old Greek citizen (M2) said:

M2: They call me Pontian but it doesn't bother me. I am from Russia. When they call me Rossopontio (i.e. Russian-Pontian) it bothers me. I tell them that it is better to be a Rossopontios than a Cypriot. I tell them this because they are worse than us. I had no problem; I came here in 1992 and from that moment I felt that I was foreign.

(Cyprus, Paphos; Pontians from Paphos FG 5;

M2: Greek, Age: 32; Sex: M, Years in Cyprus: 7)

Another stigmatising word is the Polish term "ruski" (related to people coming from Russia), already a few times mentioned, used for describing in a disrespectful way (rather intentionally) not only persons from Russia, but from the whole former Soviet Union block. Here comes the quotations of a man in his thirties of a Russian origin (ZG2) from one of the Polish groups:

ZG2: No matter if it was KAZACHSTAN OR A PERSON FROM THIS COUNTRY, for them they are all Ruskie, no matter that she or he is from Georgia, only Ruskie live there, black, white, yellow or orange – all Ruskie. EVERYTHING which is the worst (↑) (.) comes from THERE.

(Poland, Zielona Gora; Open Group Z1;

ZG2: Origin: Russia; Sex: M; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 8; Education: Technician; Occupation: Works on bazaar)

It seems that several dozens years of Poland remaining within a political zone of the Soviet Union and the resulting negative attitude towards the USSR up to present days does not allow us to understand that also the inhabitants of the than Soviet republics perceived the USSR as an invader and were victims of the totalitarian system.

But not only directly stigmatising words might be difficult to accept by respondents. There were statements in a German group, suggesting that totally neutral term as "foreigner" (Ausländer) can have negative connotations, reminding the immigrants their difference, underlying us / you distinction, as it was formulated by a 45-year old Iranian (Berlin, M4) in Berlin:

Berlin, M4: I'm sorry I just find the term foreigner to be discriminating I (--) it eh (---) it's their goal for example ehm (---) repectively Ex (-) applying foreigners (↑) and the present (-) I don't know the guy's name(↑) (.) that he just changed the term applying foreigner (.) to another term (.) inte integrated co-citizen or something (-) so (--) that means something (.) as a foreigner (-) for me discrimination starts with this term (.) even if I've lived here for 25 years (-) that (.) you find again and again (-) YOU and US (-) which means there is not necessarily a full integration in this society but rather the difference is still always made

(Germany, Berlin;

M4: Iranian; Age: 45; Sex: M; Education: University-entrance Diploma)

In Sweden some immigrants expressed their resentment of the concept of “immigrant,” which in Sweden is used officially, to label them. Many expressed a wish to be treated as “me,” not as an ‘immigrant.’ For instance, one highly educated woman from Uruguay, living in Malmo, remarked apropos the invitation to the focus group meeting:

And its one thing I thought about, when I got this email and it said “immigrants”, the first thought I got was “I don’t feel like a immigrant”, have you been living here this long you don’t feel like a immigrant. How long do you have to be a immigrant, I immigrated one day and that was the last day I was a immigrant, why then do I have to be a immigrant for nineteen years?

(Sweden, Malmo; Origin: Uruguay; Sex: F)

Actually, it is worth noting, that there were also voices illustrating the cases, when the fact of being perceived as different brought more positive than negative results. The examples are statements of a well educated woman in her forties of an Armenian origin in Poland (NEE10) or of a female Kurd in Sweden (ÖWHK4):

Mod (ii): You mean that the fact he came from abroad did not in any way raised a negative behaviour of Polish pupils, they were indifferent

NEE10:

[
[
not in any case
[

MOD:

he was rather treated as

everybody else

NEE10: in a sense he was treated exclusively

MOD: Well, even slightly better

NEE10: Even better and I have always perceived it this way, in work, in different places where I worked and so did my children

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European Highly Educated Group W1;

NEE10: Origin: Armenia; Sex: F; Age: 41/50; Years in Poland: 8; Education: Engineer; Occupation: sales manager)

ÖWHK4: (...) But here, it is seems that, when I moved here, that here people are so CURIOUS and like “Ohhhh how nice you are” (positive friendly intonations in voice as she takes of how people meet here in Östersund). It was so cozy...whereas like in Linköping people are like (hard voice) “where do you come from!?”. And then there is a persons attitude, which is really important, I know that me and my friends, like I had a friend who always felt that there is always racism, whereas myself, I never think there is racism. So he always interprets a situation to be about racism, whereas I never could interpret it in that way.

