



YOUNG MIGRANT MEN'S WELL-BEING INDEX

Experiences of Young Migrant Men and Their Well-Being

An Empirical Study from Seven European Countries



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MIGRANT MEN'S
WELL-BEING IN DIVERSITY

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The following well-being index was devised in the EU-project 'Migrant Men's Well-Being in Diversity', short MiMen. It is based data generated by the literature and policy review dealing with young migrant men (YMM), and most importantly by the empirical research conducted in the project. The well-being index describes domains which are relevant for the well-being of young migrant men and outlines how these domains can benefit their overall well-being, respectively what experiences can be detrimental to their well-being.

In MiMen 282 young migrant men from 16-27 years of age living in seven European countries (Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland and UK) were interviewed about their life-situations. Specific attention was put on the gender-specific challenges and the expectations imposed on them. The findings were analysed with the focus on the young men's subjective well-being in different domains of their life-worlds.

What is Well-Being?

"If we speak of well-being, you can say thank god I'm healthy. I have enough money to live, that is relative. I have my duties which satisfy me. I have a family that supports me. I have good friends with whom I can share something, discuss things and whom I can trust. I have a religion, I have a purpose in life and I know what I am working for." **Cafer, 24**

The concept of subjective well-being describes how an individual evaluates their overall quality of life. This subjective evaluation is the most fundamental indicator of how happy someone is with their life in general. It is most directly captured in the question 'how are you?'. However well-being goes beyond evaluation of momentary happiness and encompasses the overall evaluation of how one's life is going. Following Eurostat (2015), "subjective well-being encompasses three distinct but complementary sub-dimensions: life satisfaction (or evaluation), based on an overall cognitive assessment; affects, or the presence of positive feelings and absence of negative feelings; and eudemonics, the feeling that one's life has a meaning". Whereas affects or 'hedonic well-being', the preponderance of positive feelings over negative feelings describes the pleasure-oriented aspect of well-being, the eudemonic dimension means having a sense of purpose in life. The latter is linked for example to long-term life-goals, meaningful social relations, autonomy and self-esteem. Well-being implies a positive self-image and congruence between the individual's expectations about life and their life reality. If the individual's expectations about their life do not conform with their life-realities, for example due to experienced injustice, discrimination or unequal opportunities, well-being is affected negatively. The gap between expectations and reality can also be widened by high parental expectations or overall societal expectations, negative or positive, which are transported via the media or educational institutions.

The fact that well-being is a subjective concept means that "in a European comparative context, we need to take into account that these widely differing priorities and values are also shaped

by societal structures, norms and cultural background, which may vary between the different countries" (Eurostat 2015). In our study the variations in understanding 'well-being' and 'what constitutes a good life' are potentially even greater, taking into account additionally to European diversity the various non-European backgrounds of the young men. However, beyond the cultural variation in understanding this subjective concept, the individual's expectations play a great role for their well-being. Many immigrants gain a significant increase in well-being due to the fact that they have access to (free) education and can live in safety, calm and peace.

When we describe the well-being of the young men interviewed, it is important to note that we are focussing on those who are already to a certain extent established in their country. All young men had been living in the country for at least one year, with the average length of residency being seven years. About half the interviewees immigrated after the age of 13 and a minority of the young men are second generation. The men in the sample reside permanently in the country and can speak the language, at least enough to converse in their everyday environment. They mostly participate in the life-worlds of the autochthonous population. Thus, how they evaluate their well-being rests on very different factors than for newly arrived immigrants, in particular recent refugees. For the latter group, shelter, housing, physical safety, orientation in the new system, translation and assistance with authorities are the most pressing necessities.

Well-Being Domains

The following well-being domains describe the life-worlds of young men which are relevant for their well-being as deduced from the empirical results. While they are all more or less relevant for all young men, their individual weighting differs. The domains overlap with existing well-being surveys (Eurostat 2015, Eurofound 2013, Gallup 2015) and are complemented with aspects specific to the gendered and ethnicized experience of the young men. For each domain we also suggest subjective indicators for well-being –

some of them captured by Eurostat – and point to implications for policy. The perspective taken is transnational and the lists are by no means exhaustive. Despite the large number of interviews and due to the qualitative and transnational methodology, we cannot claim to paint a complete and representative picture of the well-being of young migrant men in Europe. More detailed results can be found in the project report and the national policy briefs, accessible via the partners.

