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**BUILDING AN EVIDENCE BASE FOR
ACTIVE AGEING POLICIES: ACTIVE
AGEING INDEX AND ITS POTENTIAL**

**Ageing in a multicultural Europe:
perspectives and challenges**

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3 Key words

Ageing

Migration

Active ageing

The case of **European** countries

AGEING

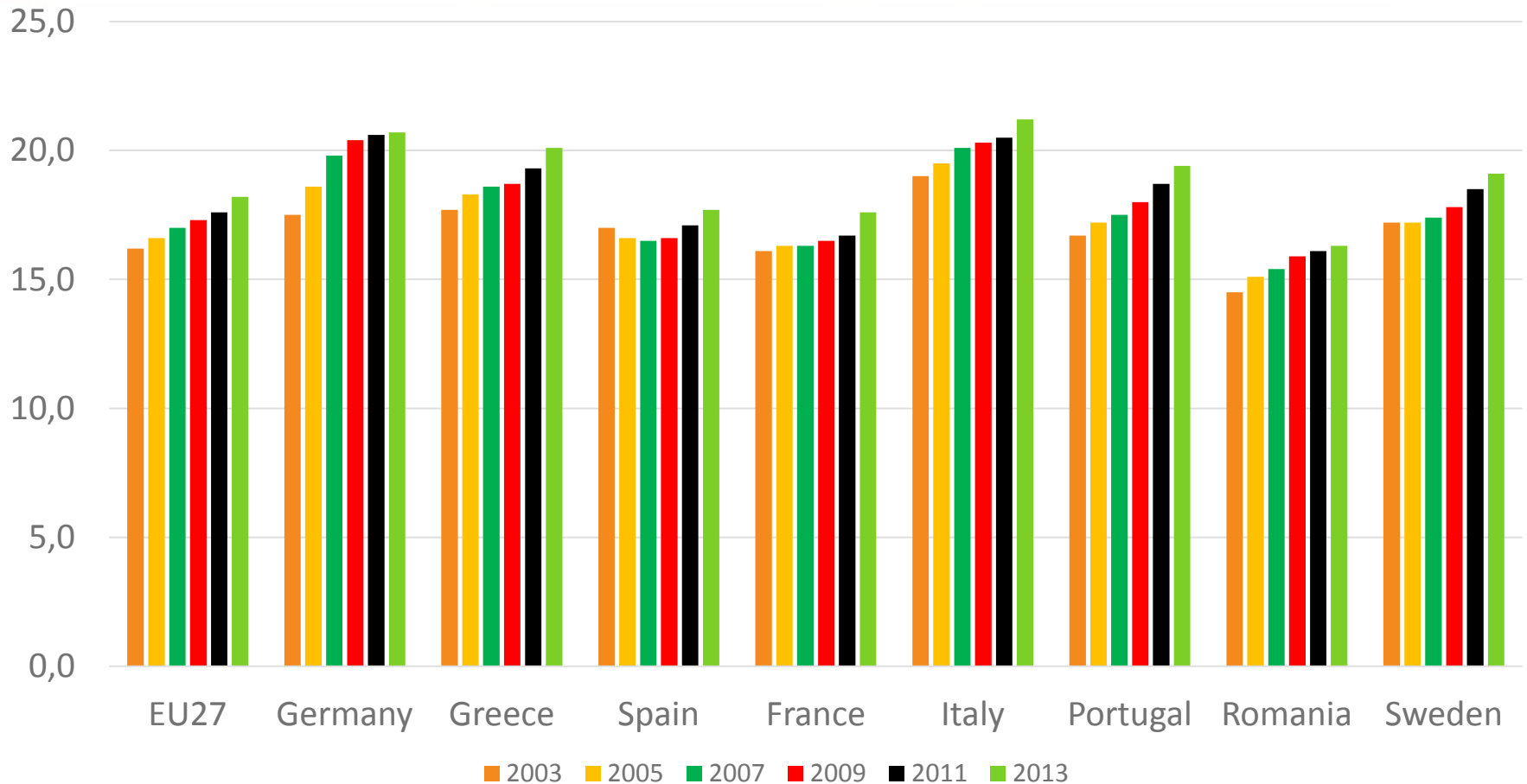
Ageing is one of the most distinguishing features of the demographic trends of developed countries' populations and one of the main challenges of western European countries (European Commission, 2005).