(Sweden, Ostersund; Highly Educated Group;

ÖWHK4: Kurd; Sex: F)

Describing the perception of difference in general, a 16-year old boy of a Vietnamese origin in Poland (YO4) pointed out, that he had not have any negative experience concerning his difference during the first contacts with the Poles. On the contrary, he was well accepted.

Yet after getting to know him better, his Polish colleagues reminded him his difference, eg. explaining in this way his point of view during different disputes. The question is if the reason was a malice or alleged cultural differences:

YO4: It means (.) in my case it was curiosity. My colleagues were curious about me.

Mod: but was this curiosity friendly or rather you experienced such incidents, you know, unpleasant?

YO4: Rather friendly, because they do not treat a stranger in such a way (.) unpleasant, they do not have reasons (↓) Just later, when they had already got to know me, for some of them my way of thinking was not acceptable (↑) and then in order to make me nervous, they started talking that I am from another country (↓) then we really were different, having different opinions. But in the very beginning it did not disturb anyone, that I was a foreigner.

(Poland, Warsaw; Youth Group W4;

YO4: Origin: Vietnam; Sex: M; Age: 16; Years in Poland: 5)

Another aspect of isolation is self-isolation of immigrants, which can be associated to the mechanism called by Robert Merton the self-fulfilling prophecy. Some immigrants may assume their difference and they predict the attitudes of members of the host society in advance *looking for* the confirmation of their assumptions. A woman from Ukraine in her thirties living in Poland (LU11) mentioned a so called "immigrant syndrome":

LU11 (ii): Yes (.) I even have immigrant syndrome (.) diagnosed

Mod: Aaaaa (.) by psychologists

LU11: Yes (↓) I had very strong complexes due to this fact and had a very strong distance in relations with other people

(Poland, Lublin; Open Group L1;

LU11: Origin: Ukraine; Sex: F; Age: 31/40; Years in Poland: 5; Education: Musicologist; Occupation: Clerk)

The following quotation of a 15-year old girl from Vietnam living in Poland (YO1), is an example of the situation when the expected reaction of the host society was much worse than the real one:

YO1: People were rather nice (.) at the beginning and (2.0) I don't know (.) actually I expected more (↑) so to say (.) that someone will abuse me when one notices me (↑) but it was a bit differently

(Poland, Warsaw; Youth Group W4;

YO1: Origin: Vietnam; Sex: F; Age: 15; Years in Poland: 6)

Some immigrants, especially in the beginning of the immigration process used to keep contacts only with other representatives of the group of their origin, perceiving all around as *different*. Here comes the statement of a young woman from Moldova living in Italy (4):

UDINE 1

4 (Moldova) 'I think it happens to everyone when they arrive here at the beginning, they find themselves a bit lost until they understand a little the situation, the people, class mates, the group ... I, at the beginning looked for someone to cling to, someone from my country, because I also felt a bit lost. If I had grown up here, I would have been already acquainted, but at the beginning I wanted someone who I could get on with, because you see other people with other ideas different from you. At the beginning, you find yourself in difficulty and later you understand the situation and meet people, and manage to open up and then things get easier. But much later.'

(Italy, Udine1; Young Immigrants Group/second generation;

4: Moldova; Age: 20; Sex: F; Years in Italy: 3)

There were also voices describing situations when the host society becomes the subject of a negative prejudices towards immigrants (which can result in their exclusion), A woman from Lebanon, living in Sweden (ÖWYL2), said:

ÖWYL2: Because I know that my friends living down there... Everubode live, it is only foreigners, they don't have one single Swede at there school. And they have a lot of prejudices against Swedes and... Then it becomes harder to get included.

(Sweden, Ostersund; Youth Group;

ÖWYL2: Lebanon; Sex: F)

Some immigrants wanted to get included, but met persons willing to keep contacts mainly within their native or similar groups. Here is the experience of a young man from Ghana, who has been living in Italy for 14 years (3):

UDINE 1

3 (Ghana) 'I didn't look for people from my country. Even my father told me to learn Italian. Therefore, I looked for friends to learn Italian well. Instead, this friend of mine said "We are the same colour, why do you have to play with the others?" I said, let's play altogether. He was the same age as me and arrived when he was little. He would say "play with me, why do you have to play with those Italians when we are Africans?" For me, it didn't matter, black or white ... then he was rejected and found other friends. I see him around every now and then. Now we get on well, but at the start it was a bit hard.'

