

HIDDEN TALENTS, WASTED TALENTS?

The real cost of neglecting the positive contribution of migrants and ethnic minorities



european network against racism

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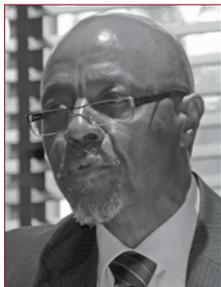
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Foreword



Europe is composed of immensely diverse people, whether migrants or natives. Each person is unique in his/her own right, with different skills, personalities, attributes, backgrounds, among other things, and each of these differences compiled is what gives Europe its spark, its competitive edge and creativity. All too often, however, the diversity of Europe is not always perceived in positive terms, but rather from a position of doom, of feeling threatened and/or insecure as a result of the many cultural, social, political and economic differences existing in Europe. As intercultural dialogue and efforts to promote and value diversity run counter to anti-immigrant rhetoric and fearful publics, immigration critics are held hostage by their xenophobic thinking. This results in the marginalisation of the foreign-born as well as EU citizens with a migrant background, or a “visible characteristic of difference”.

At the same time, high unemployment across much of the continent leads to the exacerbation of fears and results in many actually blaming migrants for the financial crisis and their seemingly insecure predicament. The reality, however, is quite different. For one, despite the high unemployment, too many employers actually lack the workers they need to fill positions in certain job sectors.¹ This is hardly surprising in a society experiencing progression in population ageing and declining birth rates, dynamics which strongly argue that migrants are indeed part of the solution to Europe’s economic and demographic challenges.

While the economic aspect of migration has drawn some recent public attention, the personal and social dimensions have not been recognised or valued in the same way; and yet, they are part of the elements that integration policies should take into account. With this publication, ENAR thus seeks to address this mismatch of information about migrants and ethnic and religious minorities by showing evidence of the many talents they all contribute to European society. This publication tells the story of minorities’ and migrants’ talents and the ways in which they are enriching Europeans, both materially and in more symbolic and qualitative ways. It also highlights, by contrast, the uncalculated losses incurred by failing to recognise and value these innumerable talents.

By documenting and shedding new light on some of the diverse contributions migrants make to European society and the economy, *Hidden Talents, Wasted Talents?* also forms part of ENAR’s progressive narrative on equality and diversity.

¹ Malmström and Sutherland, 2012.

ENAR is committed to promoting a progressive narrative on equality and diversity to bring about a paradigm shift that will enable us all to be valued and appreciated for what we are rather than categorised and undervalued because of our skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental ability, nationality or legal status, etc. We all want to live in dignity regardless of the different aspects of our identities. For most people living in Europe, living in dignity means having a roof over our head, having a decent job, knowing our children can benefit from a good education, access to adequate health services, surrounding ourselves by those we love, and being conscious and grateful for the joys of life – big and small. But to truly live in dignity, we need to be recognised and acknowledged for our talents and contributions by the broader society. This is basic psychology. Everyone wants to feel valued.

So in line with ENAR's aim to create a vibrant society, where concepts like "hope", "equality", "solidarity", "dignity", "well-being" and "happiness" become a reality in each of our daily lives, and where all of our contributions are recognised, we share evidence of the many contributions that individual migrants and ethnic and religious minorities have long been making to Europe.

Because little evidence has been gathered on this until now, with very little statistical evidence to confirm the social and cultural benefits, as well as the economic impacts of migrants' contributions, we hope this publication offers a first account and encourages further academic research in this area. With the aim of advancing data on migrants' contributions to European society, we invite migrants as well as those who know of migrants' contributions to Europe to get in touch with us at ENAR, to share their stories, personal testimonies, and figures on the "hidden talents" of migrants in Europe.²

In future, we want to hear these terms and accounts on the lips of our politicians and political leaders, instead of the common buzzwords "economic crisis", "austerity", "insecurity", "incompatible values", etc. for which migrants tend to be, albeit inaccurately, blamed. After all, we want a Europe that puts people at its heart, that enables full participation and equality, solidarity for and between all and real social and ethnic/racial justice.

Chibo Onyeji
ENAR President

2 ENAR is collecting stories and figures to build on a Panorama of Personal Testimonies, as a way of giving a human face to migration discourses. We want to collect individual stories on diversity and migrants' talents and contributions to Europe as a means by which to articulate and promote a positive narrative. ENAR is convinced that migrants contribute immensely to European society, fostering the European economy and beyond, as well as enriching our lives in many other ways. Help us counter the excuse of a lack of statistical and qualitative data on this, by sending us concrete and detailed examples by which migrants contribute to Europe. For more details about the kind of information we are looking for and how to contribute, contact Shannon Pfohman: shannon@enar-eu.org.

Key messages

Hidden Talents, Wasted Talents? highlights some of the many talents of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities; talents that may be less visible in mainstream media or in public discourses. While the economic aspect of migration has drawn some recent public attention, the social dimension has not been recognised or valued in the same way. This publication thus tells the story of migrants’³ talents and attempts to document and shed new light on the ways in which they are contributing to European society and the economy, both materially and in more symbolic and qualitative ways.

“I want to make a difference in whatever I decide to do.”
A young migrant

This publication also forms part of ENAR’s progressive narrative on equality and diversity.⁴ Specifically, the publication sets out to raise awareness of the many talents of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities in Europe by demonstrating that they contribute significantly, directly or indirectly, to European economies, well-being and social fabric. It achieves this by highlighting positive stories, giving visibility to the sometimes undetected and under-valued skills and attributes of migrants in European society. While specific attention is paid to the economic dimension of the variety of contributions, other social, cultural, political and symbolic benefits are also presented.

Surprisingly, the research undertaken for this publication has faced the challenge of the scarcity of available information and in-depth research on the multi-faceted contributions migrants and ethnic and religious minority people make to European societies. As a result, one of the objectives of this publication is to draw the attention of policy makers and academics to the need to invest in further research to unearth and bring to public attention in a documented manner the positive impact of migrants and ethnic minorities in all sectors of European societies.

Migrants are part of the diverse European community. As part of that society, migrants, like citizens, contribute and participate in a variety of ways. The words of the Swiss playwright Max Frisch, “we asked for a workforce but we got people”, ring true throughout the European Union, with migrants contributing not only to the economy but also to the social, cultural and political aspects of life.

3 For ease of reading, when referring to “migrant” in this publication, we take on a wider scope by considering migrants as well as individuals from ethnic and religious minorities. We are fully aware that neither category may be reduced to the other and are by no means synonymous. Rather, both categories compose complex identities, characteristics and legal dimensions. But for simplification in language, the concept “migrant” in this publication may cover migrants per se as well as their offspring born in Europe. Where relevant for understanding, we do specify the different categories under the term “migrant” with appropriate legal or political terminology.

4 For more information, see ENAR’s webpage on the progressive narrative: http://www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generate.asp?DocID=29577&langue=EN.

Some of the key messages arising from the publication include:

Economic contributions:

1. Migrants contribute to European society and economy.
2. Their contributions to the social, cultural and political aspects have an economic value.
3. Migrants constitute almost 10% of the EU population and are an integral part of the social fabric of the EU.
4. Migrants are employers who provide jobs to millions of native Europeans, both directly and indirectly.
5. Migrants contribute significantly, directly and indirectly, to GDP and trade of European countries.
6. Migrants allow Europeans to consume goods and services at much lower prices, whether this be in the area of catering, child and domestic care, tailoring or seamstressing, cleaning, gardening, construction, butchering, or waste removal, or just in helping Europeans to foster their energies and attention in other high added value sectors.
7. Migrants contribute enormously to their countries of origin by sending home remittances.
8. Migrants provide Europe with a direct link to global networks and markets.

Diverse skills and contributions:

9. Migrants have diverse skills and abilities. They participate in essential work, both paid and unpaid. They fill essential labour market gaps; they fill positions that natives often refuse; they volunteer in various sectors; and they are known for their entrepreneurship approach and innovative flair with start-up businesses.
10. Migrants are creative and courageous risk takers, who see the world through a wider lens as a result of their transnational backgrounds. They bring with them culinary delights, clothing and music styles, cultural and bi- or multilingual language knowledge.
11. Not only are migrants innovating but their presence is enabling others to create and innovate.

Agents of change:

12. Migrants, and migrant women in particular, are agents of change. They are changing stereotypes about women and young people and contributing powerful imagery of strong and courageous women.

Lessons to be learned:

13. If we are to develop a socially cohesive and intercultural society, it is critical that Europe validates the substantial and diverse contributions migrants are making both to the society and the economy.
14. Restrictive policies on immigration, education and employment have a direct economic and social cost to the individual, the community, and broader society. They are harming considerably prospects of quick recovery from the current economic crisis. This needs to be acknowledged and tackled, so that migrants can participate fully in society.
15. Recognising, valuing and fostering the expression and use of the diverse talents of migrants are essential steps to measuring equality and investing in research on the extent of these contributions. Due to the huge data gap in this area, economists and other researchers should take a wider approach to data collection and analysis on the contributions migrants make socially, culturally and politically to the European social fabric. Indeed, we cannot measure what we do not value and what we do not count.
16. Since women's talents are more likely to be hidden or never to be realised, a gender dimension is beneficial to research and other initiatives in order to promote and foster the participation of migrant women.

Section 1: Background and introduction

1.1 Background

Europe is a diverse society by its nature and design. Based on the values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, the principles of non-discrimination and equality,⁵ the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, the European Union is built on the understanding that mobility and cultural diversity are positive for economic and social development.⁶ With different personalities, backgrounds, skills, and characteristics, EU residents – including migrants – make up the very fabric that inspires a diverse and talented European community.⁷ Migrants, like citizens, contribute to the European community. Journalist, migration expert, and political advisor to European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, Philippe Legrain identifies the many economic contributions migrants make: “Immigrants with different skills and abilities allow us to consume goods and services that were not previously available or consume existing goods and services at much lower prices”.⁸ But beyond just the economic “consumption” type of benefits, migrants also contribute tirelessly to social, cultural and political dimensions as well.

“We asked for a workforce but we got people.”