- 1 EMOTIONAL TIES AND BONDS
- 2 ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
- 3 SOCIAL NETWORKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY BELONGING
- 4 HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
- 5 FEELING SAFE AND TRUST IN POLICE AND AUTHORITIES
- 6 DISCRIMINATION



1 EMOTIONAL TIES AND BONDS

Trusting and supportive attachments are themes strongly emphasised in the literature on well-being and happiness. Many scholars have claimed that relatedness is a basic human need and a resilience factor across the lifespan of people. Strong attachments are essential in promoting subjective well-being and feelings of loneliness have the opposite effects. The Gallup Well-Being Index describes this as having “supportive relationships and love in life” (Gallup 2015), while the Eurostat quality of life index conceptualizes this as “having someone to rely on in case of need and to discuss personal matters” (Eurostat 2015, see also ONS 2015). Alongside material deprivation and health, supportive personal relations correlate most strongly with overall life-satisfaction (Eurostat 2015).

Young migrant men are in a particularly vulnerable position, because migration often means losing physical proximity to their loved ones, their core family and close friends. The Eurostat data illustrates this by showing that non-EU nationals are more than twice as likely to have ‘no one to rely on’ than nationals of the EU country (14.8% comp. to 6.3%, Eurostat 2015¹). The MiMen study explored the connections between strong attachments of young migrant men and their (eudemonic) well-being. Emotional bonds provide feelings of continuity and belonging (emotional aspect) and offer (material) support and advice in all aspects of their lives (bonding aspect). In the data young migrant men describe a diverse range of emotional bonds as they talk about their families, relatives, friends, partners and many other attachments with love and respect. Many try to maintain the closeness to their loved

ones abroad via skype and other communication technologies. Most importantly, relations to loved ones need to be supportive and free of essential conflicts to function as emotional bonds. Quality-of-life research indicates that face-to-face contact to loved ones has a far greater positive impact on life-satisfaction than telecommunications contact (Eurofound 2013: 63).

Young men are in a position of transition between youth and adulthood. In developmental perspective this means an extension of their emotional bonds from their core family of origin to self-chosen relations, friendships and partnership. Many YMM position themselves in a ‘generational continuum’ between past and future generations. It is important for them to be able to fulfil their (masculine) roles as a part of this continuum. They respect their parents or other older relatives for all the sacrifices they have done to enable a better life for their offspring. Their task is to take the next step in a new society by establishing positions in the labour market, social networks and be able to provide a ready-made platform for the next generation. Being successful in these tasks is essential for their feelings of self-worth. Emotional bonds in the form of generational continuums provide a life-course perspective for many young migrant males – an idea about one’s roots and potentials and eventually a vision of the future paths.

It is difficult to distinguish the men’s own expectations from the ones of their parents and other family members. In the accounts of young men parental expectations are manifested in the form of support and attachment rather than as coercion and pressure. As males they are faced with specific expectations: to take the role of provider and climb up the social ladder in receiving societies. For a minority of young men, however, their escape from familial control is an important well-being factor, for example if their own identity or life-choices contradict their parents’ expectations (e.g. a homosexual respondent who broke contact with traditional parents). It is important to remember that