(Italy, Udine1; Young Immigrants Group/second generation;

3: Ghana; Age: 17; Sex: M; Years in Italy: 14)

There were respondents (like the quoted below 26-year old Turkish/German man (Stuttgart, M5) or a youngster of a Turkish origin from Austria) willing to keep their original identity being a part of the host society at the same time, which was found very difficult by them because of barriers in the society:

Stuttgart, M5: that shows eh (--) that eh the acceptance is missing (.) so it means yes you have to integrate yourself but it really means you have to adapt (--) as soon as I say I'm Turkish and ehh (-) then eh it's (--) ehm it's well I am not accepted in my identity (--) and eh that bothers me a little (----) because I I was born here and I feel good here but eh I'd like to be accepted as having a Turkish background which I unfortunately can't deny (--) and which I don't want to deny:

(Germany, Stuttgart;

M5: Turkish/German; Age: 26; Sex: M; Education: University-entrance diploma)

SCH-F7 ahm yes sometimes (.) for example when we look for a job it [job announcements] say ahm Austrians JUST Austrians I have for example at the Labor Market Service [AMS]

Mod yes but you ARE Austrian

SCH-F7 well yes but I (1.0) well

Mod don't you feel addressed when it says JUST Austrians

SCH-F7 well yes ((laughing)) I really have to think about it

Mod you hold the Austrian citizenship

SCH-F7 I have the Austrian citizenship but I AM my roots are Turkish and I AM a (.) a (.) I am proud to be a Turkish woman (.) I don't have any problems with it but other people (0.5) well (1.0) but I'm getting used to it (1.0) that's the way it is

Abstract 5 SCH

(Austria, Vienna; Secondary Professional School Group SCH;

SCH-F7)

Another group of respondents wished to keep their original identity, and the perception as *others* of them by the host society was not the problem. The problem was their perception of the host society as *others*, sometimes even without the acceptance eg. in the cultural aspect. Some examples from France are presented below:

N: There is no way to understand what happens in France, with regards to French customs and habits. If we talk about what it is they don't accept in us, I don't think that's the point, I am the one not accepting them. I don't understand how they function, and I am convinced I will never understand (...)They behaved well with me. [...] I am very cold with French people, but it is a personal issue, I don't understand them, and I never will. I have a hard time understanding them, their moods, they are always in a bad mood, they are not welcoming, that's how they are brought up. In school, teachers say : « you can do this or you cannot do this », you see what I mean, so they have square minds, and they will die with square minds, it's a cultural characteristic that cannot be changed. That's how it is.

(France, Paris; FG1;

N: Argentine; Studies of third degree; Sex: M; Age: 46)

A: « When I turned sixteen, I realized that, being sixteen, I needed some id papers. I had an Algerian id card, but I was told it didn't work, that I needed a residence permit or French id card. They told me, you were born in France, your parents live in France, you **are** French. I had made a request for a special procedure in order no to obtain French nationality. I thought it was not normal for me to be French. It was natural. All the people born of immigration, a lot of people in our generation, have tried to employ this procedure and have been rejected because it was not acceptable”.

(France, Lyon; FG4;

A: Algerian; Doctor; Sex: M; Age: 35).

H: “For everything else, I consider myself as Algerian even if I also have French nationality [laughs around the table] ». **(LYON, FRENCH*ALGERIAN, STUDENT IN DOCTORAL DEGREE, MALE, 26 YEARS OLD)**

W: no, really! **(LYON, MOROCCAN, EMPLOYEE, ESTUDIES OF THIRD DEGREE, MALE, 35 YEARS OLD)**

H: no, I would like that someday here in France we could be able to be Algerian and still have French citizenship. I am against the fact of linking nationality and citizenship. That is to say that I try to see how to describe myself or how to present myself, I would never present myself as French. It is a matter of survival. You seem surprised!

Ab: You have dual nationality. You are French here and Algerian in Algeria. **(LYON, FRENCH*ALGERIAN, UNEMPLOYED WORKER, STUDENT IN DOCTORAL DEGREE, MALE, 30 YEARS OLD)**

H: dual nationality is theory. I am French over there and Algerian here.

