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"*From Many, One*: Employing Social Representations Theory to today's migration crisis facilitating mediation in the encounter of different cultures"

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Abstract

Worldwide human mobility flows across borders have significant humanitarian and social effects and repercussions, more so in most recent years due to the increased numbers of people on the move escaping from wars, natural catastrophes or poverty. Such population movements determine the coming together of different cultural groups which can be challenging and can create issues. Nevertheless, migration can also resolve into an opportunity for positive relations between the self and the other, in particular when viewing the phenomenon from a humanity-centered perspective or when there is a deeper knowledge and mutual understanding.

By drawing on the outcomes of quantitative and qualitative instruments addressing verbal, textual, iconic and projective aspects, and applying the modelling approach research framework that is based on the blending of diverse theoretical constructs as well as on their related analysis procedures, the social representations produced by migrants and local community groups were analyzed and compared in order to trace self-identities and emotions, memories, social positioning and new common social environment developed following the coming together of migrants and locals.

This empirical investigation was performed in Germany with the support of Malteser Werke, a well-known charity organization responsible for managing facilities for refugees throughout the country. 76 female and male migrant and local community adults from over 30 countries and from solidarity and humanitarian contexts were involved on voluntary basis. They all contributed to this research aimed at analyzing direct interaction and contact as well as reciprocal knowledge and experiences as regards the migration phenomenon, offering noteworthy results and insights for developing policies and actions leading to the strengthening of social inclusion and to the construction of peaceful multicultural communities established on a human-focused vision of the citizens of tomorrow.

Keywords**:** *social representations, migrants, local community, encounter, humanity.*

CHAPTER I
Contextual Framework

1.1. Today's Migration Crisis

The refugee and migration crisis of the last years has been partly put aside in the newspapers' front pages and in the media in general, particularly since the start of 2020, as all attention has concentrated on the tragic Covid-19 pandemic which has dramatically hit the entire planet. Nevertheless, the migration phenomenon of this modern era remains one of the most defying issues facing the world in our day and affecting directly and indirectly an incredible number of persons.

Persecution, conflicts, diseases, and poverty have always throughout history forced people to abandon their homes in search of a better life for themselves and their children. Regrettably, this trend has increased dramatically in recent times and today the world is witnessing its highest levels of displacement ever recorded, with all human rights and humanitarian critical implications connected to it[1].

According to the latest figures reported by IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Center-GMDAC's Migration Data Portal[2], in 2019 at mid-year, the total number of international migrants was 271.6 million people (3.5% of the planet's population) who got on the road having lost their homes fleeing from war or harassment, struck by climate change and natural calamities, affected by illness, or otherwise -the majority- in search of jobs, fair salaries, and a way to lift themselves and their families from destitution.

A tragedy within the crisis is the distressing fact that an increasing number of these displaced people in the world are minors. Only last year there were 37.9 million youth migrants, 14% of the world's displaced. 13 million of these were child

[1] UNHCR-Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website, *http://www.unhcr.org*

[2] Migration Data Portal-IOM's GMDAC-Global Migration Data Analysis Center website, *https://migrationdataportal.org*

refugees while 936,000 were young asylum seekers[3]. The current amplified focus on the situation of this group is determined by the fact that while girls and boys have always migrated with their families or following their kin, presently there is the growing incidence that many of these children are forced to leave their parents, relatives and communities migrating unaccompanied across borders. They embark alone in perilous journeys with the hope and dream of a better future for themselves and their families[4].

Likewise, an unprecedented quota of women around the world are on the move escaping gender-based violence in war-torn areas or other abuses, seeking work and improvement of their existence. Again, referring to data related to the year 2019, 48% of all international migrants were females[5]. For some, travelling away from home produces a level of advancement and upgrading, but for many there are huge hazards as the crossing has no safety guarantees and often they are vulnerable to renewed mistreatment and injury during the transit or even at destination where for instance exploitation in domestic work is frequent[6].

Strikingly clear, it is undeniable that fear and escape are strictly related to migration which is also so strongly linked to distress as well as need. Precisely from figures recorded by the United Nations agency for migration, international students in 2016 were 4.8 million[7], a reduced number if placed next to the overall totality of worldwide migrants recalled earlier.