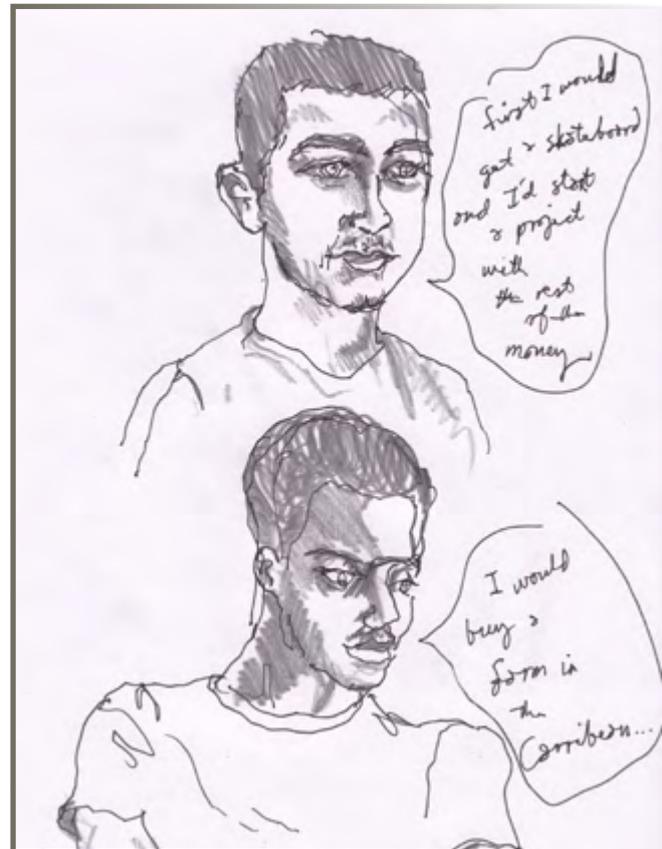
“It is difficult when you are alone. There is nobody who tells you what to do, what is good, what is bad. And now, my family is not able to help me. I moved here to live alone.” Omar, 22

¹Vulnerability is increased by the facts that there is a general drop in satisfaction rates with personal relations between the age groups 16-24 and 25-24, and men in single

households tend to have lower satisfaction rates with their personal relations than other groups, including women in single households. Eurostat 2015.

emotional bonds exist in a variety of social relations, with friends, partners, genetic, voluntary or foster parents, siblings, and children. Men lacking these attachments were few in numbers, but are in vulnerable positions. They suffer from mental problems and lack of trust in other people, have a fragile identity and expect little from the future.

"There are no real problems, as long as you have someone you can go for help or sort out your problem with." Tawab, 18



Policy Implications

Firstly, polices need to acknowledge men not only as public actors (e.g. in employment) but also as caring actors in private spheres. Lack of emotional bonds is deeply detrimental to their well-being. Policies need to recognise the intertwining of public and private issues.

- *Do policies take into account emotional bonds of young male migrants? How are transnational relations affected by national policies?*
- *What are the implications of national family reunion policies for young migrant men?*
- *To what extent are emotional bonds taken into account in practices of social/youth work?*
- *To what extent are extra-familial relations for young migrants supported?*
- *Are there officially supported and financed open rooms and spaces where young migrants can come together, share ideas, thoughts and feelings and have free access to the internet and relevant communication technologies?*

Subjective Indicators

- *Having someone to rely on in case of need (Eurostat & Gallup indicator)*
- *Perception of the YMM to fulfil their parents expectations*
- *Level of satisfaction with family contact*
- *Level of satisfaction with close peer relations*

2 ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



Employment and education play important roles in a person's life and are also crucial in terms of a person's success in society. They substantially influence young migrant men's well-being for various reasons: "Work has obvious economic benefits, but having a job also helps individuals stay connected with society, build self-esteem, and develop skills and competencies" (OECD Better-Life Index), while unemployment strongly correlates with lower life satisfaction and overall decrease in well-being (Eurofound 2013). Satisfactory employment is a source of societal recognition, feelings of 'usefulness', increases self-confidence and provides opportunities for personal growth. It is an essential part of young migrant men's well-being to achieve financial independence, being able to support themselves and often their families as well (often living in the home country). Employment is an important part of their masculine identity and position of 'breadwinner' of the family. Where they see themselves as part of a generational continuum, employment is important to fulfil

their (masculine) role in the family, to provide security to other family members now and in the future perspective. For many interviewed young men having stable employment is the essential prerequisite before starting their own family.