An overview:

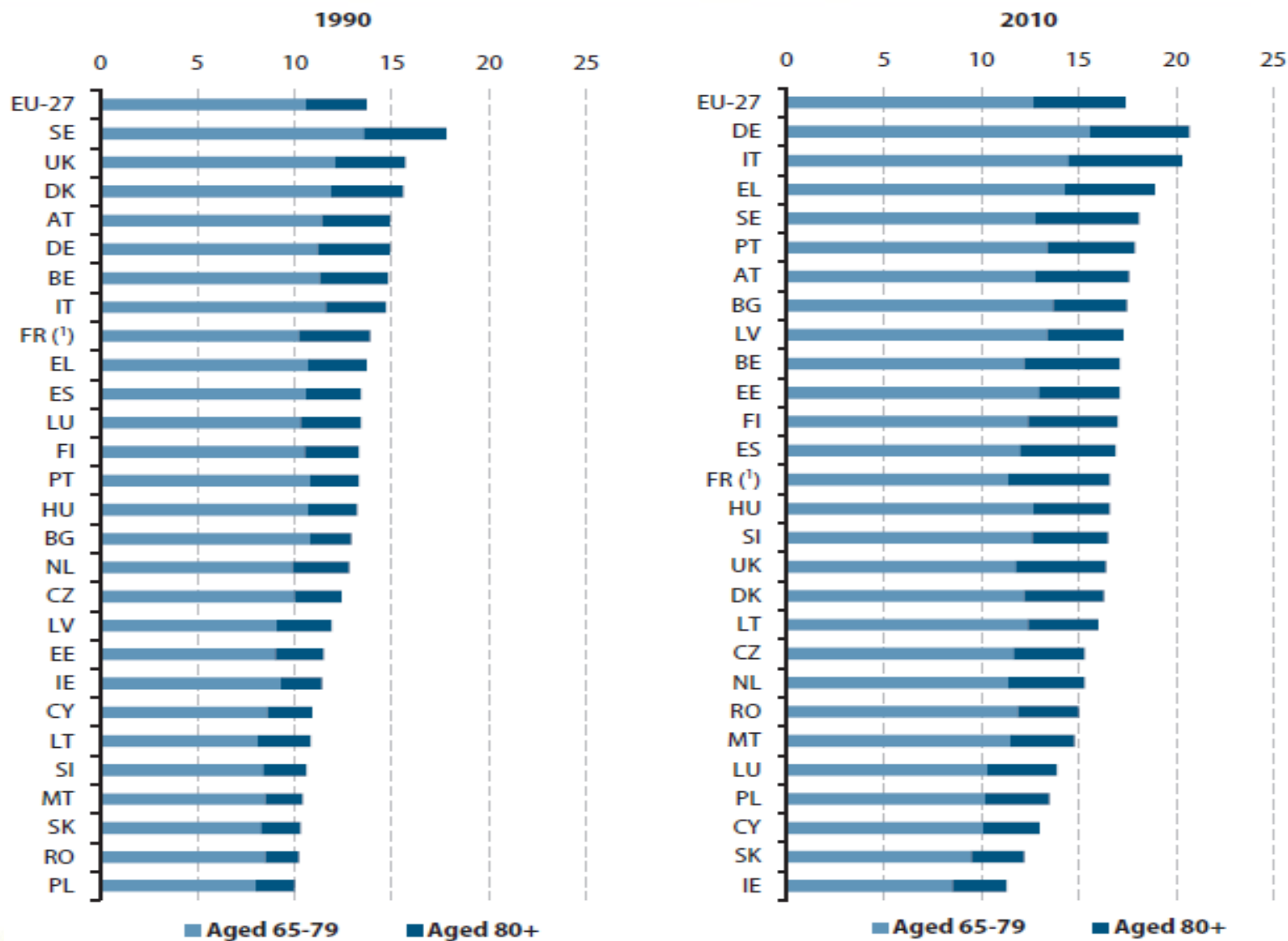
- The European Union's (EU-27) population structure is changing and becoming progressively older:
 - 01/01/2010: more than 87 million persons aged 65 and over (17.4 % of the total population)
 - 01/01/1985: about 59.3 million persons aged 65 and over (12.8 % of the total population).
- Two factors:
 - The increasing in life expectancy across the EU
 - The falling in fertility rates