Ab: You take the nationality of the country where you live, that's all.

H: no, you don't give a damn about it. »

(France, Lyon; FG4;

H: French*Algerian; Student in doctoral degree; Sex: M; Age: 26;

W: Moroccan; Employee; Studies Of Third Degree; Sex: M; Age: 35;

Ab: French*Algerian, Unemployed worker, student in doctoral degree; Sex: M; Age: 30)

Another issue is the “dual identity” mentioned in the above quotation which very often becomes the lack of full identity. Many persons do not feel at home neither in the host county nor in the place of origin. Here comes the conversation of schoolgirls in Austria (SCH-F2, SCH-F1; SCH-F6; SCH-F4; SCH-F3) and the statement of a woman from Kirghizia in her fifties living in Poland (ZG9):

- Mod** all expect you [addressing SCH-F5] hold the Austrian citizenship (.) do you regard yourself as Austrians or still as foreigners
- SCH-F2** as foreigners
- SCH-F1** [as foreigners
- SCH-F6** [as foreigners
- SCH-F4** [yes
- Mod** and that's because
- SCH-F6** well (.) because there are many people who are xenophobic and who do not like us for example on the streets when an old woman sees me (.) right away she starts to complain about me (3.0)
- SCH-F1** yes that's right
- Mod** so actually you don't feel welcome in Austria do you
- SCH-F1** well I feel myself in between (.) I regard myself neither as a foreigner nor as I don't know sometimes when I spend my time with Austrians (.) then I see myself as a foreigner because (.) ahm (.) I am not I don't know a pure foreigner I was just born here but my roots are in Turkey and therefore (1.0) I only know the Austrian way of life (.) I don't know how it is there [Turkey] therefore (.) I don't know (.) when I am there I somehow feel differently too because they are (1.5) for example I can not speak Turkish that well and when I am there [Turkey] they say I was born in Austria and when I am in Austria they [the Austrians] say I am a Turkish woman (.) I am a Turkish woman (.) that's what I am (.) I don't say I am not (.) but I feel myself in between I don't know
- SCH-F3** it's not only here in Austria that we are regarded as foreigners (.) when why travel to Turkey they say we are from Austria and therefore we are foreigners there too

Abstract 1 SCH

- (Austria, Vienna; Secondary Professional School Group SCH;**
SCH-F2: Austrian; Age: 16; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship
SCH-F1: Austrian; Age: 17; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship
SCH-F6: Austrian; Age: 17; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship
SCH-F4: Austrian; Age: 16; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship
SCH-F3: Austrian; Age: 17; Sex: F; Education: Apprenticeship)

ZG9: I want to say something (.) In Kirghysia I was always a Pole I have a Polish name (.) here till now I am a Russian

(Poland, Zielona Gora; Open Group Z1;

ZG9: Origin: Kirghizia; Sex: F; Age: 51/60; Years in Poland: 11; Education: chemist; Occupation: Chemist)

Another problem is the frame us / guests, us / foreigners, us / immigrants which was already mentioned, due to negative connotations of the word "foreigner" or "immigrant" expressed by the respondent in Germany and Sweden. Immigrants wish to adopt the identity of the host society, but they are still reminded that they are just guest. It manifests not only in classifying and naming them in a specific way but in addressing specific questions to them as well (apparently not harming). A 41-year old Croatian in Germany (Stuttgart, M4) expressed it in the following way:

Q: How is it at the work place ehm are the Germans and foreigners treated equally or are there any problems or I don't know experiences

Stuttgart, M4: For me there's there's really no almost no differences you notice it then eh when you're asked eh well I I say I'm going on vacation now (.) and then eh (-) they ask you eh are you going home (-) ya well that's a

question that you you actually think in German you live here the kids were born here (.) and then it's still clear to the co-workers at work that you're going home to Croatia you you (.) are not at home here

(Germany, Stuttgart;

M4: Croatian; Age: 41; Sex: M; Education: Electrical Engineer; Occupation: Supervisor)

A respondent from Sudan in Austria formulated the same problem like this:

ENE-M1: the interesting thing about older Austrians is if you talk to them they they would ask you (2.0) where you come from, the second thing WHY you choose Austria (3.0)