Max Frisch

While we know this reality, there continues to be a clear absence of comparable and quantitative data on the social, cultural and political contributions that migrants make in Europe. Until the EU and its Member States recognise and validate the diversity of migrants’ participation and contributions, this situation is likely to continue. In the absence of readily available data, this publication aims to be innovative in its approach, combining human rights and economic arguments to raise attention to the positive contributions migrants make to European societies.

After all, migrants create opportunities for participation and expression of their wide-ranging talents. An examination of daily life and exceptional achievements speak to the contribution that migrants are making daily, both directly and indirectly. Migrants themselves are achieving high standards. It is clear that living in a diverse society also leads to innovation and has helped develop broader perspectives across the population. Migration is important to developing the economy of the EU. Migration is seen as a source of innovation and in business, there is a real drive to attract talent – both high and low skilled.

5 The principle of non-discrimination, requiring the equal treatment of an individual or group irrespective of their particular characteristics, was affirmed by Article 21 of the 2000 Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and included into primary European Union law via Article 6 Treaty of the European Union.

6 European Commission. Directorate General for Justice - Fundamental Rights.

7 Legrain, 2006: 69.

8 Legrain, 2006: 68.

Despite the advantages of their contributing to all aspects of European society, structural barriers and economically driven migration policies are often known to limit the opportunities of migrants to fully participate in society or have their talents recognised and valued – without clear rational reasons why such barriers have been set up in the first place.

Recognising the contributions of migrants is of crucial importance at this juncture. For one, not recognising these contributions allows negative perceptions of migration and migrants to dominate and does not give them a fair chance to integrate European society. Secondly, the lack of a positive narrative on migration leaves open a space for more extremist views and discourses. Thirdly and perhaps least acknowledged, is the importance of recognition for the esteem and value of communities. In the course of this research, migrants' interest in the purpose of the publication was palpable. The affirmation of the goal to recognise and make visible migrants' contributions was highly welcomed. People need to be valued. While clear at the individual level, it is also true for communities.

1.2 Purpose of the publication

An anomaly exists regarding the relationship between migration and the EU. Mobility and freedom of movement are key principles of the EU and have been recognised as a core contributor to the success of the Union. However, some public perceptions of migration and the approach of EU and state institutions particularly to migration from outside of the EU, can appear to be at odds with the principle and belief that mobility is a positive thing, and important for developing economies and relationships between states and peoples.

There are many common myths about migrants, but the most frequent are 1) migrants come and take away our jobs, 2) they are lazy and dependent on the welfare system, and 3) they are unwilling to adopt our cultural norms and values.

It is important to recall that any claim about migrants is by definition a generalisation considering their diverse backgrounds, identities, life situations, skills and characteristics. "Migrants are not a homogenous mass, but vary considerably from one another, as well as from the local population".⁹

The purpose of this publication therefore is to move away from the many negative clichés and untruths about migrants by providing evidence by means of brief descriptions of the valuable contributions migrants make every day to the lives of those surrounding them throughout Europe. Evidence is drawn from a range of sources: from academic texts and lectures to policy documents; EU institutions and civil society organisations; media reports and social media; digital storytelling and individual interviews. It draws from research conducted at the European level, where available, and also looks to studies from specific Member States, where a wider range of research is available and in the absence of comparable EU-wide data.

These facts are further differentiated according to the various areas in which the subject – migrants – manoeuvre in society, such as: culturally (language competencies, film, food and cuisine, fashion and sport); socially (family care and domestic work, health, neighbourhood, community, volunteering,

9 Legrain, 2006: 69.

schooling and higher education); politically (civil society and activism, migrant women as change agents); economically (in employment, business and services, entrepreneurialism, taxation and welfare, consumption and purchasing power, global networks, trade with countries of origin, etc.).

While ENAR does not necessarily want to contribute to ongoing discussions that examine migration under the lens of economics, and rather, holds true to human rights-based argumentation, we recognise that our human rights arguments are easily attackable in the media, by populist groups and by most of the political spectrum. We acknowledge that we can measure some things in economic terms, but there are many migrant contributions and hidden talents that we cannot measure but that nonetheless contribute to our well-being in Europe. Where possible, the economic value of these talents is estimated and described in the publication with the intention of changing the commonly negative discourses revolving around migration in Europe today. ENAR hopes with this publication to also add new arguments and evidence of the economic values of migrants to European societies, since “money often talks louder” than human rights and moral arguments. ENAR will try below to use money to talk louder about the human rights and moral arguments.

The overall objective of this publication therefore is to highlight the hidden talents of migrants and ethnic and religious minorities, the portrayal of which is part of ENAR’s progressive narrative on equality and diversity.¹⁰ The publication argues that the range of migrant contributions is not sufficiently visible in public and political discourses. It demonstrates that much participation outside of the traditional economic activity also has an economic value. It is vital that the EU and Member States recognise the diversity of migrants’ talents and the positive impact on the economy and European society.

1.3 Structure

Each section focuses on a particular aspect of migrants’ contributions, including the social, cultural, political and economic. Some contributions are cross-cutting, impacting both socially and economically.

Each section presents a short description of the nature of migrants’ contributions. It provides evidence of contributions from various sources. Individual stories are integrated throughout, illuminating and bringing to life the daily and exceptional contributions that migrants have made to the success and social fabric of the European Union. It is important to note that many of the individual accounts described here cannot be understood as “hidden talents” anymore, as they have meanwhile acquired public recognition and in some cases, fame. The fact that their successes are described in a publication reflecting “hidden and wasted talents” is intended to provide a reverse demonstration, as they are among those who have managed to succeed and make a name for themselves. This, in turn, demonstrates just how much they contribute to the collective well-being of European societies. Consider, for instance, how many other success stories would come to light if we ceased wasting talents because of discriminatory and exclusionary practices. How much better off would we be? How many Fatih Akins have been lost? How many Peter Bossmans have been lost? This is the question we aim to highlight as we identify recognised talents in a publication on “hidden and wasted talents”.

¹⁰ For more information, see http://www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=29577&langue=EN.

Section 2: Hidden talents – the evidence

2.1 Cultural contributions and opportunities

To start, it is important to recall that culture is never static. Cultural diversity and creativity owe much to the migration evident across the European Union. The cultural dimensions of migrants' talents are vast. This section has selected five specific areas for consideration, including language, film, food, fashion and sport.

2.1.1 Language competencies

Most immigrants to Europe are eager to be perceived as Europeans and full participants in their immediate community. For this, many learn the language in the society in which they have settled. In so doing, many retain their native languages as well and those become valuable cultural assets. Their bi- and multilingualism have been enormously important in bridging cultural and language gaps and contributing to intercultural understanding. Migrants thus contribute in multiple ways with their language and cultural competencies, for instance, by maintaining contacts abroad and relying on existing links to extend and broaden global markets. This increase in the diversity of language and experience in European culture further helps the continent remain a dominant economic force as the economy becomes more global. Bilingual immigrants and their children contribute to European culture in numerous ways, many of which are highlighted henceforth in this publication, whether through political positions, business and the non-profit sectors, establishing economic and cultural ties with other countries, and more.

2.1.2 Film

Film is a specific cultural medium, an art form that has mass appeal. Ranging in form and appeal, from popular culture to more elite artistic expressions, film is simply part of everyday life in Europe. The European film industry is renowned internationally for its quality and creativity and plays a central role in shaping and communicating European culture. With mass appeal, the film industry is also a very lucrative business.

“There are not more than five musical notes, yet the combinations of these five give rise to more melodies than can ever be heard.”

Sun Tzu

Film is also a medium that can communicate an intercultural message. There are many mainstream films that explore hybridity and the negotiation of cultures in diverse societies.

The quality of European cinema is recognised across the globe. Support for European cinema has a long tradition, with financial and symbolic supports, including, for example, the European Film Awards.

Migrant filmmakers – directors, screenwriters, producers – are among the most renowned. Their talent and specific contributions have been recognised by, for example, the European Film Academy and shown internationally. These filmmakers, in turn, create jobs within the European film industry.

Among the many acclaimed filmmakers with a migrant background are Fatih Akin from Germany and Gurinder Chadha who was born in Kenya and grew up in London.

Fatih Akin was born in 1973 in Hamburg to Turkish parents. He began studying Visual Communications at Hamburg’s College of Fine Arts in 1994. In 1995, he wrote and directed his first short feature, “Sensin – Du Bist Es!” (“Sensin - You’re The One!”), which received the Audience Award at the Hamburg International Short Film Festival. Akin’s work has gained mass popularity and international attention. He often addresses difficult issues related to migration, such as questions of identity and notions of belonging. His work has won esteem in particular for building bridges and cultural understanding between Germans and Turks. In his own words, Akin describes his work:

“What I’m always trying to say is, this Turkish-German gap, you know, or this connecting element of the two nations, or systems, or worlds - you can change that and put other things instead. Mexico and the U.S., same thing”.¹¹

Akin’s films have received numerous awards. One of his internationally renowned films was “Auf der anderen Seite” (The Edge of Heaven), produced in Germany and released in 2007. In less than five months, “The Edge of Heaven” had grossed \$741,283 in the US alone.¹² “The Edge of Heaven” received various awards including Best Director at the Golden Orange Film Festival, Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival and the LUX prize for European Cinema, by the European Parliament.

Gurinder Chadha was born in Kenya, and grew up in Southall, London, England. She began her career as a news reporter with BBC Radio, directed several award winning documentaries for the BBC, and began an alliance with both the British Film Institute (BFI) and Channel Four. In 1990, Chadha set up her own production company: Umbi Films. Chadha once said:

“I knew from an early age that people didn’t see the different sides of me. I formulated a kind of bi-cultural identity quite early and I was always very comfortable with it, but I knew people didn’t quite see that”.¹³

Chadha has been responsible for numerous films of international repute. One of her earlier films of international acclaim was “Bend it like Beckham”, which was released in 2002 in England. The film touches on questions of identity and the challenges for youth with a migration background to balance the values and traditions of the society in which they live with that of their immigrant parents, which are not always in sync with one another. In addition to dealing with complex

11 IMDb. Auf der Anderen Seite.

12 Ibid.

13 IMDb. Gurinder Chadha.

social questions, the film with a budget of approximately £3.5 million also grossed \$76,583,333 worldwide.¹⁴ Chadha was awarded the O.B.E. (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) in 2006 for her services to the British Film Industry.