Thus, lamentably, the tragedy and uncertainty lie with the huge majority of migrants who undisputedly very often experience horrible physical and psychological ill-treatments, especially the ones who get caught up into the networks of human traffickers. Actually, a great number of migrants, for their condition of vulnerability,

[3] IOM-International Organization for Migration-World Migration Report 2020, ISSN 1561-5502, e-ISBN 978-92-9068-789-4

[4] UNICEF-United Nations Children's Fund website, *https://www.unicef.org*

[5] IOM-International Organization for Migration-World Migration Report 2020, ISSN 1561-5502, e-ISBN 978-92-9068-789-4

[6] UN WOMEN website, *https://www.unwomen.org*

[7] IOM-International Organization for Migration website: *https://www.iom.int*

fall into the hands of transnational criminals who threaten, deceit, rob, and force them into servitude, slavery, sexual exploitation, or even removal of body organs. The complete violation of human rights is sadly recurrent for so many of these people[8].

Even in the present coronavirus emergency, migrants and refugees are among the most helpless for the conditions in which they live in camps, detention centers, high-density urban areas, or informal settlements[9]. They are often overcrowded, with scarce access to clean water and sanitation, they generally also have to deal with lacking healthcare, income loss, as well as uncertain legal status. Moreover, the recent lockdowns have reduced local community volunteer relief services for this group of foreign disadvantaged people (Kluge, Jakab, Bartovic, D'Anna & Severoni, 2020).

1.2. Viewpoints of Migration Phenomenon

The subject of migration that is dominating nations' policies, which is being debated among the general public, as well as being an increasingly recurrent theme present in experts' and academic work, has a huge number of facets and covers countless areas and levels. It can be considered and examined from a humanitarian or a social perspective, from the juridical or the rule of law viewpoint, from a geographical or demographic trend, from an economic or labor market angle, from the medical or public health standpoint, from gender or vulnerable groups' position, and so forth.

Moreover, it should be noted that the migration issue touches all countries: the ones suffering from endemic poverty, food insecurity, conflicts, natural disasters, then also the transit nations, and finally those states that have a significant humanitarian burden in what is often perceived by local communities as an everlasting emergency linked to a continuous flow of arrivals. This impression of foreign plundering is also tightly connected to economic interests, the environmental debate, and it is always more frequently imbued in ideology and politics.

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[8] OHCHR – United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *https://www.ohchr.org*

[9] WHO-World Health Organization website, *http://www.who.org/*

The dramatic migration situation is indeed seen as awfully troublesome when examined from the viewpoint of certain contexts in which the phenomenon befalls and where partisan and biased forces intervene on the resident populations. That is so particularly true in circumstances of preexistent endemic weaknesses, income downfalls, or social degradation and neglect[10].

The natural outcome of such course is an increasing resistance in the societies of industrialized countries to immigration and assimilation of foreigners as evidenced for instance by Brexit, the border wall argument in the United States of America, the hardline reaction to immigration occurring in Australia, and the controversies regarding NGOs involved in migrant rescues in Italy, just to recall a few cases.

There is indeed a growing and widely accepted conviction in the more economically advanced countries that an uncontrolled exodus of peoples is putting at stake established welfare, social cohesion, and peace. In Western societies, the media, political campaigners, together with socio-economic factors, seem to be the main elements determining attitudes vis-à-vis migration that frequently express national division on this delicate subject.

Concerns among citizens for the presence of migrants also seem to be linked to the complex interplay between perceived -or driven- and actual reality[11]. There is the irrefutable certainty of today's migration factual situation, but then there also is the manner how such truths are perceived and mediated.

Certainly, receiving communities are addressing huge difficulties dealing with present-day flows of people and all the connected elements related to such movements. However, there are few reservations concerning the fact that migration also encourages and boosts economic and cultural development of both origin and

[10] United Nations – Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019) International Migration 2019: Report (ST/ESA/SER.A/438), eISBN: 978-92-1-004819-4

[11] EPIM-European Program for Integration website, *http://www.epim.info*

receiving countries[12] as well as inspires important acts of compassion and humanitarian solidarity[13].

There actually are some hopeful signs that go in the direction of wider consistency in confronting the migration complexities as for instance the favorable vote at the end of 2018 by a wide majority of United Nations member states of (a) the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the foremost interstate agreement concerning all scopes of worldwide migration in an all-inclusive and universal way. A document that respects the sovereignty of every country in deciding regulations of entry in their grounds without providing compulsory norms, but that on the other hand surely offers a shared and exhaustive framework for dealing with international migration dimensions[14], and (b) the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), an outline for nations, international organizations and all actors involved providing necessary collaboration and support to receiving settings as well as elements from which refugees can benefit for a worthwhile and untroubled life[15].