ENE-M2: ((laughs)) [

ENE-M1: and the third question WHEN you plan to go back to your country

Abstract 4 ENE

(Austria, Vienna

ENE-M1: Origin: Sudan; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 36; Sex: M; Education: Graduate; Occupation: Engineer

ENE-M2: Origin: South Africa; Nationality: Austrian; Age: 35; Sex: M; Education: Graduate; Occupation: IT specialist / teacher)

Another aspect is the formal situation of immigrants. Even these, who were born and brought up in the host society are still treated as guests. Here are the voices of a Greek (Cologne-1, M4) and a Vietnamese (Leipzig-2, M5) in their fifties from one of German groups

Cologne-1, M4: [...] I have for example a son who was born here he had to apply for a residence visa the other day well for me it was understandable but for my child it was a traumatic experience ya it was a traumatic experience suddenly he understood that he's a foreigner here it's really messed up

(Germany, Cologne;

M4: Greek; Age: 54; Sex: M; Education: Social scientist; Occupation: Consultant)

Leipzig-2, M5: [...] well seen socio-politically the German society we are we are looked upon and treated as guests and nothing more and that hinders integration yes they are friendly but this society will never be for us [...] what's missing well I (-- for example I (-- a foreigner must take part in the society must also have the same obligations must have the same rights and duties in German legislation (-- a foreigner is always a foreigner and is never treated equally (-) yes in some aspects let's say eh uhm in certain aspects of humanity we may be equal but in the law we are not equal and that is one point that I have figured out over many years here in Germany

(Germany, Leipzig2;

M5: Vietnamese; Age: 51; Sex: M; Education: Construction Engineer; Occupation: Association assistance)

Actually there were also some statements about full identification with the host society, as the following of an Algerian woman in France (A, N, D), a Georgian Pontian / Greek citizen woman in Cyprus (F5) and an Armenian woman in Poland (NEE10):

A: I came here because this is my native country, I tried elsewhere but it didn't work, so I came back to my roots. That's it, even if I have two cultures, my first culture is France. The second one comes second, it's my parents' culture, in fact. So we get used to it, but not completely, that's where the problem lies and we play with two personalities, we live in a country but people are not considerate because you come from another place. And when you go back to your country, where you were born, where you lived, people reject you because you don't quite fit the criteria, which is true. That's our problem. But, frankly, I feel French. I was sometimes mistaken,

always fighting, telling myself, my parents' country, my parents' country. After 20 years, I understood that I didn't belong there, that I belonged here, because I really don't know anything better than France. For me, this is where the problem lies.

(France, Paris; FG 6;

A: Algerian; Housework and others; General certificate of education; Sex: F; Age: 45)

GTMS : What about you, do you feel more French than Algerian ?

N : More French. I got my residency permit last Thursday, I already picked up the forms for my reintegration, she gave it to me. I will fill them up, I don't know if she will accept my file, but I already started filling the forms up, I'm putting together the necessary papers.

D : I am French, as you can see I don't wear a scarf.

N : Well, there are some French women who wear a scarf.

(France, Lyon; FG 2;

N: Algerian; General certificate of education; Sex: F; Age: 37;

D: Algerian, Capef; Sex: F; Age: 42)

F5: I feel Cypriot. When I was at school they treated me very nice I was never discriminated. I have never face any problems at school.

(Cyprus, Nicosia; 'European' Less Highly Educated FG3;

F5: Georgian Pontian, Greek citizen; Age: 21; Sex: F)

NEE10 (ii): I have once read, in a book, such a word - the second mother country, I didn't understand the essence of this word and only in Poland I realised what it means. (2.0). Poland has become another mother country for me, no matter there are good or bad Poles, well, I don't know, gentle or not. (.) I tolerate all, I like all, also the drunk in the street, also drug attics, these learned or not, and it hurts, what I see, because I treat it as mine. And now a moment came that I thought to go to Armenia, I have such a complex, that I come there, it was my dream for many years and I will look at all this from the other side; it is like a Pole who visit Armenia and look at things, because I will go there not as an Armenian but as a visitor from abroad. I will simply go there only for a few days, visit places, where I was before, which are dear to me and I will return here because here is my home, my children speak Polish, my younger daughter does not speak Armenian, she was only 5 when we came here, does not know Armenian letters; she is very busy, had no time to learn, she speaks Polish with us; here live our friends, my life is here.