Beyond acclaimed film makers with migrant backgrounds, there are also many who have not yet achieved mass public attention. Saddie Choua is one example. She is a Belgian filmmaker and writer of Moroccan descent, who studied sociology at the Free University in Brussels (VUB). Her practical and theoretical experience finds an outlet in the topics she covers in her films, evident, for instance, in the personal account of her sister in the film *My Sister Zahra*. Saddie often puts the focus on hidden worlds in her films. *Being a Muslim Today* debuted in 2011, *This is My Home Now* came out in 2012 and *The Combative Widows* debuted in 2007, which is a film about three Italian women who lost their husbands in the Marcinelle mine disaster in 1956. Saddie Choua's next project is a video-performance about her father and his brothers, consisting of two who migrated to Belgium and three who remained in Morocco. She examines which of the men made the best decision. She also writes columns, has published several short stories and has won numerous prizes for her films and writings.

2.1.3 Food and cuisine

The spice of life, the variety of foods and cuisine available in Europe is a direct result of migration and exposure to cultural diversity. The contribution of migration to cuisine is undisputed. The European diet today can hardly be separated from the influence of migration. Europe boasts an enviable international cuisine of the highest standards. Dishes from across the globe have been embraced throughout Europe. The kebab is an everyday food on the streets of Germany, curry is among the most popular dishes in the UK, and the traditional fish and chips was brought to Ireland by Italian migrants who travelled through England on their way to the island.

Food of course is a vital ingredient in human survival, health and quality of life. As such, it is central to the economy. Demand for ethnic foods has risen by 14% in Europe.¹⁵ The multicultural nature of European populations, together with increased travel and the globalisation of the food supply, have led to an increase in the consumption of ethnic foods by the mainstream population.¹⁶

As mentioned, the Döner Kebab is the most popular street food in Germany and is part of everyday German culinary vocabulary, comparable to the Greek gyro in the United States, the Indian Chicken Tikka Masala in the UK or the American hamburger throughout Europe. The Döner was introduced to Germany in Berlin by Turkish immigrants in the early 1970s.¹⁷ Today you will find a Döner stand in just about every German town. Indeed, in Berlin alone there are 1,200 Döner stands. More Döners are eaten every day than any other German food. The Association of Döner producers estimates that more than 100,000 tons of Döner meat is consumed annually. That amounts to about 2 million kebabs sold on a daily basis.

¹⁴ IMDb. Bend It Like Beckham.

¹⁵ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2006.

¹⁶ Eurofir, 2006.

¹⁷ Hanssen, 2011.

In the UK, Chicken Tikka Masala was proclaimed a “true British national dish” by the former UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook. The Indian food industry makes a substantial contribution to the UK economy, employment and revenue. The trade magazine “Spice Business”, for example, suggests that every week, 2.5 million customers eat in one of the 10,000 Indian food restaurants that employ 80,000 staff. Estimates of the Indian food industry’s annual turnover vary between £2.5 billion and £3.6 billion.¹⁸

Of course, Italian food has had a greater impact on eating habits than any other national food. Pasta, pizza, tiramisu and espresso are commonplace across Europe and indeed in the USA as well.

Migrants also excel in the culinary field. Ali Güngörmüş, in Germany, is an example of someone who has reached the highest standards and recognition, becoming the first chef with a Turkish background to receive the coveted Michelin star.

Beyond this, thousands of migrants are employed in catering and restaurant jobs, as well as agriculture, harvesting, and food processing plants throughout Europe, contributing to the food industry in more ways than one. Even those less known than Ali Güngörmüş are making major contributions: “Through their willingness to do unskilled work at lower wages than native people would accept, immigrants fill jobs that would otherwise not exist”.¹⁹

2.1.4 Fashion

Fashion is an area where the impact of migration is widely recognised.²⁰ Fashion culture is changing all the time and migration has greatly influenced the changes in recent decades. Fashion is at the forefront of the cultural diversity movement, promoting an appreciation of cultures.²¹

The role of migrants both as fashion shapers and industry players is worth careful attention, both because of the cultural messages it communicates and because of the economic value of the industry.

Migration and cultural diversity are inspirations for creativity, the vital ingredient of the fashion business. Many top designers attribute their inspiration to cultural diversity. Matthew Williamson and the late Alexander McQueen are just some of the designers who have attributed the inspiration for their collections to travel and exposure to different cultures.

Another prominent and interesting designer is John Rocha, a Hong Kong born designer based in Ireland, well recognised on the international stage. John Rocha is best known for his distinctive style experimenting with fabric and technique. Alongside his distinctive and high-end collections, he also designs a range for the high street which is available in Debenhams, a store trading in a number of EU Member States and online. John Rocha’s daughter, Simone Rocha, is also a young, talented and well recognised designer in her own right. John has been supportive of interculturalism

¹⁸ Khaleeli, 2012.

¹⁹ Legrain, 2006: 66.

²⁰ European Migration Network, 2006.

²¹ Yahoo Voices, 2009.

and, for example, designed a pin for the Irish Government’s “Know Racism” awareness campaign in the past as well as supported NGOs, such as Sport Against Racism in Ireland (SARI).

The European fashion industry has global appeal for fashion designers and others, e.g. models, who often choose to come to European fashion capitals to pursue creative work. Despite competition from places like New York and Tokyo, Paris, London and Milan are among the popular fashion capitals that attract foreign designers. Successful fashion designers, in turn, create jobs within the European fashion industry. The contribution of minorities to fashion is not a particularly new story. Historically, the influence of the Jewish community on fashion is well documented, with the Levi’s 501 jean recognised as one of the first Jewish fashion success stories.²²

Such is the importance of migration to the fashion industry, that in the US some of the biggest names in the fashion business are among those calling for immigration reform to promote easier visa procedures for international workers. They include Oscar de la Renta, Brooks Brothers, Malia Mills and Diane von Furstenberg.²³

Fashion is one of the more lucrative industries in Europe. In the UK alone, the fashion industry is worth £21 billion.²⁴ The UK fashion industry is the largest employer of all the creative industries, directly employing 816,000 people. Research commissioned by the British Fashion Council reveals that the industry is similar in size to food and drink services. The study compares the industry with other dominant industries and concludes that fashion generates more than twice as many jobs as real estate and considerably more than the sum total of telecommunications, car manufacturing and publishing.

Migrants, too, are consumers of fashion. The fashion industry including high street stores are increasingly aware of the purchasing power of migrants and the diversity of their client base. There is increasing consciousness and efforts by both designers and stores to ensure that they reflect and understand this diversity. VAWK is one the luxury brands recognised for promoting diversity on the catwalk. Debenhams²⁵ is an international company that has spoken of its efforts to reflect diversity, focusing in particular on ethnicity, age and disability.²⁶

A 2006 study by the European Migration Network (EMN) on the impact of migration suggests that the influence of migration on the world of fashion is perhaps one of the most evident manifestations of the adoption of what is described as the “allochthonous cultural expressions” in European societies. An analysis of the country studies suggests a number of reasons for this, including a trend towards “exoticism” in fashion styles. The EMN study also point to “ethnic fashion” as a recognisable segment of the textile market.²⁷

22 Neumann.

23 Thakur, 2011.

24 Fox, 2010.

25 Debenhams, an originally UK-based store now with international franchises across the globe, yielded revenue of £2,209.8 million in 2011 alone.

26 Fashioning Reality, 2010.

27 European Migration Network, 2006: 10.

Considering this popularity, migration has resulted in traditional codes of dress being challenged and adapted to new circumstances. Successful designers are conscious of this process. Ehud Men's spring 2012 collection actively and consciously explores the concept of migration and reinvention.²⁸ Ehud Joseph explored the notion of migration as a way of person reinvention, of how life in a dynamic world where people move from place to place affects the clothing choices people make. This can serve as a strategy to help adapt to the changes and against the alienation often associated with the migratory experience.

Ehud Joseph is himself another example of the many talented migrants making a very direct and sizeable contribution to the European fashion industry. Born in Israel and raised in New Zealand, Ehud Joseph moved to London in 2002 and graduated with an MA from Central Saint Martins in 2006. He launched his own label from Amsterdam in 2009. Another interesting young designer is Umut Kutluk. Originally from Turkey, he studied fashion in Ireland, which he has meanwhile made his home. An award winner, he is one of the young designers bringing something new to the fashion industry and playing a pivotal role in putting heretofore less prominent cities on the fashion map.

Fashion is becoming a platform for spreading a positive message of cultural diversity and equality, giving the stage to ethical fashion initiatives and campaigns such as Fashion Against Racism in Ireland. This goes to show that industries, in which migrants or those with a migration background have found a niche for themselves, tend to go a step further by serving as role models and leaders in their field. Many also make strides in bridging gaps and breaking down cultural and structural barriers in society to foster inclusion and ease the paths of future migrants and minorities. This is also evident in sport, as will be seen below.

2.1.5 Sport

The sports industry is extremely valuable and growing. A Price Waterhouse Cooper report in 2010 estimates the value of the industry at \$114 billion, predicting an annual growth rate of 3.7%, so that the industry should reach a global value of \$145.3 billion by 2015.²⁹

Football is one of the more lucrative sports in the world today, with the UK taking the lead. There is huge competition between countries and clubs to attract the best players. Many clubs search the globe for talent to attract to their teams. Forbes' estimates indicated in April 2012 that one football club alone, Manchester United, was worth \$2.2 billion. Manchester United is a multi-ethnic team, drawing some of its more prominent players from 15 different countries.³⁰ Frontier found that the Spanish team had an estimated value of £258 million and England £226 million.³¹

Migrants make up a significant proportion of the leading premier league teams. The majority of footballers in France, for example, are migrants or have a migrant background.³² The composition

28 Long, 2011.

29 McCullagh, 2010 and PWC.

30 Wikipedia. List of Manchester United F.C. players.

31 Frontier Economics, 2010.

32 Quiñero, 2010.

of premier league teams has changed dramatically over the past 20 years. In 1989, teams were likely to have one or two foreign players. In 2009, BBC Sport reported that premier league teams had on average 13 foreign players in their ranks.³³ The list of foreign premier league players, which was established in 1992, lists players stemming from close to 100 countries.³⁴

Examples of inspiring players abound and seem almost endless in the context of European football and sport – Drogba, Ronaldo, Ronaldinho, Mesut Özil, Javier Casquero, Faustino Reyes, John Joe Nevin, and so on. Didier Drogba, from the Ivory Coast and player with Chelsea Football Club, is an interesting case, however, being one of the numerous sports figures who contribute well beyond the pitch. Clearly a high earner, he and his family contribute to the local economy. He is a sporting role model for all children including migrant children. He is also a role model for civic participation and giving back to society. Drogba is the founder of the Didier Drogba Foundation,³⁵ to which he donates the moneys earned through sponsorship. He seeks to change things for the better by developing structures to give people basic healthcare and education in Africa.³⁶ Securing the best players in the world has a direct impact on the team’s success, with the potential to yield wins, a high profile and funds for the club. The presence of international players also helps increase the international appeal of different football clubs. Clearly, local clubs benefit financially from a market and fan base that spans well beyond their own cities or countries.