Share of population aged 65 years and more



Our elaboration based on: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_pjanind&lang=en

Relative importance of elderly persons in the total population (% share of total population)



MIGRATION

Migration is the second major phenomenon challenging Western society's policies.

Predominant line of thinking: migration can mitigate the ongoing ageing process of the population in the lowest-low fertility countries.

Migrants have been neglected in the ageing studies:

Firstly: focus primarily on migration flows, border control, integration and the 2nd generation.

Second : myth of return in their home countries.

But migrant population is ageing as well... and many of them are not returning but living back and forth.

White P. (2006), Migrant Populations Approaching Old Age: Prospects in Europe. In: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 32, 8, pp. 1283-1300.

King R., Cela E., Fokkema T., Vullnetari J., 2014, "The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people", Population, Space and Place, 20(8), pp. 728-738.

According to Eurostat 31.4% of the immigrants in the EU-27 are aged 50+ and migrants in Europe are older (median age 42.3 years) compared to other world regions;

AGEING & MIGRATION

Ageing implies changes and adaptations; **migration** is often a stressful life event bringing both constraints and opportunities.

The **intersection** of **ageing** and **migration** generates a wide taxonomy of types, from the most wealthy and active individuals to those who are deprived and marginalised (like international retirement migrants and the zero generation migrants).

*King R., Warnes T., & Williams A. (2000), *Sunset Lives: British Retirement Migration to the Mediterranean*, Oxford: Berg, UK.*

*King R., Cela E., Fokkema T., Vullnetari J., 2014, "The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people", *Population, Space and Place*, 20(8), pp. 728-738.*

AGEING & MIGRATION

labour migrants' life trajectories create **latent disadvantage and vulnerability**, compared to their native peers.

risk-enhancing factors :

- poor economic status;
- poor health;
- social exclusion;
- homesickness;
- cultural and language barriers;
- discrimination and stigmatisation

Bolzman, C., Poncioni-Derigo, R., Vial, M. and Fibbi, R. (2004) Older labour migrants' wellbeing in Europe: the case of Switzerland, Ageing & Society, 24: 411–30.

• *Cornwell, E.Y. and Waite L.J. (2009) Social disconnectedness, perceived isolation, and health among older adults, Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 50:31–48.*

• *King R., Cela E., Fokkema T., Vullnetari J., 2014, “The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people”, Population, Space and Place, 20(8), pp. 728-738.*

• *Fokkema, T. and Naderi, R. (2006) Differences in late-life loneliness: a comparison between Turkish and native-born older adults in Germany, European Journal of Ageing, 10: 289–300.*

AGEING & MIGRATION

Protective factors:

embeddedness within the family - strong norms of intergenerational solidarity and obligation

The circulation of **care across borders**.

Baldassar, L. and Merla, L. (eds) (2013) Transnational Families, Migration and the Circulation of Care. London: Routledge.

King R., Cela E., Fokkema T., Vullnetari J., 2014, "The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people", Population, Space and Place, 20(8), pp. 728-738.

Lunt, N. (2009) Older people within transnational families: the social policy implications, International Journal of Social Welfare, 18:243-51.