By facilitating the governance of migration, by reducing the pressure on host countries, by augmenting the self-reliance of the displaced, and by supporting improvement of life conditions in countries of origin, these two above mentioned noteworthy pacts provide an extraordinary opportunity to progress successfully in collectively confronting the migration drama for the advantage of all concerned. Furthermore, these compacts represent relevant openings for the advancement of worldwide conduct and the handling of migration, as well as orientations towards addressing together the challenges associated with today's flows, including strengthening the contribution of migrants themselves in this process for an effective migration dimension and generalized sustainable development.

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[12] European Commission-Directorate General for Research and Innovation, Research on Migration: Facing Realities and Maximizing Opportunities, 2016, ISBN 978-92-79-52976-4, doi 10.2777/414370

[13] OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs, *https://www.unocha.org*

[14] Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration – United Nations General Assembly, seventy-third session, Resolution A/RES/73/195 adopted on 19 Dec. 2018

[15] Global Compact on Refugees – United Nations General Assembly, seventy-third session, Supplement n. 12 - A/73/12 (Part II) affirmed on 17 Dec. 2018

Nevertheless - in spite of these auspicious steps towards a common world vision and action for people on the move, the global long-lasting debate on the effects of migration and how to relate the phenomenon to concepts such as enrichment, solidarity, human rights and overall generalized development - the migration situation still misses being considered from a neutral perspective so that nations and societies can respond and adapt appropriately to this existing challenge. Regrettably, there still are no fully shared common understandings regarding the cause of concern involving millions of people, nor any predominant solutions nor actions.

1.3. Ways Forward Addressing Migration

Today's great responsibility is to intervene not only in response of humanitarian emergencies as when there is a shipwreck, a violent armed conflict, lest a natural catastrophe such as an earthquake and hurricane, or rather in taking action on occasions of immediate life urgencies of those unfortunate derelicts just as they arise, but substantially the core necessity is to find lasting and proficient solutions for asylum seekers and displaced so as for them to live their lives in dignity and peace as well as guarantee a continued harmony in the destination host countries and receiving communities.

The foreseeable plausible and durable solutions attainable in addressing such longer-term requirement include voluntary repatriation, resettlement, and integration of the displaced, refugees, and migrants[16].

Most of the migrants yearn for their homes and long for their cultural backgrounds and environments, thus, when possible, a *voluntary repatriation* scheme in absolute safety and respectfulness is often the most encouraged and supported answer expressed by humanitarian organizations and the United Nations system.

If observed casually, and above all if considered hastily, the voluntary repatriation could erroneously look as a turnaround or a failure with all the side emotional and psychological implications. Yet, even if certainly the option of voluntary

[16] IOM-International Organization for Migration website: *https://www.iom.int*

repatriation implies looking backwards, nonetheless it includes significant revitalized elements and novelty in the migrant's refreshed life trail as this decision entails the investment of new energies and tools rebuilding one's destiny and existence.

Those persons who decide to undertake such brave choice of reversing the direction of their fate starting anew with a renovated beginning in the direction from where they precisely initially started, will of course inevitably need the continual backing of the world community and the promotion of all necessary empowering requirements for such significant step. Nonetheless, this option when applicable is the utmost favored as there is the evident advantages for the migrant of having the full knowledge of the motherland and the emotional support returning to family and friends' affection.

Surely, for a completely successful return, it is necessary that the countries of origin pledge to collaborate proactively in the project of reincorporation in the local social framework facilitating with adequate measures these people's homecoming. In any case, even in a composite configuration as the one mentioned above, this solution is the most desired as there would normally be no major cultural traumas.

Many migrants however cannot take into consideration such option of a return to the country of origin because of unvarying persecution, conflicts, famines, or other local shortages. Some cannot even remain in the sites where they have requested relief or where they have arrived after their escape journey, thus, they are those cases for whom it is essential and needed to be transferred to a third safe and welcoming port.