Footballers of course spend money in the country. By the nature of the sport, you will find that footballers must be available for training and so in practice, international players take up residence in the country. Therefore, they pay taxes including income tax and contribute to the local economy through their considerable purchasing power. The top international players are among the best paid both within the industry and compared to other industries.

Top football players can earn very high salaries and qualify for higher tax rates. Changes to tax rates for international players have brought to light the value of their contribution and also the role that the tax system plays in helping to attract or retain players.³⁷ Spain, for example, has made changes to the tax regime, which others argue could attract international players who do not want to pay the level of taxes they might pay elsewhere. This has drawn particular attention, for example, in the UK, where some groups argue they may not be able to hold the best players who are currently helping the country hold its leading position.

Moreover, the value of sport to national morale and the economy has not escaped the attention of governments either. Football is of symbolic, cultural and economic importance across the EU. One need merely draw on the significant impact of the 2006 World Cup in Germany, as it inspired a new form for Germans to celebrate their national identity through sport, freeing it somewhat of its burdened historical memory and associations with patriotism practiced during the Second World

33 Williams, Ollie. 2009.

34 Wikipedia. List of foreign Premier League players.

35 Didier Drogba Foundation.

36 Ibid.

37 For discussions on this topic, see Kleven, H.J. et al, 2012.

War. In addition, one could also argue that the inspiration athletes offer to all people and youth in particular, from all backgrounds, by enticing them to mobilise their energies to alter and improve their life situations, to climb the social ladder and advance, has in many ways numerous economic and financial implications. At the end of the day, this effectively results in individuals being less reliant on antidepressants, increasing individual well-being, fostering self-confidence, and being more innovative and successful in the labour market, among other positive outcomes.

Another aspect of athletes' contributions to society is reflected in the many products derived from their popularity. Thousands of Euros are invested and returned as a result of the direct and indirect marketing linked with the promotion of these popular role models. In making use of their popular images, thousands of jobs are created in multiple industries, ranging from marketing, sports products, textile, figurines, video games, to soft drinks, food, dairy, etc. – essentially any niche in which the image of the athlete can be promoted. This in turn generates mass wealth, which contributes to GDP and the economy overall. Such figures also need to be factored in when trying to estimate their contribution to the economy and overall well-being in society, as this wealth extends far beyond just their salaries and individual consumption. But the simplest contribution athletes make is measurable by the enjoyment sports fans have in watching games, supporting players and joining fan clubs, which contributes to overall happiness throughout society.

2.2 Social participation and contributions

Migrants are part of the social fabric of the European Union. They contribute in everyday and in exceptional ways to the communities of which they are a part, as well as to the wider social life of European society. Cities with significant migrant populations and cultural diversity tend to be dynamic and increasingly, are attracting investment. Projects such as Cities of Migration speak to the many social (and economic) benefits of diversity.³⁸

Migrants are keen to integrate socially. Indeed, in the HSBC Expat Explorer, 41% of participants surveyed during 2010 stated that making friends and forming social networks was one of their biggest concerns when relocating.

Migrants' social participation involves engaging in a variety of roles. Social roles are broad and might include for example, domestic roles of homemaker and caregiver; interpersonal roles of friend and family member; roles as student, worker and entrepreneur; and community roles such as participating in organisations or volunteering.

“Real dialogue is on the streets of every city in Europe.”

This section focuses on the contributions that migrants are making in the areas of particular social (and economic) value including care (paid and unpaid work); health; volunteering; and education.

³⁸ For more information, see <http://citiesofmigration.ca/>.

2.2.1 Care work and domestic work

One of the key challenges for society in the EU is care. The EU clearly recognises ageing as a striking demographic feature. With a changing age demographic and changes to participation in the labour market, caring for older and disabled people as well as babies and young children is a challenge for the EU. Care work is critically important to ensuring high levels of labour market participation, both by men and women. Migrants are playing a particular role in care work across the EU. The majority of migrant care workers are women.

For instance, data from the UK employer survey show that migrant workers account for 19% of care workers and 35% of nurses employed in long-term care.³⁹ In Ireland, 27% of care assistants (social care workers) caring for older people are migrant workers.⁴⁰ In Italy, between 2005 and 2007, the number of immigrant workers entering Italy with a contract for employment in family assistance and domestic work amounted to 259,473, representing about a quarter of all regularly employed migrant workers.⁴¹

Care workers and care recipients tell heart-warming stories of their relationships and the rewards of the work. One care worker in a retirement home, for example, says that she loves her job; her goal every day is to put a smile on someone's face. But another side of the story is heart breaking. It would be remiss not to mention the fact that engaging in care work in Europe often takes migrants away from caring for their own families, located outside of Europe. Family reunification plays an important role in enabling care workers (largely female) to engage in care and other economic work in Europe, but the reality is that many care workers in Europe are migrants. Migrant women tell stories of the heartbreak of leaving their own children behind in their countries of origin in order to care for other people's children in Europe.

There are also empowering stories with domestic workers and care workers organising to support each other and to have their rights recognised. Across the EU, domestic workers groups, for example, are raising awareness about the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers⁴² and seeking to have Member States ratify it.

In addition to advocating for the rights of domestic workers, migrant care workers also contribute to society by earning wages, buying things, sending home remittances, and enabling others, customarily native women, to engage in high skill, high added value employment that benefits the whole of society. This is not to say that only native women benefit from the dedication of domestic care workers, but rather due to existing patriarchal systems, care duties often fall to the responsibility of women and as such, native women often appear to be the direct beneficiaries of employing domestic workers, as it frees them from carrying out the domestic care work themselves. Yet this contributes to the wider society as well and not just native women, as domestic workers provide safety and a positive developmental environment for the children for whom they care, and the assurance that the elderly or physically disabled individuals in their care are being

³⁹ International Organization for Migration, 2010.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Di Santo and Ceruzzi, 2010.

⁴² International Labour Organization.

well attended to. Generally, this allows someone else, often native women, the opportunity to engage in a high value, higher paying position outside the home and further contributes to more consumption, greater economic growth, and so on.

2.2.2 Health

Health systems in a number of high-income EU countries depend heavily on medical professionals, including doctors and nurses, who were trained abroad. Over the last 30 years, the number of migrant health workers increased by more than 5% per year in many European countries. In countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), around 20% of the doctors have come from abroad.⁴³

The contribution that migrants make and the central role they play in sustaining healthcare systems, is evident across the EU. In Ireland, for example, 12.4% of workers in the area of human health and social work are migrants, with 17.4% of health professionals identifying themselves as migrants. In France, half of the doctors in Paris are migrants or of a migrant background. Imagine what would happen if these health professionals were not practicing in Europe. Consider the high quality medical knowledge (attained abroad) of migrants who support the European population. They contribute by filling in labour market gaps with skilled personnel, and providing a high quality service delivery. They also contribute by making the lives of the residents in their communities healthy and happy, contributing to a healthy work force, which in turn contributes to more growth and greater production.

Consider further what the economic losses for Europe would be if these health professionals were absent or prevented from working and contributing to society. Doctors, for instance, generally earn high salaries. With this income, many contribute directly to their community, both in the destination country and abroad. Many also support NGO work and some volunteer to provide medical treatment to the poor and needy. In both cases, they are contributing to the well-being of the wider society, for instance, by preventing the spread of disease and illnesses, inspiring thousands of youth to strive for a better life and fostering community cohesion. Of course, they also contribute by paying taxes, spending income as consumers, etc. Clearly, more research is needed regarding the different levels of wealth that would be generated by such figures and daily realities, not just in relation to healthcare but in all these areas identified.

There are also interesting anecdotes also about how migration has changed the way healthcare is delivered. The Turks in Germany, for example, are credited with making hospitals and visiting hours more flexible and patient-centred.

43 World Health Organisation, 2010.

2.2.3 Volunteering

Volunteering plays an invaluable role in maintaining the social and cultural fabric of society in Europe. The role of volunteering was recognised by the EU when it designated 2011 as the EU Year of Volunteering. Migrants across the EU have adopted volunteering as a strategy for contributing to their local and ethnic communities and for creating opportunities for integration.⁴⁴ While volunteering has become more visible on the European agenda, there is still a significant data gap, especially with regard to measuring the volunteer work carried out by migrants.

Volunteering has a clear economic value. While data in the EU is not so readily available, an estimate of the value of volunteering in the US alone shows that volunteers gave about 1.9 billion hours in 2006. The value of their donated time was about \$20 per hour, which calculates to about \$38 billion in lost volunteer time in one year.⁴⁵ Volunteering in the US has long been promoted, sometimes even being a prerequisite to attaining certain paying positions. Civic volunteerism in the US boosts career chances.

This is partly due to reliance of the system on volunteers to carry out certain tasks that would otherwise not be covered by the welfare system. The value of volunteers' economic contributions to society has been more readily recognised in the last years.

Volunteering provides migrants with opportunities to connect to society and prevent social exclusion. It also helps promote intercultural learning which is of value to all involved and plays a role in preventing racism and xenophobia. Many migrants volunteer in mainstream organisations as well as within their own migrant communities.

A number of factors help increase the possibility of migrants volunteering. These include: accessibility, diversity, clarity and quality of work, visibility, community empowerment and networking.⁴⁶ It is also noted, however, that certain socio-economic factors prevent migrants from volunteering, including discrimination.⁴⁷

Structural challenges also make it more difficult for migrants to volunteer. For instance, some migrants' residency right is contingent upon their working full-time in a paid position, making it difficult to find time to volunteer. Despite this, many still do. Some migrants excluded from the labour force have found that volunteering is a way to participate in the broader society and give back. Asylum seekers, for example, compose a group with particularly active volunteers.⁴⁸ In fact, in some cases, asylum seekers are more likely to volunteer than the general population due to limits in their ability to access the labour market.