ACTIVE AGEING

In tackling the (financial) challenge of an increasing ageing population, European governments focus on **Active Ageing**, as the “situation where people continue to participate to the formal labour market, as well as engage in other unpaid productive activities (such as care provision to family members and volunteering), and live healthy, independent and secure lives as they age”.



ACTIVE AGEING

The European Union designated 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. This initiative aims to:

- help create better job opportunities and working conditions for the growing numbers of older people in Europe;
- help them play an active role in society, and;
- encourage healthy ageing and independent living.

ACTIVE AGEING

But....understandings of **successful ageing** that are simultaneously shaped by different cultures are little developed.

Torres, S. (2001) Understandings of successful ageing in the context of migration: the case of Iranian immigrants to Sweden, Ageing & Society, 21:333–55.

Question: Is the common conceptualisation of successful and active ageing fully applicable and effective for older migrants?

Other aspects to take into consideration in the active ageing concept? - **cultural** values and **contextual** aspects and increasing **mobility of** ageing population

King, R., Warnes, T. and Williams, A. (2000) Sunset Lives: British Retirement Migration to the Mediterranean. Oxford: Berg.

King R., Cela, E., Fokkema, T. and Vullnetari, J. (2014) The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people, Population, Space and Place, 20(8):728-738.

AIM OF THE STUDY

We seek to analyze the Active Ageing Index (AAI), developed in the framework of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012).

Our aim is threefold:

1. Stimulate the debate on the necessity to link aging and migration concepts
2. Stimulate the debate on how to “translate” AAI for a specific segment of the population – with migration background
3. An exercise aiming to apply AAI for the migrant aging population using SHARE dataset

Some existing surveys on ageing migrants

1. German GGS (Generations and Gender Survey) – Wave 1 - *Fokkema, T. & Naderi, R. (2013), Differences in late-life loneliness: a comparison between Turkish and native-born older adults in Germany. European Journal of Ageing, 10(4): 289-300*
2. SYMBOL (Systematic Memory testing Beholding Other Languages) study
3. LASA (Longitudinal Aging Study Amsterdam) migrant survey
4. French 'Route to Retirement of Immigrants' (PRI: Passage à la Retraite des Immigrés) survey
5. FPN (Families of Poles in the Netherlands) survey
6. Moroccan return migrants (La migration de retour des Marocains résidant à l'étranger) survey

Shortcomings: impossibility to compare over time and across countries

Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe

SHARE is a multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of micro data on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of more than 85,000 individuals (approximately 150,000 interviews) from [20 European countries](#) (+Israel) aged 50 or over