Supported by the dedicated United Nations refugee agency, asylum seekers' *resettlement* implies the relocation from an initially supposed refuge country to another nation that agrees to accept them and in due time gives permanent and lasting shelter. Such option under the aegis of the UN High Commission for Refugees is a precious safeguard for individuals whose existence is liable to insecurity, detention, illness, and fundamental rights violations not only back in the

home country, but also in the place of first arrival. The resettlement status provided in the third state secures to the migrant the human, civil, political, economic, and social rights just like the ones guaranteed to the natives and it is presumable that it can eventually bring naturalization.

Resettlement is complex as just a few states participate and open to this practice determining that less than 1% of refugees are resettled each year. The main countries involved in the recent years in such program are the United States of America, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the North European states.

Another alternative for the people who are helpless and powerless in returning to the country of origin is *integration* into the receiving state. Habitually integration is a complicated progressive course which involves the direct interaction of the migrant with the host society generating a mechanism of ongoing connection and relatedness.

Integration is a momentous experience which deeply affects a person's existence as it infers adaptation into a new community completely dissimilar from what is familiar until that moment. It also requires an open attitude and position on the part of the native citizens who not necessarily are prepared to such alien presence. Yet when examining the alternatives available for migrants to achieve a righteous life while assuring steadiness and peace in the receiving communities, integration, together with resettlement, are coherent and consistent formulas even if they are the most complicated possibilities due to the fact that they both imply a more or less externally determined encounter and relation between populations with completely different backgrounds, traditions, religions, languages and cultures.

Integration is indeed a bilateral, multilayered, slow, and steady process with a number of interconnected and interdependent juridical, economic, cultural and social features. It demands that the welcoming nations ensure migrants have means of access to the assets that are essential for adaptation and for a long-standing stability to the new culture and customs promoting involvement and wide sense of community.

For a successful outcome for all parties involved, receiving communities should strive to greet and sustain the migrants sharing with them civil and human rights. The newcomers on their part should absorb the local customs and adopt the new rules even maintaining their own native identity.

Such encounter and combination of the two groups is beneficial for both: the migrants will be able to become productive contributing economically in the new territory as well as enriching the social context, while the host community will acquire a more open perspective and become more creative and dynamic. Therefore, for a successful outcome of such encounter, dedicated schemes and plans are necessary. Language courses, cultural orientation and vocational trainings are fundamental to facilitate reciprocal knowledge and adjustment with the ultimate objective of integration[17].

[17] UNHCR-Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website, *http://www.unhcr.org*

CHAPTER II
Theoretical Framework

2.1. Social Representations Theory

2.1.1. Origin of the Social Representations Theory

The year 1961 marked a number of significant episodes and milestones for humanity. One of the utmost famous moments of that year, which has probably set itself the most into our social fabric, was when, in April, the first human accomplished something unthinkable until then: the Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin achieved to journey into outer space orbiting the Earth, thus opening an entire new realm to mankind. A few months later, another memorable event occurred which would influence the world history of at least the next thirty years: the raising of a divide between East and West Germany, the Berlin Wall. More linked to the theme of this study, other relevant world changing happenings of 1961 that should be recalled are the condemnation of apartheid in South Africa by the United Nations General Assembly[18], the end of discrimination in employment based on gender with the recognition in Spain of equal rights for men and women[19], and the establishment of Amnesty International, a human rights organization sparked from British lawyer Peter Benenson who launched a momentous campaign after two Portuguese students were jailed for cheering to liberty. His appeal spurred the belief that people should unite for justice and freedom, starting an epochal social change[20].

In Social Psychology too, 1961 is a paramount year as it marks the date of the genesis of the Social Representations Theory by Serge Moscovici who then first introduced his revolutionary paradigm with his Doctoral composition "La Psychanalyse, son image et son public". In his dissertation, Moscovici first explains in a powerful and systematic manner the concept which he had elaborated from the empirical research run on the diffusion of psychoanalysis in France, a very controversial theme of concern at that time.

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[18] United Nations General Assembly, fifteenth session, Resolution A/RES/1598 adopted on 13 April 1961

[19] B.O.E. (Spanish Official Bulletin of the State) n. 175, 56/1961 of 22 July 1961, Law Regarding Political, Professional and Labor Rights of Women

[20] Amnesty International website *https://www.amnesty.org/en/*

For his innovational work he became one of the leading theorists of social construction of knowledge within the scientific arena. In contrast to the conventionally more individualistic emphasis of the epoch, Moscovici's work is embedded in a broader sociological and cultural practice and is intensely concerned with the milieu and environment in which meaning is constructed and people interact, as well as with the processes and dynamics of such relations and ideas occurring and circulating in global modern society.