Moreover, language skills – both the mother tongue and new country language of migrants and their offspring – are known to improve in destination countries among those engaged in volunteering and

44 Migration Policy Group, 2012.

45 Eisner et al. 2009.

46 European Volunteer Centre, 2006.

47 European Anti-Poverty Network, 2011.

48 Islington Training Network/EASI DP, 2007.

interethnic exchanges. Interactions between migrants and natives of the destination country are known to foster intercultural understanding and community cohesion. This is further valued, as informal networks emerge, which in turn contribute by supporting newly arrived migrants in easing their way through the intricacies of European societies' administrations, supporting families materially and psychologically, assisting migrant children through the school system, ensuring this support leads to their successful completion of degrees and trainings, among other benefits. These daily contributions, to name but a few, make a huge (but often unnoticed) contribution to the social inclusion of migrant communities and the global well-being of European societies. This message cannot be underscored enough.

2.2.4 Higher education

Immigrants have made enormous contributions to the sciences and education in European culture, though it is not always recognised. Migrants also tend to be better qualified than the indigenous and working population. This is supported by numerous sources including OECD and Eurostat data.⁴⁹ Migrants are an important contributor and stakeholder group in European higher education and include academics and international students with links to potential students, emerging markets and talent across the globe.

Migrants are a strategic resource in the current drive towards internationalisation of education, where the EU, Member States and universities have set ambitious growth targets. Internationalisation of European higher education is an explicit strategy of the European Commission to support growth and jobs, through the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems.⁵⁰

International students are still a largely untapped resource for other economic and business development. One leading critique of student visas is that states tend to limit international students' stay to the study period; whereas economists argue they should be trying to hold graduates and retain the talent. They argue that Member States are losing a key opportunity here. As businesses engage in what has been termed a "war on talent",⁵¹ where attracting and retaining talent to serve a global economy and client base is key for achieving competitive advantage, the EU and Member States are effectively losing this battle and thus also the advantage. Instead, the EU should be developing proactive measures to retain these knowledgeable and skilled graduates.

**"This is my home.
I grew up here. My
friends, my family,
my future are here.
But the system sees
me as an outsider
and so we face
these huge fees."
*A young migrant***

Another sometimes neglected group are the young migrants growing up in Europe. Integration policies often focus on recruiting skilled, incoming migrants whereby entire generations of third country

49 For example, a study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that 34% of migrants in the UK have a post-school qualification, i.e. 4.9% more than non-immigrants (See Chartered Management Institute, 2011). Eurostat data finds that for the age group 20-64, the level of higher education attainment is similar but the over-qualification rate is much higher for "foreign born" workers (See Eurostat, 2011).

50 European Commission. 2011. Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Supporting growth and jobs - an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems.

51 For a discussion on this issue, see CPL Integrated, 2012.

nationals already residing in the EU Member States remain forgotten. Moreover, structural barriers may also limit their potential, requiring them, for example, to pay higher tuition fees than citizens of the Member State or complete more intricate entrance tests and/or language requirements.

Fees for “foreign students” can be exorbitant and may result in effectively excluding migrant youth from entering third level education. This, in turn, results in limiting their full potential to make something of themselves and contribute to their surrounding community.

2.3 Political participation

Migrants want to contribute to the body politic, to the decision making processes that affect their lives, and to the broader European community. Generally, being able to do so signifies the existence of a true democracy, measured by the extent to which the residents within are able to influence decisions affecting their lives.

Migrants make up approximately 9.5% of the population of the EU.⁵² Despite this, migrants’ contributions to political life and decision making are often not always visible. Their right to participate in political decision making varies significantly from one Member State to the next. A number of structural factors influence their political participation, including their legal status, their country of origin, and specifically, the regularity of elections in the country of origin. In many EU countries, third country nationals who have not yet acquired EU citizenship or naturalized in the country of residence are often excluded from the political process, thereby weakening their representation in democratic institutions in Europe.

Despite these structural barriers, migrants are finding ways to engage politically, be it through politics, trade union activism, civil society engagement, or through other decision making bodies.

2.3.1 Political participation and decision making

It is widely acknowledged that decision making, particularly political decision making, is an area where third country nationals are most excluded by institutional barriers, with much of the political discourse centring on granting them voting rights.

The skewed representation, with third country nationals less likely to be eligible for election or to be accepted by the electorate, is a notable pattern throughout Europe. At all levels, however, there are exceptions with some of the highest offices held by politicians of a migrant background. These public representatives often serve as role models, in particular to the migrant and minority constituents they serve. Their political achievements send the message that migrants can and do represent all people and that every career choice is possible. Although not always intentional, they contribute in breaking new ground and creating avenues for other migrants both into as well as through the political system.

52 Vasileva, 2011.

Success stories: Politicians breaking new ground and leading the way

There are some notable examples of migrants and people from a migrant or ethnic/religious minority background participating in political life, including at the highest levels. Many of these politicians are providing role models, in particular for migrant communities. Some examples:

- ➔ **Ahmud Aboubaleb** is a Dutch politician of the Labour Party. He was elected to the position of Mayor of Rotterdam in the Netherlands in January 2009.
- ➔ **Rotimi Adebari** made history in Ireland in 2007, seven years after arriving in Ireland from Nigeria, when he was elected Ireland's first black mayor to the town of Portlaoise in County Laois.
- ➔ **Malika Benarab-Attou** is a French politician and Member of the European Parliament in the Greens/EFA political group, and elected in the 2009 European election for the South-East France constituency. Born into a Kabyle family in Algeria, she and her family immigrated to France in 1968, where she became active in anti-racist work.
- ➔ **Peter Bossman** was born in Ghana and migrated to Yugoslavia in 1978 when he received a scholarship to study medicine. After graduating from medical school in Ljubljana and working as a general practitioner in the community of Piran, he became politically active. This led to his current role as mayor of the Piran municipality in Slovenia, though he is also still working as a medical doctor. Throughout his professional and political life he has been closely engaged in social activities in his community, mainly working with young and disadvantaged people in society.
- ➔ **Karima Delli** was born in France to Algerian parents and is a French politician and Member of the European Parliament, elected in the 2009 European election for the Île-de-France constituency.
- ➔ **Saïd El Khadraoui** was born in Belgium to a Moroccan father and Belgian mother. He is a Belgian politician and Member of the European Parliament with the Socialist Party.
- ➔ **Patricia Janet** was born in the Dominican Republic. She is a prominent member of the House of Lords in the UK.
- ➔ **Livia Jaroka** is a Hungarian Roma politician, serving as a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats).
- ➔ **Dr. Syed Kamall** was born in the UK with an Indian and Guyanese background. He is a British Conservative Party politician and Member of the European Parliament for London.

- ➔ **Sajjad Haider Karim** is a UK politician and MEP for the European Conservatives and Reformists Group. Born in the UK, with a Pakistani background, Mr. Karim was the first British Muslim elected to the European Parliament. He was re-elected in June 2009.
- ➔ **Claude Moraes** grew up in Scotland, having moved to the United Kingdom with his parents at the age of six from India. He is a Member of the European Parliament for the Labour Party. He is also the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party in Europe and one of eight MEPs representing London.
- ➔ **Viktória Mohácsi** is a Hungarian politician of Roma ethnicity. Between 2004 and 2009 she was a Member of the European Parliament, one of only a small caucus of Roma MEPs. In 2009, she received the International Woman of Courage Award, an award honouring women who have shown exceptional courage and leadership in women's rights and advancement.
- ➔ **Younous Omarjee** was born in La Réunion, a French island. He became politically active in his high school years and was a parliamentary assistant from 1998 to 2009; first, in the French Senate and then in the European Parliament. Since 2012, he is an MEP with GUE/NGL.
- ➔ **Cem Özdemir**, co-leader of the Green Party in Germany, is of Turkish descent.
- ➔ **Aygül Özkan** was born in Germany in 1971 to parents who had migrated to Germany from Turkey in the 1960s. She was appointed Minister for Social Affairs in Germany in 2010.
- ➔ **Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia** from Spain was the first Roma to serve as a European Member of Parliament (from 1994 to 1999).
- ➔ **Tokia Saïfi** was born in France to Algerian parents. She is a member of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and MEP.
- ➔ **Toma Tomov** is a Roma from Bulgaria. A retired athlete, Toma Tomov got involved in politics and became an elected representative in Bulgaria.
- ➔ **Emine Bozkurt** is a Dutch politician of Turkish descent and a Member of the European Parliament since 2004. She is a member of the Dutch Labour Party, which is part of the Party of European Socialists. She has been the chair of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup in the European Parliament since 2009.
- ➔ **Ismail Ertug**, born in Germany of Turkish descent, is a Member of the European Parliament and member of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats.
- ➔ **John Abraham Godson**, of Nigerian descent, is a member of parliament in Poland and the first black man to become a member of parliament in this country.

The political participation of migrants who have the right to vote and benefit from diverse and inclusive integration practices in the destination country is noteworthy. Likewise, given the issues facing women in politics and decision making, the experience of migrant women also warrants particular attention.

Young women from Somalia, now resident in Europe, are among those who speak of their appreciation of democracy and what it means for them. They speak of the fact that they do not take their voices or voting for granted. Sharing this perspective also impacts on citizens' appreciation and political engagement. A YouTube video shows one young Somali woman telling the story of how sharing her experience and views has opened up people's eyes to their political rights and brought about a renewed appreciation for democracy and political participation.⁵³ Refugees offer particular insights in terms of the political life of the European Union and contributions in this regard.

Research conducted on participation in European elections also shows interesting results.⁵⁴ The study looked at people with a migrant background who had acquired European citizenship and found that migrants were just as likely to vote where elections were held regularly in the country of origin. Where elections were held less regularly, the migrants were half as likely to vote, but this gap was already halved in the voting patterns of second generation migrants. This alludes to the contagiousness of practical democracy and indicates that migrants are eager to be active citizens and to participate in the political arena. This expands beyond just voting rights. Migrants often engage in high level community organisations involving multiple actors and local groups. Many work to promote intercultural dialogue, joining forces with natives to advocate diversity, social inclusion and integration agendas. Moreover, migrants exercise their political engagement through the institutionalisation of ethnic group associations, forming a consultative structure, and also through social services run by migrants and ethnic and religious minorities. In some ways, migrants could thus be perceived as being more politically active than even native residents with voting rights.