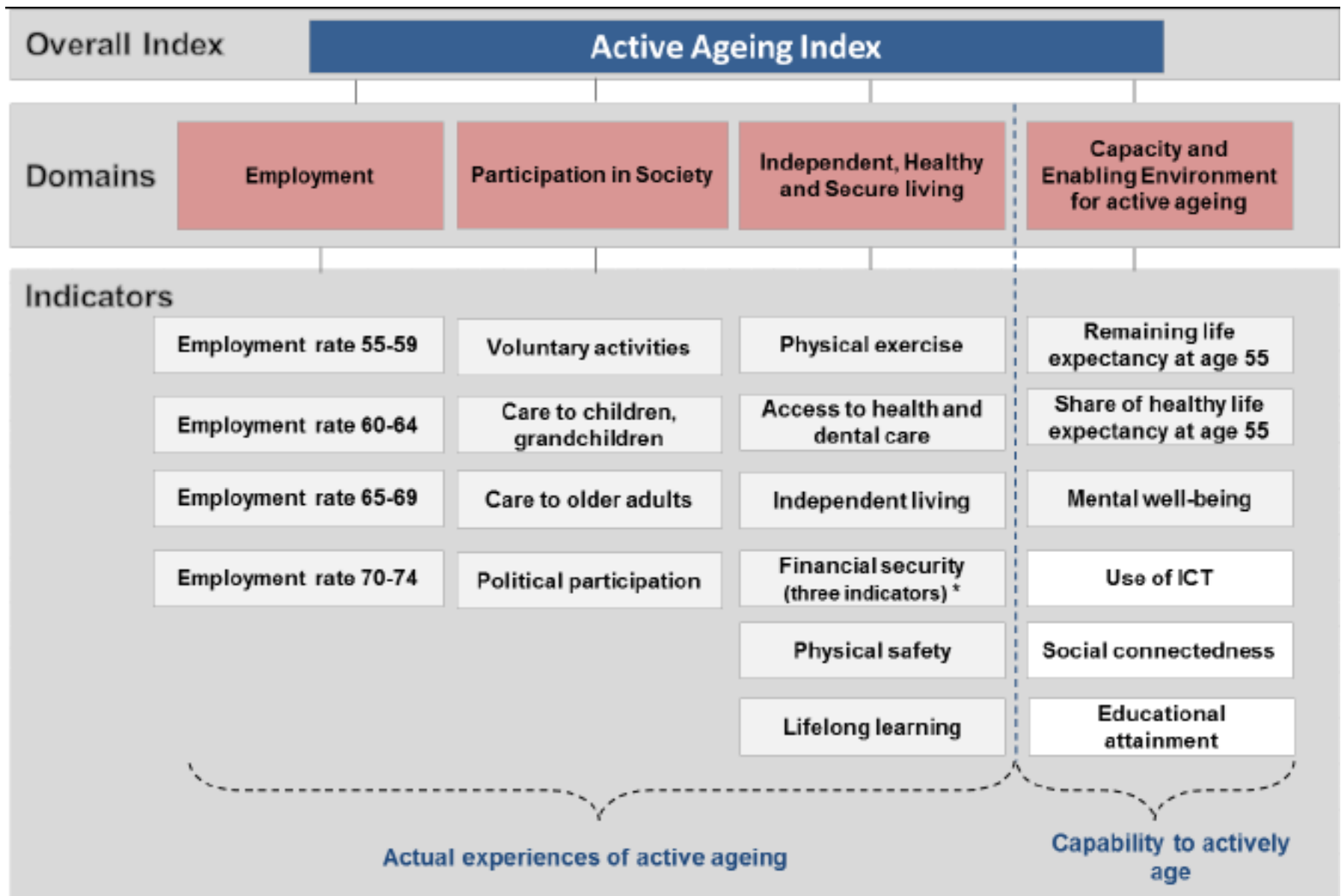
Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe

The analysis is conducted using micro data from the **first wave** , with interviews conducted in 2004/2005.