Though education and employment are clearly linked, they also have different and interdependent well-being impacts. The most obvious link between the two domains is that higher education increases the individual's chances on the job market to attain more diverse, better paid and more prestigious jobs. Additionally, educational institutions support the young men's contact to their peers, help them to build their social

"I came here to build a future. In Afghanistan, there was not this possibility to go to school, build a future ... I want to stay on the path, so my parents can be proud of me later." **Nasir, 18**

networks and develop friendships with other youth. For some interviewees the advantages and opportunities offered by migration were a feature often commented upon, and family expectations to succeed were evident. Therefore, there was a perception that it was necessary to be successful and to achieve. This could have a positive effect on well-being when there were achievements to celebrate, it could have a negative effect and induce a sense of having failed if expectations were not lived up to, those expectations being of either parents or the individual. Many young men reflected upon their parents' impact on their educational ambitions. Their support was commonly cited and prolonged conflicts on career ambitions were rarely reported in the sample.

Young men's well-being in the education sector is disrupted by discrimination. The target group is affected by structural discrimination and individual discrimination (Zick et. al 2008). The men in the sample report discrimination both by teachers and other students. This affects particularly young men who lack sufficient linguistic skills, culturally or ethnically differ from the majority. Among pupils there was hesitation how to interpret 'jokes' of cultural stereotyping and how to feel about its effects.

Policy Implications

Lack of access to suitable education and employment opportunities result in frustration, boredom, feelings of uselessness and isolation. Lack of support in education, training and apprenticeship, lack of or unsuitable advice and lack of access to training opportunities suitable for the individual are also detrimental to well-being. The following programs, structures and measures could support the participation in the Education and Employment sectors

- *Access to training and education institutions, (fee) funding opportunities, support for higher education*
- *Free and customised advise services*
- *(Free) services for recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas*
- *(Specialised) free language courses*
- *Anti-discrimination measures in education institutions, awareness raising in schools, education and training institutions and the private sector.*

Subjective Indicators

- *Satisfaction with current education situation*
- *Satisfaction with personal education opportunities*
- *Satisfaction with current employment situation*
- *Satisfaction with orientation / counselling services on education / employment opportunities*
- *Satisfaction with availability of (specialised) language courses*
- *Satisfaction with sanctioning of discrimination in one's education / employment context*

3 SOCIAL NETWORKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY BELONGING

Eurostat (2015) notes that engaging in recreational activities, following one's interests and engaging with like-minded people contributes to an individual's overall life-satisfaction. MiMen research confirms this finding in that sport was a significant past-time of many of the respondents which increased a sense of belonging and engagement with their community. Recreational activities are also important bonding factors with others. The research in MiMen suggests that YMM's individual well-being was linked to communal aspects – their own well-being is both aided by their friends and peers and influenced the well-being of their friends and peers. For migrants as newcomers, building social networks creates a particular challenge in that social interactions are surrounded by informality and uncertainty. Recreational, cultural and sport activities offer a more structured platform for social interaction that reduces this uncertainty.

Participation in recreational, cultural and sports activities is expected to contribute to an individual's well-being (Eurofound 2013). Induction and orientation programmes can play an important role for assisting young migrants upon their arrival. However, also mainstream services need to be accessible and open to young migrant men as they are key platform for engaging with general recreational activities and even more importantly, for social interaction with the general population. Although both bonding (to one's own cultural group) and bridging (to other cultural groups) connections are important for well-being, it is bridging connections that young migrant men often find hard to create. Connections to other people are easier established via shared interests and communal activities. According to the research, participating in social, leisure and cultural activities and establishing these connections maybe hampered by lack of time, information and financial resources, limited language capacity, and that certain religious young men have a desire for recreational activities which do not involve the consumption of alcohol.

Active outreach by sport and youth organisations – both in the public and private sector – is required to groups that are underrepresented among service users and who may face difficulties in accessing activities. Sport organisations proved to be great facilitators of positive interaction among young migrant and autochthone youth.

However, some young migrants reported racial harassment at sporting facilities. The feelings that resulted from the sense of

"In school you learn the grammar, but you need to have places in which to have informal discussions." **Tamas, 23**

isolation, harassment and segregation resulted in some YMM visiting sports clubs that were attended only by young people of their ethnicity.