**“Civilisations
should be
measured by
the degree
of diversity
attained and the
degree of unity
retained.”**
W.H. Auden

2.3.2 Civil society and activism

Politics is not the only area where people can participate. Migrants are finding other avenues open to them, including school boards, residents' associations and community organisations. Involvement in voluntary associations and other social structures impact on political participation and inclusion.⁵⁵

Migrants are among the strongest advocates, encouraging their communities to participate across society, and beyond the economic arena. In Member States, migrant social entrepreneurs and

53 First Light Movies, 2012.

54 Mark Franklin refers to the results of the European Election Study 2009, available online at www.ees-homepage.net, during his presentation on “Political Participation of EU Migrants” (See Franklin, 2011).

55 Morales and Guigni, 2011: 7.

migrant-led organisations are supporting their communities to participate socially, culturally and politically.

Migrant organisations promote and advocate for political rights. They also play an important role in promoting awareness within migrant communities of political rights and mobilising participation. For example, some have run voter registration campaigns. These initiatives have often been developed in partnership with municipalities and other relevant institutions.⁵⁶

Migrants recognise and congratulate the contributions made by migrants to society. In the absence of other channels or due to barriers for migrants to access mainstream institutions or media, interesting developments have been taking place in which migrants honour and validate fellow migrants. These include award ceremonies in the area of business, fashion and the media, such as the “Diwan Awards” in Belgium,⁵⁷ just to name a few.

Migrants are also using the internet as a powerful medium to increase their visibility, circumventing and overcoming to some degree, their invisibility in mainstream media and cultural representations.

Migrant leadership is visible in civil society organisations, both in mainstream and migrant organisations. Civil society organisations and migrant-led organisations play an important role in developing migrant leaders. Leadership manifests itself in all areas of life. Leadership development in such organisations has at times been a training ground for future politicians, with some activists later entering political life.

The late Mouloud Aounit (1953-2012) is a prime example of an activist who entered politics in France. Mouloud Aounit was a renowned human rights activist known especially for his defence of refugees’ rights. Aounit became a prominent political and social figure in France and an elected representative of the people of Paris and its vicinity. He was also the Honorary Chairman of the Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Between Peoples (MRAP).⁵⁸ Similar to frequent migrant engagement in civil society – big or small – Aounit’s commitment has had a far reaching impact beyond just his immediate community.

2.3.3 Migrant women as agents of change

There is increasing recognition of migrant women as agents of change, including by the Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which held a conference on this very subject in 2012.⁵⁹

In recent years, there have been numerous examples of women, among whom migrant and Roma women and communities, acting as agents of change. Women play an important role

⁵⁶ Cities of Migration, 2011.

⁵⁷ See <http://www.diwanawards.be/>.

⁵⁸ CNN, 2012.

⁵⁹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

as catalysts for social integration and coherence, contributing to the economic development of individual communities and society overall.

Migrant women are clearly making a valuable contribution to their own community, to the broader women's movement and society overall. Seja Majeed is an example of many inspiring young women, who has demonstrated clear leadership, volunteering with youth groups and raising the profile of young migrants. Seja Majeed recently delivered a presentation

“It's become my vocation to find solutions to ease acceptance. Everybody needs to play their part.”

A young migrant woman

to UK Members of Parliament on the topic of migrants' contributions.⁶⁰ Born in Iraq, Seja Majeed's family emigrated to the UK when she was aged one. A young migrant and a young Briton, she is actively working to promote the talents of all young people and has become a prominent face of the Vinspired campaign.⁶¹

Another example is Melek Usta, a self-made woman, who started working at an early age. After her management studies, she began her career in the HR department of a printing company and in 1995 she moved into the temporary employment sector, working for Start Employment Agency, where her career took off. At 29 she was Area Manager, responsible for several branches and an eight million euro turnover. In 2000, she decided to set up her own business and created Colourful People, an agency in the Netherlands working in the field of diversity management and filling (top) positions both within government and the business world. It also counsels directors and managers in formulating and implementing diversity strategies, cooperating closely with universities. Melek Usta also holds various other positions in several academic and governmental networks, boards and platforms. She was named Black Businesswoman of the Year in 2006.

Similar other examples exist of migrant women across Europe contributing both at the national and European levels through and with organisations such as the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and the European Migrant Women's Network (EMoWN), just to name a few.

2.3.4 Representation

Widespread acceptance in mainstream society is essential in the election process. While there are notable exceptions, there is an uphill path yet to climb. Eurobarometer and MIPEX data reveal issues around political leadership with MIPEX showing that on average, only about one third of people across Europe would accept a person of migrant background in the highest political office.⁶²

For those working to increase the political representation of visible minorities in Europe, it is discouraging to see the clear lack of representational politics or the representative vote on laws in the Parliament. For instance, among the 620 members of the German Parliament, there are only five people of Turkish descent.⁶³

⁶⁰ Majeed, 2009.

⁶¹ Vinspired is a campaign encouraging young people to volunteer. For more information, see: www.vinspired.com.

⁶² Migrant Integration Policy Index, 2010 and European Commission. 2012. Special Eurobarometer 393.

⁶³ Fidan and Gülsünler, 2011. Germany, with 82 million people, is home to an estimated 3.8 to 4.3 million Muslims, mostly Turkish citizens and Germans of Turkish descent.

Despite remaining hurdles in some Member States, enforcing strict citizenship rules effectively hindering the foreign-born in many cases from becoming citizens or being eligible to run for office, there has been increased attention directed recently toward fostering the political participation of newcomers and their locally born children in representational politics.

The project “Diversity in Political Parties’ Programmes, Organisation and Representation”, for instance, seeks to initiate, assess and support diversity development processes with regard to ethnic diversity in major political parties in different EU Member States. By raising awareness and developing practical tools to promote diversity development in parties, particularly at the national level, the project enhances the chances for third country nationals (TCNs) to participate in political parties. “Improving participation opportunities for TCNs in party politics is essential to increasing the influence of TCNs in decision making processes and their place as agents in the democratic system”.⁶⁴

Initiatives like this are clearly needed to highlight and bank on the talents of migrants in Europe. It is an interesting time, however, with numerous politicians breaking new ground by becoming the first with a migrant background to hold various political positions.

2.4 The economy

The business case for migration and diversity is clear and well documented. However, there is a broader economic case for diversity and migration that deserves closer attention. This section highlights some of the ways migrants are contributing to the economy, as entrepreneurs, innovators, employees, consumers and tax payers.

Migrants make a measurable, positive contribution to the European economy. They tend to spend a lot and are enterprising. While there is still little comparable research on the economic contribution of migrants from region to region, there is considerably greater research focused on the economic dimension than the social, cultural and political dimensions in relation to migration in Europe.

As warnings of demographic changes – i.e. lower birth rates and an increasingly older population in Europe – have become more pronounced, some European policy makers have become cognisant of Europe’s dependence on migrant workers. This acknowledgement has led to greater demands for in particular highly skilled migrant workers, considered necessary for filling current and future labour shortages. With the impetus of growing labour shortages and demographic changes, immigration has thus gained a new focus and the role of immigrants has become increasingly more important as far as the growth and composition of Europe’s population and its future labour force are concerned.⁶⁵

Research in Member States clearly demonstrates that payments made to migrants, e.g. in pensions, are more than offset by social security contributions. This is due to a number of factors, including age profile, rate of employment and migration status. Economic migrants migrate in order to work.

⁶⁴ Migration Policy Group. DivPol - Diversity in Political Parties Programmes, Organisation and Representation.

⁶⁵ Pfohman, 2011.

Their access to other income options, e.g. through welfare, is often more limited than that of European citizens. It should also be noted that their availability to work is often facilitated by other migrants and family members who, for example, engage in unpaid childcare.⁶⁶ Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth is at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy. In this context, migrants play a central role, contributing to the economy in multiple ways.

2.4.1 Labour market

Those willing to migrate, i.e. to take risks, are known to be enterprising people.⁶⁷ Migrants offer a huge potential to address some of the labour market issues facing Europe today. Europe’s workforce is shrinking as a result of demographic changes. The EU has around 80 million people with low or basic skills that are benefiting less from lifelong learning than more educated people. The European Commission estimates that by 2020, there will be 16 million jobs requiring high qualifications.

Migrants tend to either have a higher level of qualification than the general population or be low-skilled. Migrants have a strong incentive once they are in Europe to take advantage and make the best of the opportunities available to them there. As a result, Europe benefits greatly from their hard work and enterprise. According to the OECD, regional differences emerge in the distribution of highly skilled foreign-born individuals. Highly skilled foreign-born individuals contribute heavily to human capital endowments. Germany, as well as Paris and London signify poles in Europe for skilled immigrants. London benefits in particular from skilled migration, with a high percentage of a tertiary educated, foreign-born population in the labour force.⁶⁸

Migrants have also been found to boost productivity in Europe.⁶⁹ “When immigrants spend their wages, they increase the overall demand for goods and services, which in turn boosts the demand for workers, some of them highly skilled, to produce them. Thus, far from taking local people’s jobs, immigrants generally create new jobs for the existing population”.⁷⁰

Migrants are employed in nearly every industry and across the service sector. Yet, the percentage of migrants and minorities, particularly women, in the workforce is substantially less – for many types of jobs – than their representation in the wider European, working age native population.

There is also a high proportion of migrants employed in specific sectors, often low-skilled and underpaid, that are effectively dependent on migrant labour. Healthcare and other care work, for instance, is a particular sector in which

“The first thing I learned is when times are tough, you need to hedge your bets – you need to diversify.”

Donald Trump

⁶⁶ For more on this topic, see Honohan, 2009.

⁶⁷ Legrain, 2006.

⁶⁸ OECD, 2011.

⁶⁹ Khallash, 2012. 28 Migration boosts productivity in Europe .