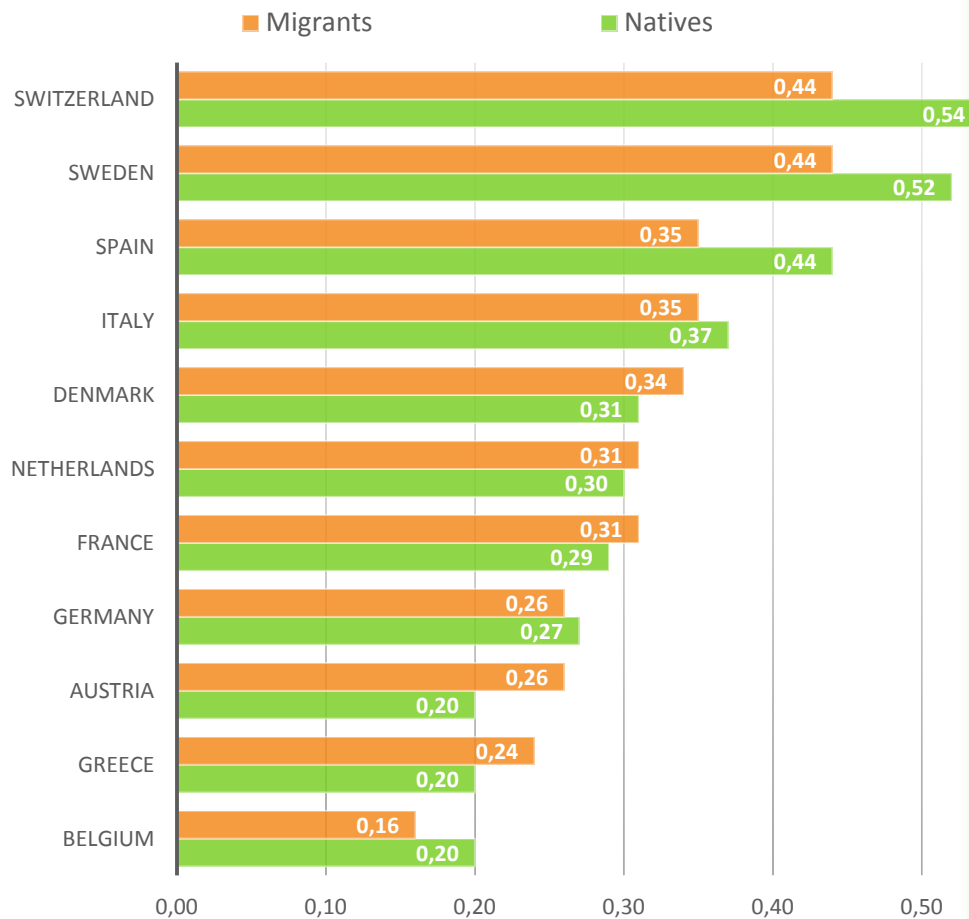
Households were selected following the criteria that at least one member was born in 1954 or before (individuals aged 50 years or over), based on nationally representative samples.