Spirituality and religion for some contribute significantly to their eudemonic well-being (Eurostat 2015). The MiMen findings support this. Several religious young men in the sample report to find 'inner peace' and stress relief in their faith. For some religion provides a 'guide book' which helps them to master their life. Religion can be a link to their (parents') origin. Attending religious services can generate a sense of 'home' and 'belonging'. Moreover, the research suggested that religious organisations facilitated building social bridges between young males from different ethnic backgrounds and autochthones. This is contrasted with the negative stereotyping of Muslims in all European countries, which are often perpetuated by the media. All young men of Muslim faith are aware of reservations against their religion. Many have directly or indirectly experienced rejection or feel their religious identity stigmatized. They need to justify, position or define themselves in relation to those stereotypes.



Policy Implications

- *Recreational, cultural and sports services to young people need to be open, facilitated through outreach programmes and sensitive to direct and indirect discrimination. Anti-discrimination training is a necessity as is the need to evaluate the existing barriers of access for unrepresented groups. There is a need to review existing programs in terms of their intercultural openness and appeal and how they can facilitate interaction between different cultural/ethnic groups)*
- *Recreational services should be accessible (in geographic and financial terms) and information available in relevant languages; links with integration services is desirable*
- *Integration services should include leisure and youth activities and be linked to/provide information about other general recreational services*
- *The link of religious and ethnic organisations to organisations of the 'host society' should be supported (financially and structurally, e.g. to municipal authorities). Initiatives which enable young people's links to both heritage and new culture should be assisted*
- *YMM should be assisted to take voluntary and leadership roles in their recreational activities (e.g. in sports organisations)*

Subjective Indicators

- *Satisfaction with time use for leisure, friend and community activities (Eurostat)*
- *Satisfaction with leisure facilities and opportunities*
- *Satisfaction with ability to participate in social and community activities*

4 HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

The European Quality of Life Survey understands housing conditions as part of the general standard of living, which has a high relevance for general quality of life (Eurofound 2013: 49). In terms of impact of individual housing conditions on well-being, insecure housing and fear of losing the accommodation have the highest negative impact on well-being (more than e.g. lack of space) (ibid: 56). A common theme in the data is for many YMM the need to obtain security in accommodation. Many YMM were looking for an improvement of their situation. Due to little space and high rents they evaluated their own housing situation as not satisfying. Some expected and others reported discrimination in the selection procedures for public and privately rented flats.

Some interviewees report an increase in well-being due to good relations to the neighbours, providing help and orientation in everyday life matters especially when the core family is missing.

Conversely bad relations – sometimes also linked to racial discrimination or negative stereotyping as ‘trouble-makers’ – are detrimental to well-being.

In everyday interactions, young migrant men are confronted with various stereotypes based on their (perceived) ethnic identity, accent/language, youth and gender. Being perceived as a ‘trouble-maker’ and a potentially dangerous/criminal person is one of the most common prejudices they are confronted with. Many report unfair treatment due to this, e.g. being denied access in bars/nightclubs or suspicious treatment in shops, restaurants and public space. Well-being in many neighbourhoods is influenced negatively by experiences of discrimination.

Feelings of belonging and being accepted in the neighbourhood are important for general well-being. Many young respondents voice these positive aspects about diverse neighbourhoods. Such neighbourhoods provide a friendlier



“The process of getting to know people here is quite slow. I can walk in the city centre and say hello to an unknown African man. I see him and immediately we are friends. But here in Finland you have to see people couple of times in restaurants or wherever. Then it starts to open up.” **Muhammed, 20**

environment where minority young males feel safer. For many the diversity of a larger city provides a more favoured environment. However immigrant minorities are often segregated in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, a problem which is recognized by the young men. Some respondents moreover report discrimination in the job market due to their neighbourhood's bad reputation.

Fear of crime and feelings of lack of safety thwart well-being in a neighbourhood. Feelings of 'safe walking after dark' are commonly measured

as well-being indicators (e.g. Eurostat 2015, ONS). Young migrant men are in double jeopardy position, being both potential victims of violence – often perpetrated by other young males – and being stigmatized as potential aggressors. The empirical material shows that many YMM wish to live in a neighbourhood which they would classify as safe.