⁷⁰ Legrain, 2006: 67.

migrants contribute disproportionately, as has been previously mentioned. However, less visible may be the dependency of other sectors on migrant labour. Once again in France we see that other industries are effectively sustained by migrants. 42% of people working for cleaning companies are migrants. More than 60% of car repair shops in Paris are run by mechanics or entrepreneurs with a migrant background.⁷¹ Data collected by the Irish Central Statistics Office offers further examples, with migrants constituting 24.1% of the workforce in administration and support services.⁷²

Due to the growing shortage of workers and the unwillingness of many Europeans to perform certain low-skilled, low paying jobs, unqualified or semi-qualified migrants are assuming a very important role in Europe, particularly as they take on cleaning jobs, maintain buildings and grounds, collect rubbish, prepare and serve food, and work in construction, security, retail sales, and personal care and services such as healthcare support, among other sectors.⁷³ Those likely to be under-employed tend to be flexible in the labour market and are more willing to engage in a variety of work, including positions for which they may be overqualified. Hence, the waste of talents that has prompted this study.

ENAR has considered what would happen if all the migrant workers in Europe were to carry out an organised strike on the same day. Restaurants, hospitals, metros and trams, dry cleaners and tailor shops, among many other sectors, would have to shut down for the day as there would not be enough workers to carry out the business. Clearly, migrants sustain a number of industries in Europe, often providing essential services that would not otherwise be filled by Europeans under the same conditions.

Greater attention is needed to collect evidence of the discrepancies between the availability and actual labour force percentages that illustrate differences between underutilisation and underrepresentation of certain population groups in Europe and in particular “job groups”.

2.4.2 Entrepreneurship

“It is the drive to get ahead – as well as their exclusion from mainstream society – that helps explain why many immigrants set up their own businesses”.⁷⁴ Thus migrants have to be enterprising. The initial decision they make to migrate and the journey they take is evidence already of drive and determination. Moreover, “Immigrants tend to be younger, fitter, more hard-working and more enterprising than local people. Why? Not because foreigners in general are more industrious and adventurous, but because migrants are a self-selected minority. Young people have their whole lives ahead of them and so most to gain from migrating, while the old and sick are generally not able to do so”.⁷⁵

71 Quiñonero, 2010.

72 Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2012.

73 Legrain, 2006: 75.

74 Legrain, 2006: 71.

75 Legrain, 2006: 69.

Various studies from different EU Member States indicate that proportionately more migrants and members of ethnic minorities start small businesses than nationals⁷⁶ – often because discrimination and specific labour market regulations make it harder for migrants to earn a living as employees.

Migrant entrepreneurs are therefore making a growing contribution to European economies, with increasing recognition of their capacity to act as role models. Migrant entrepreneurs create employment for others, also in different Member States. A study conducted by the Migration Policy Group (MPG) on migrant self-employment and entrepreneurship, shows that in all the eight Member States covered, there has been a growth in the number of migrant entrepreneurs during the period 1998-2008.⁷⁷ The number had almost doubled in seven of the Member States (with France being the one exception). A sharp increase was noted during the period 2004-2008 in the case of Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK.

Pierre Omidyar is one of those entrepreneurial spirits that was lost to Europe when his Iranian parents left France to emigrate to the USA when he was six years old. He went on to co-found the online auction website eBay at the age of 28. Today eBay conducts over €9.5 billion in sales and has over 85 million users.

It is important to acknowledge that migrants do not take jobs, but rather, they create them. According to Peter Stalker, a migration expert, “The problem for immigrants is that while the jobs they take are visible, the jobs they create for everyone else are largely invisible”.⁷⁸

According to the European Commission Communication on the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan “Reigniting the Entrepreneurial Spirit in Europe”, 52% of the start-ups created in the Silicon Valley between 1995 and 2005 were founded by immigrants. The document highlighted that Israel as well owes much of its success to its immigrant population.⁷⁹ The OECD, likewise, confirms that migrants are more entrepreneurial than natives. It argues that “a foreign-born self-employed person who owns a small or medium firm creates between 1.4 and 2.1 additional jobs”.⁸⁰

Limited labour markets and career opportunities often push qualified migrants into self-employment, resulting in their having higher business creation rates than the rest of the population.⁸¹ While this population represents an important pool of entrepreneurs in Europe, migrant businesses in Europe nevertheless tend to be micro-businesses with little to no employees, and often with a smaller turnover and profit rate compared with “indigenous” businesses.⁸² This is often attributed to structural problems, lack of information, knowledge and in some cases, host society language skills, and the legal difficulties

76 This reality is reflected in the Migration Policy Group research outlined below.

77 Migration Policy Group. Integration Dossier n° 2: Immigrant self-employment and entrepreneurship.

78 Legrain, 2006: 66.

79 European Commission. 2012. Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan: Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe.

80 OECD, 2010.

81 European Commission, 2012.

82 Ibid.

confronting migrants in Europe.⁸³ At the same time, the EU has publicly recognised the key contribution that migrant entrepreneurs make to sustainable growth and employment and have been promoting policies that encourage the entrepreneurship potential of migrants.⁸⁴ This needs to go hand in hand, however, with financial inclusion policies that ease the credit and banking rights of migrants, in particular third country nationals in EU Member States, so as to enable their entrepreneurship drive if they so choose.

2.4.3 Taxation and the welfare state

When migrants are not blamed for stealing jobs from the native population, they are often portrayed by critics as “lazy welfare scroungers”.⁸⁵ Yet evidence shows the opposite is actually true. In general, migrants are more likely to be of working age and thus working and paying taxes, both as workers and as consumers. As tax payers in Europe, migrants are direct contributors to Member States’ welfare programmes. While they pay taxes, their access to welfare payments and other benefits may be limited. Many migrants, in fact, are not entitled to most welfare benefits, unless they have attained citizenship or long-term resident status in a particular EU Member State.

In Member States where research on this topic is available, it is noted that migrants are contributing more to the welfare state than the rest of the population. In France, a study commissioned by the Ministry for Social Affairs and conducted at the University of Lille argues that migrants are a good deal for the state. Accounting for migrants’ contributions and also state payments, the research found a positive balance with migrants contributing €12 billion annually and helping in no small way to pay for pensions.⁸⁶ Specifically, calculations show that migrants contribute in income tax, € 3.4 billion; in wealth tax, €3.3 billion; in consumer related taxes, €18.4 billion, and in other local taxes, €2.6 billion. Their contribution to the repayment of the social debt (CRDS) and social contribution (CSG) is estimated at €6.2 billion. The research tells us of estimates that inward migration flow alone, with 50,000 migrants annually, would reduce the pension deficit by 0.5%.

Similarly in Spain, it is found that migrants contribute more, particularly in the areas of health, education and pensions. While migrants represent approximately 12.5% of the population, they account for only 5.6% of the service users.⁸⁷ In Germany, the contribution of the Turkish community alone to the domestic economy is estimated at €35 billion annually.⁸⁸ In Ireland, a much smaller state, it is estimated that migrants contribute €3.7 billion to the economy through taxes and pay related social insurance (PRSI), work permit fees, immigration registration fees, higher education fees and personal consumption.⁸⁹ With the majority of migrants being of working age, they contribute more in taxes than they receive in public services or social welfare.

83 Rath, 2011.

84 European Commission. 2011. Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals.

85 Legrain, 2006: 68.

86 Quiñonero, 2010.

87 Fuenteas and Bruquetas Callejo, 2011.

88 This figure is presented by the Turkish-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Cologne. The achievements of the community as entrepreneurs and business people are supported by research conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

89 Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, 2008.

The contribution that migrants make to pensions is critically important in Europe right now. As Europeans live longer and have fewer children, fewer people in work are supporting higher numbers of pensioners, as well as funding the rest of the welfare system. Data from the European Commission shows that the number of over-60s is now increasing twice as fast as it did before 2007, increasing by some 2 million a year compared with 1 million previously.⁹⁰

The significant and often positively disproportionate contribution to the welfare state is a shared experience across the EU, in both larger and smaller countries.

2.4.4 Consumption and purchasing power

Young migrants tend to be major consumers in Europe. While there is limited comparable data available across the EU, research, both international and in individual EU Member States, reveals the high levels of purchasing power that migrants hold and the crucial contribution they make to the economy.

Examples can be found across Member States where purchasing power and consumption have been measured. In France, for example, research from the University of Lille⁹¹ provides clear evidence of the contribution that migrants make to the local economy through their spending; they pay about €18.4 billion to the state through their personal consumption and expenditure. The purchasing power of migrants in Austria has been estimated to be around €20 billion.⁹² This exceeds the estimated demand by foreign tourists which stands at €16 billion.

Purchasing power and consumption is an area that deserves specific research in the EU, as it has received elsewhere. In the US for example, it is estimated that Latinos' spending and purchasing power stands at \$1 trillion and is growing faster than the purchasing power of any other group.⁹³

2.4.5 Global networks and diverse perspectives

The access that migrants provide to global networks is of huge strategic importance. They provide access to global markets both through their own social and professional networks and the insights their diverse perspectives offer on the needs of different markets. Their many language competencies and social networks abroad are very important for bringing innovative labour niches to Europe, but also for investing abroad. Migrants invest back in their countries of origin by sending remittances home.

Considering the average wage earned by migrants in Europe is thirty-five times the average wage in sub-Saharan Africa, and that migrants tend to send back a part of their earnings, the remittances sent home contribute enormously to economies abroad. "The money is spent in the local economy,

90 European Commission. Europe 2020 in a nutshell.

91 Quiñonero, 2010.

92 Regio Data Research.

93 Creciendo Juntos. Immigration Myths and Facts.

boosting the demand for goods and services that locals produce”.⁹⁴ In some countries, such remittances sent home play a major role in combating poverty in particularly poor regions. They can also “stimulate faster long-term growth in countries where poor people would otherwise find it impossible to borrow enough money to start their own businesses”.⁹⁵

Although it is difficult to confirm how much money exactly is sent abroad in the form of remittances, estimates based on officially recorded money flows show that remittances make up a huge amount. According to World Bank estimates, they totalled \$167 billion in 2005. “The true figure, including unregistered flows, may be more than 50 per cent higher, the World Bank reckons, or as much as three times higher, according to the Global Commission of International Migration”. In 2004, remittances accounted for over a tenth of the economy in twenty developing countries, according to Philippe Legrain.⁹⁶ “In thirty-six countries in 2004, remittances were larger than public and private capital inflows combined – government aid, foreign direct investment and net foreign purchases of bonds and shares. They were larger than total merchandise exports in twelve countries or territories, and larger than the earnings from the biggest commodity export in another twenty-eight countries. And they are rising fast”.⁹⁷

While migration is positive for the economy both in the country or origin as well as the country of settlement, the corollary is also true. The untold story of migration is the fact that migrants are actually leaving Member States and other OECD countries. Peter Sutherland and Professor Ian McGoldin are among those highlighting the risks of losing migrants or not managing to attract them in the first place.