We focus on migrants living in **11 EU countries** , namely Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.





Employment: natives VS migrants

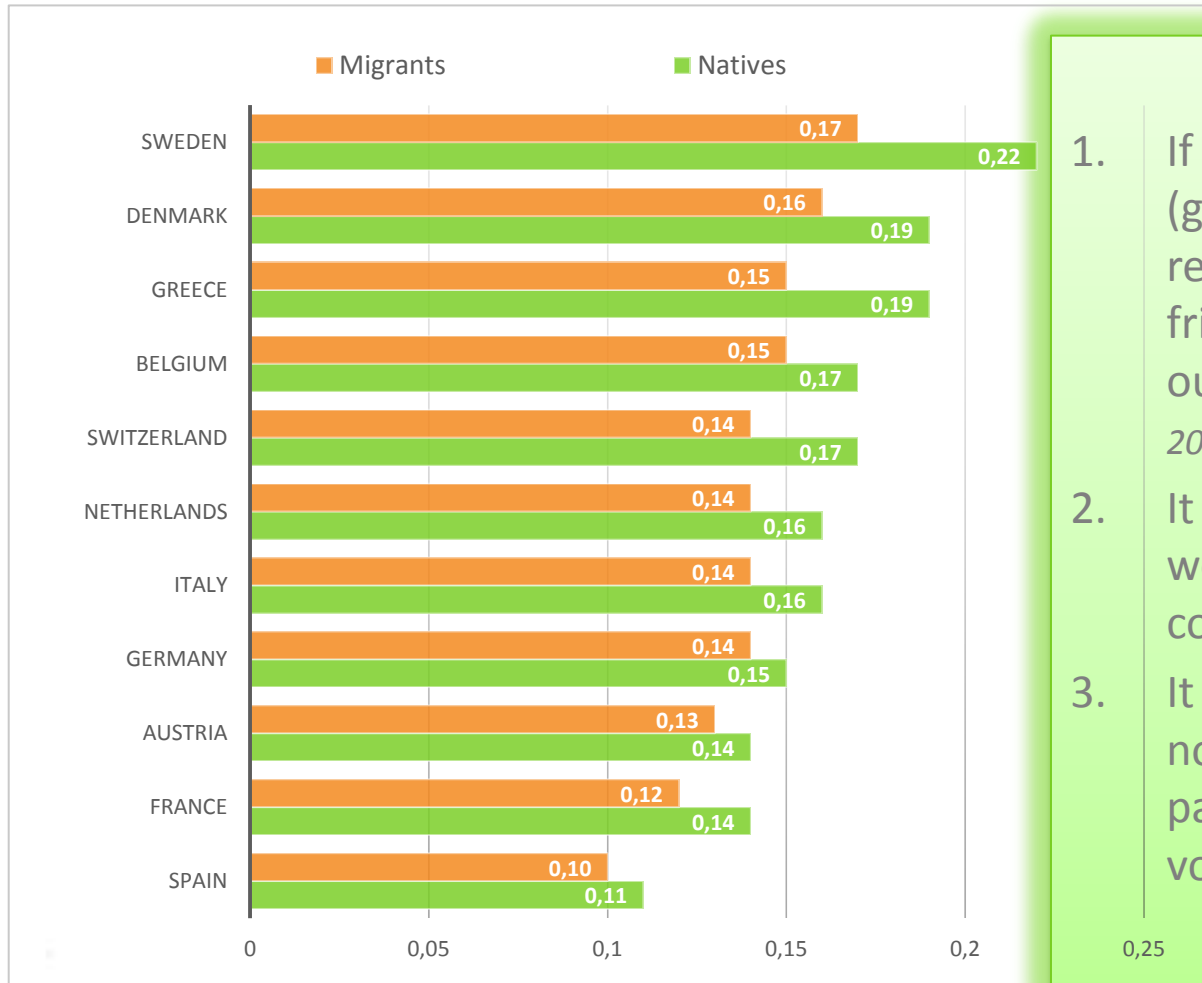


MIGRANTS:

It is not granted that

1. working until 75 years old is considered a positive aspect (cultural aspect);
2. their health allows them to continue working, given their hard working conditions;
3. if they continue working it is because they want (to be active), but because they need (erase poverty).

Participation in society: natives VS migrants



MIGRANTS:

1. If I'm taking care of my (grand)children or other relatives...no more time to meet friend, play sport, engage in outdoor activities (*Cela, Fokkema, 2014*)...am I still active?
2. It is not granted that voluntary work is widespread in the country of origin (cultural value);
3. It is well-known that migrants do not have strong political participation (i.e. no right to vote)

Independent Healthy and Secure living: natives VS migrants

PHYSICAL EXERCISE:

- research into sport and immigration still remains limited (Kennett, 2005)

ACCESS TO HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE:

- Cultural differences as well as language barriers make it difficult to reach immigrant groups through health promotion and other preventive services (Sundquist, 2001)