Policy Implications

- *Public spaces and places should be established, accessible and well-known, where discrimination is perceived as an intolerable act that is sanctioned*
- *Informal, free and low-threshold meeting places and public spaces are important, where young people can meet. These should be sustainably financed*
- *Assignment procedures for public housing should take into account the needs of young migrant men and be sensitive to direct or indirect discrimination*
- *Studies and random testing need to be advanced to capture the extent of discrimination on the private housing market. Subsequent anti-discrimination measures need to be taken to counteract it*

Subjective Indicators

- *Level of satisfaction with own housing situation (Eurostat)*
- *Level of satisfaction with relations with neighbours*
- *Having been victim of (racial) harassment in the neighbourhood*
- *Feelings of safety when out walking alone at day/at night ('safe walking at night': Eurostat)*
- *Having friends in walking distance of home*
- *Level of satisfaction with opportunities to meet friends in the neighbourhood (outside of home)*

5 FEELING SAFE AND TRUST IN POLICE AND AUTHORITIES

The quality of life index measures the level of trust in the police, in the legal system and in the political system (Eurostat 2015). A well-being index relevant for young migrant men also needs to take into account the interaction with the various state authorities. This is a key issue for young immigrants as they encounter many problems on different levels. When they have a fragile legal status they are vulnerable to anti-migration discourses and subject to tougher immigration laws. Feelings of safety and security for young migrant men also relate to feeling safe from the police and other authorities that have power over them, particularly if they do not hold full citizenship rights.

The hostile environment towards immigrants and particularly young men is also reflected in incidents of discriminatory behaviour by police officers. The narratives present a complex picture whereby the authorities may serve as both protectors and supporters for some whilst being a source of tension, frustration, cynicism and mistrust for others. These were linked to the narratives of stigmatization, namely the double-bind of the discriminatory migrant construction alongside public perceptions of 'deviant youth'. Some YMM have experienced mistrust and suspicion by the police and conversely mistrust becomes mutual. Lack of trust in the police is prevalent among second generation youth in the sample. Yet for first generation they were more

"I think to call the police is not a good idea in our neighbourhood. You would have more problems with the police as if you would manage these things without them"

Levent, 16

cautious in their behaviour and actively sought to avoid trouble. This serves, not only, as a protective measure against being criminalized in the new country, but also to be able to look after themselves as men amid the lack of close family support and social networks which they had enjoyed in their country of origin. Their attempts to ensure a stable and secure lifestyle for themselves in the new country is also related to their experiences of political and economic insecurities back home.

Even though for many young migrant men there were challenges as set out above there were positive expressions of the migration experience. For many of the young migrant men, their new host country provided a tangible sense of security. They were enabled to 'sleep at night' removing from them the threats they had previously experienced. There was a sense amongst many that securing a feeling of safety was one of the most positive aspects of living in the 'host country'.

"In my home country everybody is afraid of the future. ... Nobody knows what will happen tomorrow. ... Well-being is not about money, it is about safety and security" **Serhat, 26**



Policy Implications

- *Intercultural competencies need to be considered as prerequisite to employment in police/public authorities (especially for positions which involve personal contact)*
- *Inclusion of intercultural trainings and anti-discrimination awareness in (further) training agendas for police/public authorities*
- *Diversity of the workforce in police/public authorities*

Subjective Indicators

- *Trust in police, legal and political system (Eurostat)*
- *Feelings of safety in encounters with the police*
- *Feelings of safety in encounters with other government bodies*
- *Feelings of security with regard to one's legal status*
- *Experience of discrimination due to race, ethnicity or migrant status by authorities*
- *Extend and perceptions of freedom of movement i.e. legal status and how this impacts on their perceptions of freedom of movement*
- *Perception of legal barriers for family reunification*

6 DISCRIMINATION

"When I see how things are portrayed on TV even I get scared! It's exactly because of these pictures that people discriminate against us." **Tawab, 18**

Experiences of discrimination and negative stereotyping feature repeatedly in the domains discussed above, nevertheless its relevance to the target group led us to devote a specific section of this index to the issue. Ethnic, racial and religious discriminations are widespread phenomena in contemporary Europe (Zick et al. 2008). This is especially true for the young men with a minority background who often tend to embody the 'dangerous other'. Existing well-being surveys do not yet include measures on the experience of discrimination, although studies show that being subject to prolonged discrimination is strongly detrimental to well-being as it increases stress, depression and is related to different health issues. It also helps to strengthen reactive identities among those discriminated against, promotes ethnic closures and hostility between groups.