Predictions on a shrinking workforce in Europe have serious implications over the next decades. Referring to OECD data, Peter Sutherland explains that at current rates of decline, the gap in Member States’ labour markets will be immense, with drops in software specialists, doctors and home health aides, among others. The EU’s labour force is predicted to decline by almost 70 million workers over the next 40 years. It is clear that in the absence of substantial net immigration, European economies and social safety nets are under threat.⁹⁸

2.4.6 Diversity, innovation and economic growth

One aspect of migration that warrants attention as the EU and business strive for “competitive advantage” is the link between diversity and innovation. Multi-ethnic societies hold the key to the ability to trade and compete in a global economy. Known as soft skills, business leaders today recognise that the ability to work cross-culturally can be as important as the quality of qualifications.⁹⁹ Cultural diversity in the labour market and in the workplace is thus crucial to enhancing companies’ ability to perform in diverse societies and a global market.

94 Legrain, 2006: 165.

95 Legrain, 2006: 166.

96 Legrain, 2006: 167.

97 Ibid.

98 Sutherland, 2012.

99 Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN), 2009.

“Diversity refers to human qualities that are different from our own and those of groups to which we belong; but that are manifested in other individuals and groups. Dimensions of diversity include but are not limited to: age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race, sexual orientation, educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, work experience, and job classification”.¹⁰⁰

As a concept, diversity focuses on a broader set of qualities rather than just race and gender, despite how it is commonly used in political discourses. Valuing diversity thus means creating an environment that respects and allows for differences, while also recognising the unique contributions different individuals make and creating an atmosphere in which the potential of each individual is maximised.

Prominent economic thinking identifies innovation as key to competing in today’s global economy and argues that innovation leads to competitive advantage. Interestingly, related literature draws a link between diversity and innovation.¹⁰¹ One such study was carried out by Danish researchers who investigated the relationship between labour diversity (including ethnic diversity) and innovation in Denmark over a twelve year period.¹⁰² They found that an increase in labour diversity in terms of education and ethnicity had a positive effect on the firm’s innovation process. Sodexo is an example of a company that places a high value on building diverse teams, including the possibilities staff diversity offers to better understand its diverse client base.

Of course, communication is crucial. A diverse pool of workers also provides a diverse pool of language skills and is critical to ensuring European enterprises can reach and secure a global market.

Diversity management, if properly implemented and leveraged at every level within a business, can improve effectiveness and cost-efficiency, guarantee a broader customer and client base, and improve the work environment as well as communication between colleagues, clients, subsidiaries, and other organisations. ENAR’s Equal@work initiative is one way for employers to deepen their understanding of diversity and anti-discrimination within their organisation. Equal@work takes a multi-stakeholder approach by bringing together businesses committed to diversity and inclusion, trade unions, public employers, EU institutions and anti-racist organisations to share best practices and concrete solutions on issues that foster the labour market insertion of migrants and minorities, such as: monitoring equality processes, implementing mentorship programmes, participating in antidiscrimination and diversity awareness raising trainings.¹⁰³

It is commonly held that the “managing diversity” approach, which focuses on presenting the business case, followed the “equal opportunity” approach. However, some research suggests that the business case is not the only motivating factor.¹⁰⁴ When asked why they support diversity, it is interesting to hear some of the more successful business people give a two-fold response: it is

100 University of Berkeley. Why Diversity Matters.

101 A wide variety of actors are contributing to debate and research in this area, including economics, academics and civil society organisations. The Migration Policy Centre provides some interesting and up to date research on migration and innovation. See, for example, research papers by Alessandra Venturini.

102 Khallash, 2012. ‘Ethnic Diversity Leads to Innovation’.

103 For more information on ENAR’s Equal@work initiative, see www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=28886&langue=EN.

104 Vasista, 2010.

the right thing to do and it is good for business. Both equality and diversity approaches have some positive aspects and in combination, may yield greater results and success. Companies that do not find a way to embrace and utilise diversity, may pay the price. One cost is the loss of talented people by failing to employ them. Another is missing the opportunity to reach diverse consumer groups. Diversity alone might not build a business but it could help secure the competitive advantage needed to sustain it. The current economic situation is a difficult one. In order to turn things around, Europe will need, among many other things, greater innovation and collaboration. At a time when new approaches to the economy and business are mooted on a daily basis, the relevance of diversity comes to the fore. In a global economy and with diverse market opportunities, a diverse leadership and workforce can be nurtured to deliver the innovation required to compete and to grow. The business case for diversity contributes to promoting innovation as a key benefit of a diverse workforce.

“Diversity and inclusion is at the heart of what we do in Sodexo. We want to ensure everyone at Sodexo whatever their nationality, religion and language feels respected, valued and included in all that we do on a daily basis. Each employee is ‘unique’ and is a leverage of performance for the company thanks to this uniqueness. We serve clients and consumers from all countries, all ethnic origins, cultures and religions and so we put an emphasis on ensuring that our teams are as diverse as those of our clients, in order to better understand and respond to the diversity of preferences and expectations.”

*Aldina Fernandes,
Sodexo Diversity Project Manager*

Section 3: Changing the negative discourses on migration

As highlighted, migrants and minorities are part of Europe's social fabric. They have a wide variety of talents, some unveiled, some hidden and others not yet realised. As people and members of local and ethnic minority communities, they make a valuable and immeasurable contribution every day, whether acknowledged or not. The previous chapters have highlighted just a small number of the positive contributions made by migrants.

While the previous sections present a positive narrative of migration, it is clear that the myths and negative stories of migration abound nonetheless. The negative stories are those that are more likely to hit the media headlines and that receive undue attention, while the positive stories are less likely to reach the wider public.

Since many people are less familiar with the positive contributions migrants make – socially, economically, culturally and politically, they may be more prone to believing negative messages. One of the underlying reasons that migrants' talents go unnoticed or unfulfilled is the economic focus associated with migration policy. Indeed, the economy often takes precedence over social policies, clearly evident now with the financial crisis where choices have to be made about what is funded and what is cut. Other areas, such as social life and culture, are often less valued. However, this is a missed opportunity. A society is more than an economy. And migrants are more than just labourers or solutions to Europe's economic problems and demographic concerns.

Throughout this publication, the authors and editors have constantly born in mind that the economic value of any human contribution only represents a part of it and that no contribution can be reduced to its single economic value. However, in a world of policies and politics where only figures have a scent of veridicity, infinitely complex human contributions to the social fabric also have to be articulated in this limitative language in order at some point to have a political impact. The authors and editors hope to have dealt with this difficult equation with sensitivity and not have given the impression that migrants' talents only matter if they produce wealth and growth.

As acknowledgment of the need for greater representation of diversity in public positions is gradually mainstreamed, the hope is that more positive stories about migrants and their many contributions will become heard and more visible. This, in turn, will have an additional positive impact, since happy, healthy, confident migrants, who feel "connected" and "at home" can contribute much more to the society in which they live when they are respected and recognised for their contributions.

It is thus important to promote a positive narrative on migration and to show how migration and diversity have positively influenced the way we all live our lives – the creativity, innovation, support networks, etc. that have come as a result of migration.

Science demonstrates that migration is crucial to ensure human survival. In this sense, we are all migrants. It just depends how far back we look.

Did you know?

- ➔ Indian restaurants in the UK employ 80,000 people.
- ➔ Half the doctors in Paris are migrants or from a migrant background.
- ➔ Admitting 50,000 new migrants annually would cut the French pension deficit by 0.5%.
- ➔ If migrants were to leave the healthcare sector in many Member States, it would collapse.
- ➔ Migrants are more likely to have third level education than European citizens.
- ➔ Half of the people working in the Silicon Valley have a migration background.
- ➔ Pierre Omidyar, co-founder of eBay, was born to Iranian immigrants in Paris, France. His family emigrated to the USA when he was six.
- ➔ Demand for ethnic foods has risen by 14% in Europe.
- ➔ Two million kebabs are sold daily in Germany.
- ➔ Toronto, a city where about half the population have a migrant background, has been voted as the best place to live.¹⁰⁵
- ➔ Four EU Member States are among the top 20 migrant sending countries and four EU Member States are among the top 10 remittance receiving countries.

Section 4: Conclusion

In conclusion, this publication aims to be innovative in its approach, combining human rights and economic arguments to raise attention to the positive contributions migrants make to European societies by mobilising their immense pool of talents, skills, entrepreneurial spirit, capacities to inspire energies and their commitment and drive. In light of the data gaps in showing the evidence of migrants' contributions to Europe, we encourage other researchers to borrow from our ideas and to be innovative in their research approach on this issue. We also emphasise the need for economists and statisticians to adopt a wider approach in data collection and analyses when measuring and promoting the positive contributions of migrants in European societies, so that the negative narratives about migrants can be quashed by facts, evidenced-based arguments and statistical data. After all, it is when we fail to value or measure the social and cultural contributions made that we fail to identify and measure the economic value they represent.

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While the economic aspect of migration has drawn academic and public attention, the personal and social dimensions have not been recognised or valued to the same extent.

“Hidden Talents, Wasted Talents?” aims to address this mismatch of information about migrants and ethnic and religious minorities by showcasing some of the many talents they contribute to European society. This publication thus presents the ways in which minorities and migrants are enriching Europe, both materially and in more symbolic and qualitative ways. It also highlights, by contrast, the uncalculated losses incurred by failing to recognise and value these innumerable talents. It is therefore vital that the EU and its Member States recognise the diversity of migrants’ and minorities’ talents and the positive impact they have on the economy and European society.

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) stands up against racism and discrimination and advocates for equality and solidarity for all in Europe. We connect local and national anti-racist NGOs throughout Europe and act as an interface between our member organisations and the European institutions. We voice the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debates.

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