LIFELONG LEARNING

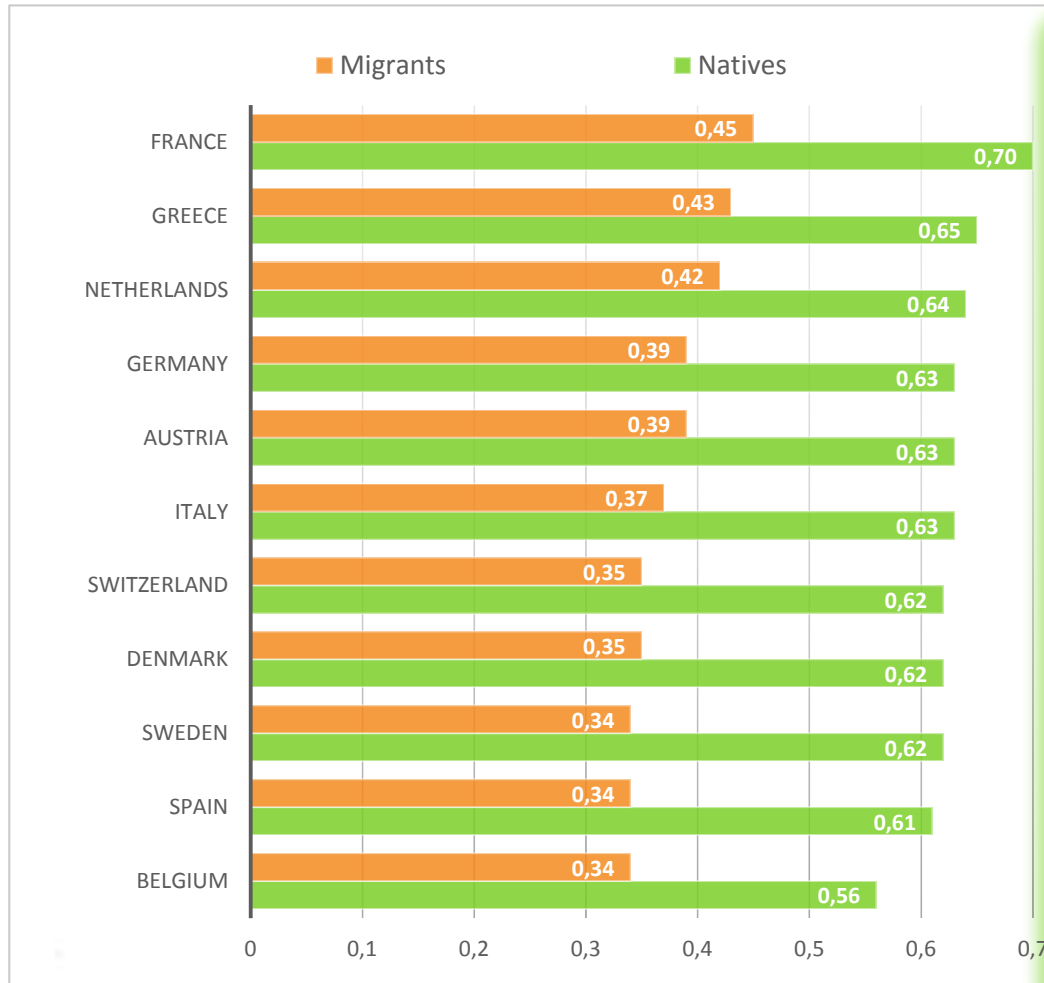
- Lack of resources (financial, time, language)

INDIPENDENT LIVING ARRANGEMENT:

- Recent immigrants may have fewer economic resources and be more likely to live in multigenerational households (King et al. 2014).
- Older migrants are more likely to co-reside with their children (Baykara-Krumme, 2008; Bolt, 2002; Fokkema & Naderi, 2013) - a livelihood strategy that is quite common in Southern European countries (Tomassini et al. 2004; Fokkema & Liefbroer, 2008)

It is not granted that living in multigenerational households or engage in lifelong learning means not being independent. It is not a matter of autonomy rather a cultural value or financial condition.

Capacity and enabling environment for AA: natives VS migrants



MIGRANTS:

Empirical evidence shows that:
old migrants are more lonely than natives (Fokkema & Naderi, 2013);

are strongly embedded within the family (Cela & Fokkema, 2014; King et al 2014; Cela & Fokkema submitted)

social connectedness for immigrants should put more emphasis on relatives rather than on friends and colleagues given their strong embeddedness within the family.

The computation of remaining life expectancy should also take into account the life expectancy of individuals' country of origin.

Preliminary conclusions

Immigration and **ageing** are two of the major issues in the European countries.

Given the scenario of **many ageings** in Europe, it is very important to provide research on the interplay between migration and ageing.

In tackling the challenge of an increasing ageing population through promoting active ageing and empowerment of older people it is important to take into consideration **cultural** aspects and **contextual** factors as important determinants in shaping and defining the meanings of **age** and **ageing** .

- *Bytheway, B. (1995) Ageism (Milton Keynes: Open University Press).*
- *King R., Cela E., Fokkema T., Vullnetari J., 2014, “The migration and wellbeing of the zero generation: transgenerational care, grandparenting and loneliness amongst Albanian older people”, Population, Space and Place, 20(8), pp. 728-738.*
- *McHugh, K. (2003) ‘The Three Faces of Ageism: Society, Image and Place’, Ageing and Society, 23(2): 165–85.*

Thank you!

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