As defined in the 'Racial Equality Directive' (Council Directive 2000/43/EC), direct discrimination occurs when "one person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of racial or ethnic origin" and indirect discrimination occurs when "an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons of a racial or ethnic origin at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary". Discrimination takes different forms and expressions from the subtle and invisible selection in hiring or housing to the direct and violent insult in social interactions. A number of interviewees of Caribbean and sub-Saharan African origin tell stories of overt racial slurs. Instances of open islamophobia are increasingly common. Additionally, subtle forms of subordination and

differentiation delineate minority youth from the mainstream population.

One of the most widespread experiences of young migrants, including those of the second generation, is the reference to their 'otherness' or 'foreignness' (a process called 'othering'). Interviewees tend to react differently to the experience of ethnicization and 'othering', depending on their immigration status. For those who migrated at an early age or are born in the country, repeated expressions of othering are perceived negatively as threatening their belonging to their society. They are very reactive against this unwelcomed labelling, although they also show certain fatalism in anticipating that they will never be considered as members of the mainstream population.

"I was told – 'you are the first Black guy I have met. I did not know Black people are nice'" **Austin, 21**

Recent young migrants consider references to their cultural dissonance as a simple reflection of their foreignness. Being seen as different is perceived as inherently impossible to avoid by most of the respondents who have an accent or linguistic limitations, and thus young immigrants tend to consider that different treatments or subordinate positions are somehow temporarily justified. Even though they might perceive negative contacts with majority population, they tend to consider that these inequalities and stereotyping are part of the immigrant experience. As a consequence, they often deny having been subject to discrimination, but recount experiences which clearly classify as discrimination. Another coping strategy is to understand discrimination as 'inevitable' and claim not to care about it. Despite this many young migrants are confident about their acceptance in society in the future. They hope to master the cultural codes and language and become an assimilated part of their country. Those who came as young children or are born in the country are more critical about their

assimilation. They sometimes feel as second-class citizens, facing othering while they thought they were natives like the others. The experiences of identity dissonance are echoing the narratives of discriminations.

Many young men are aware of the negative perception of immigrants particularly from Arabic countries and Muslim origin in the public

discourse. Media and political speeches are seen as a source of negative stereotyping of young migrant men. The young men themselves are influenced by these images, often negatively and sometimes in doubt where to position themselves and their peers. Some reject media stereotyping strongly, in particular with respect to Muslims, and speak of ‘brainwashing’ by the media.

Policy Implications

Policies need to raise awareness and enhance communication about the many facets of discrimination on the one side, and on the other side enforce existing rights to equality and protection against discrimination. This implies for example:

- *Undertake and publicize field experiment tests on discrimination in various domains showing its impact on everyday life (e.g. private housing, hiring practices)*
- *Acknowledge the role and responsibility of mass media in perpetrating negative stereotypes and subsequently aim at a more balanced reporting (e.g. increased diversity in public media human resources, specific training for journalists, involvement of national media authorities, any radio, press and TV ombudsmen and press unions to foster reflexivity)*
- *Organize campaigns with a large scope at national and local level, to increase awareness of stereotyping, othering and routine discrimination (e.g. (mass) media campaigns, public poster campaigns, training-of-trainers modules for both public and private sectors)*
- *Assess the effectiveness of existing anti-discriminatory legislation (e.g. specialized NGOs’ legal capacity in assisting victims or directly suing discriminating institutions, class actions in cases of discrimination, barriers to filing complaints, divergence in case outcomes, monitoring discrimination, diversity managements and charters of good practices, positive action) and the efficiency of the resources and tools at the disposal of national equality bodies*
- *Support coping resources for the victims of discrimination (e.g. local ombudsmen/equality bodies’ local network, specialized NGOs, school and educative staff), by funding or project cooperation*