(Poland, Warsaw; Non-European Highly Educated Group W1;

NEE10: Origin: Armenia; Sex: F; Age: 41/50; Years in Poland: 8; Education: Engineer; Occupation: sales manager)

One of the above quoted Algerian woman from France (D) found the values of the host society even more valuable than these of her native culture:

D: (...) And I felt that my children had taken on this mentality, meaning a woman is a woman, always inferior to man, she cannot be allowed to do this or that. But since they are here, they've changed, they've taken on the good part of French youth. I don't have to lock myself up, my son tells me, « Mom, you should not stay in. There are independent women, you won't always be stuck to Dad », well, they encourage me to take care of myself, to change. They tell me, « you've suffered enough, you will no longer suffer. » It feels so good. When you really look at our mentality from over there, I think there is nothing to be kept.

(France, Lyon; FG2;

D: Algerian; Capef; Sex: F; Age: 42)

In one of the English groups, a respondent said that regardless if one likes cultural norms and values of the host society or not, living in a given society one should accept the way it behaves. This sequence is typical of an assimilation discourse that was dominant in the 'European' group in Liverpool. In general their conversation put the emphasis on the migrant to change, with the dominant culture of the host society perceived as inflexible and not. One respondent is an Italian man in his 'mid

fifties', who is a retired engineer (LM5). He has been in Britain for just over 30 years. Another is a 68 year-old Irish woman (LF4).

LM5: You can do things as part of your main culture that you have, ok (.) You try not necessarily to put out of your way some local cultures, because obviously you are not as keen as the people who lived here all the time. But, as and when we go on, we've got to say we will abide with those cultures. The reason being, you're here and you're living with the people that are here

LF4: It's true that

LM5: And that to me is the most important way how to behave (.) If I'm going to live in Liverpool I've got to accept what they have. If I'm going to live in Canada for instance, I've got to accept what they have. Sometimes it takes time, but to have a peaceful life ((laughs)) you need to follow the flow

(England, Liverpool; 'European' group;

LM5: Italian man in his 'mid fifties', who is a retired engineer. He has been in Britain for just over 30 years;

LF4: 68 year-old Irish woman)

Conclusion

The distinction into *us* and *them* was present both in the statements referring to the perception of immigrants by host societies and in the statements concerning the will to preserve an original identity by respondents as well.

It is good to differentiate between two approaches to *difference* among immigrants – one finding the pure category of difference as something *negative*, second – something *positive*. According to the first approach, immigrants wish to become a part of a host society, but the society refuses the access in more overt or more latent way – they do not want to be perceived as different in any case (even if only being called a foreigner or an immigrant). According to the second approach immigrants do not wish to become a part of a host society in its full meaning, but wish to keep their identity living there without being discriminated against – they do want to be perceived as different but with respect to this difference and without discrimination.

In the first case the issue is the barriers to assimilation in the host society, in the second one - barriers to being respected as someone who wants to keep his or her difference. In both cases barriers are rooted in the appearance, spoken language (accent), functioning stereotypes or general socio-cultural background in the host society (such as eg. its general openness or closeness anchored in its culture).

But actually the problem can be more complicated, especially when the two above mentioned approaches occur in one person at the same time, but in different fields (what was the most common), eg. one still wants to keep his ethnic cultural identity (which correlates with difference towards the host society), but does not want to be perceived as different in his everyday contacts or rather does not want anyone to remind her or him of his / her difference (eg. by focusing attention) finding such behaviours intolerant.

The overt symbolic means of exclusion mentioned by the respondents were: gazing, pointing ones finger at *others*, overt associating selected groups of immigrants with pathologic activities or not acceptable cultural values. The overt rhetorical mean of exclusion was describing some specified categories with special names such as Murzyn, Ruski, Charlie, Mavre etc.

The example of a more latent symbolic exclusion can be a general approach to some categories of immigrants, eg. treating blacks as someone worse, less skilled, someone, who has to prove his or her competence. More latent mean of rhetoric exclusion is even unintentionally asking specific questions such as *when are you coming home?* to someone who finds the host society her or his home or even describing her or him using the above mentioned neutral words such as *foreigner* or *immigrant*, but underlying in this way the frame *us / them*.

To sum up, the issue is not the difference itself, but the fact **how** it is perceived (or sometimes even: **that** it is perceived) by the host society and how the difference and its perception by the host society *are perceived* by immigrants.