Subjective Indicators

- *Perception of the existence of discrimination by addressing questions on the representations of the majority population and the minority groups on the relevance and the magnitude of the different type of discriminations*
- *Experience of discrimination through self-reported indicator, broken-down by motives of discrimination and the specific cause of ethnic and racial discrimination, (colour, accent, nationality, name, religion, address etc.). Questions on the contexts where discrimination has occurred can be added*
- *Perception of the ‘climate’ regarding discrimination via existing tolerance indicator/inter-group cohesion indicator/social values indicators or via lexicographic media survey (non-subjective indicator)*
- *Impact of discrimination on well-being through self-assessment in a list of different consequences (lack of confidence, depression, rage, filing a complaint, talking with family or friends, etc.) and itemizing the capacity to derive support (from an association, a workers’ union, the police, an ombudsman, the local/migrant community etc.)*

Evaluating the Migration Experience

The distance between (initial) expectations and (perceived) achievements of young migrant men is strictly related to their satisfaction with their current life and with their overall migration experience. In turn, such satisfaction is strictly dependant on the expectations they brought with them (1st generation) or they grew up with (2nd generation). Whether they perceive the outcomes of their migration as 'success' or 'failure' is crucial to the young men's well-being and can determine the quality of their present life and future outlook.

Well-being is essentially a dynamic process that gives people a sense of how their life is going, through the interaction between the objective conditions they experience, the activities they carry out and their psychological resources (Dodge et al. 2012). The expectations-achievements gap needs to be measured with subjective indicators. While overall life satisfaction is increasingly being regarded as "a push factor towards migration even stronger than GDP per capita" (Blanchflower and Shadforth 2009), it is possible to identify several issues that can determine satisfaction in relation to the migration experience: earning money, getting a good job and acquiring professional skills are common expectations that young men have in respect to their migration. However there are also costs – both monetary and non-monetary – and particularly the latter can be unexpectedly high

and severely affect the outcomes of migration. Migration costs and outcomes as subjective factors may vary greatly between individuals, so it becomes very difficult to identify objective measures for their assessment and evaluation in a policy perspective. Our research findings however show that issues such as safety, money, education and increased autonomy are common expectations for the young male adults interviewed in this study. In general, the young migrant men's expectations are marked by a twofold transition: transition to some 'better place' to live by migrating, and transition to adulthood. In this respect, adequate policies that recognize the importance of subjective well-being of YMM should include transition or change as an intrinsic part of their well-being in different areas. Existing surveys on well-being use a variety of subjective indicators, many of them mentioned in this index, which are also pertinent to YMM. However the migration experience adds the 'before-and-after' dimension which is peculiar to migration. The 'was it really worth it?' key-question is common to many YMM interviewed. The extent to which the achievements of the *After* meet the expectations of the *Before* is what the below indicators intend to detect.

Policy Implications

- *Do national migration policies entail the assessment of the YMM satisfaction of their outcomes and overall present life (possibly in various areas, e.g., safety; income; work; education; professional skills; sports and leisure; etc.)?*
- *Do national policies foresee the measuring of the 'transition' dimension in the life of YMM? Is transition/ change (of country, nationality, status, employment, etc.) considered positively by national policies?*
- *Are there any measures addressing young migrant males specifically?*
- *To what extent do national policies specifically address the needs of young migrant males without a family?*
- *To what extent is professional training considered a priority for male migrants?*

Subjective Indicators

The central question is how the individual evaluates their migration experience

- *Satisfaction with own working/studying life*
- *Perception of social mobility*

- Perception of freedom & safety: to be masters of one's own destiny; to be able to start a family; to be able to fulfil one's own needs
- Present achievements vs past expectations: individual expectations; family expectations; social expectations (i.e. comparison with peers in country of origin)
- Perception of being in debt to one's parents/family vs perception to being fully capable to fulfil parents'/family expectations
- Perception of YMM to fulfil their own expectations in the host countries
- Perception of future expectations

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