Upon his own acknowledgment, Moscovici drew from Émile Durkheim's concept of collective representations elaborated at the close of the 19th century. Durkheim had already distanced collective from individual representations in his strive to interpret the collective aspects of life in a given society. Moscovici, however, purifies and sharpens further the notion choosing to associate the word "social" next to representations so as to accentuate the contextual and active character of the latter contrariwise to an attention directed more to the inert and descriptive nature which representations assume in Durkheim's interpretation, which is mostly oriented towards what keeps society as a whole. Thus, comparing further the two thinkers' positions, unlike Durkheim, Moscovici recognized and took into consideration the inseparability of the individual and society, and also focused on the variations and the altering motions occurring within society (Duveen, 2000).

Another discernible brick at the base of the future dawn of social representations seems to come from Durkheim's contemporary, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, who analyzed the specificities of the collective representations connecting them to different societies thus allowing a firmer comparison of the representations. From his studies of the primitive, he highlighted four main features: one is that every concept implies a larger number of other elements; secondly, representations considered as intellectual constructions related to group emotions should be associated to such emotions or to the feelings they come to develop; another point is that representations are within and recurrent in both society and reality as a representation is contemporarily image and its essence; finally, all collective representations are equal for their congruity and utility (Flick, 1998).

In consideration of the above, Moscovici's wide-angle lens was certainly directed more towards the mutations and varieties of collective concepts produced by modern society, providing with his theory an instrument which allows to decipher and understand the dynamic changes occurring in the present world. A world which evidently reflects the greater complexities and distinctions within today's cultures, as well as the more articulate communication means available in society. Indeed, social representations for Moscovici are a characteristic form of knowledge of our era, or better he identifies as a phenomenon what was previously considered a concept (Moscovici & Duveen, 2000). As Moscovici himself explains: "…collective representations are an explanatory device, and refer to a general class of ideas and beliefs (science, myth, religion, etc.), for us they are phenomena which need to be described and to be explained. They are specific phenomena which are related to a particular mode of understanding and communicating – a mode which creates both reality and common sense. It is in order to stress such distinction that I use the term 'social' instead of 'collective'." (Moscovici, 1984, p. 33).

2.1.2. Common Sense and Communication

The historical and social background basis in which Moscovici developed his social representations concept coincides with dramatic world events linked to the Second World War and to the post-war unfolding manifestations and debates, such as the theme regarding science and technology, and their diffusion among the general strata of society. At that time, the flow of scientific erudition into the popular layers of humanity was seen as a second-rate cognizance. Moscovici not only noted instead that general knowledge is immerged in our everyday experience, customary language, and day-to-day routines and actions, but above all he restored and renovated the value of ordinary people's thinking and convictions. He addressed the question from an innovative and modern perspective seeing it as something rising from science, shaping itself in the transposition towards another lamina of society, and landing into that other dimension, thus becoming itself as well particle, and property, of reality (Moscovici & Marková, 1998; Moscovici, 2005).

Common sense knowledge is therefore an indispensable and essential asset for the social representations theory as such norm is thus a conceptualization of social knowledge. Everyone is a native of a given culture where little is left to the individual propensity while most occurs with ancestral transmissions of collective memory and establishments, daily activities and relations, as well as dialogue, discussions, interactions and communication. All these phenomena become modalities of group rituals, collective reasoning, acting, and relating, as they are impressed in the given community's common sense knowledge (Marková, 2003).

Thanks to common sense knowledge, it is then possible to instinctually understand the surrounding world, grasping the significance of objects, people, actions, ideas. This type of knowledge is unwavering and absolute as it is deeply rooted and fixed (Marková, 2003). Common sense is thus a social sense, as Moscovici himself affirms (Moscovici, 1998b/2000), or as was for instance reflected in the work on social images by Denise Jodelet and Stanley Milgram, in which, through the examination of urban space and rudimentary daily life constructs, they noted its determination and conditioning by representations. Moreover, they also proved that contrarily to general perception, society's common sense knowledge is far from not being real and consolidated as actually, conversely, it is a rich thinking territory (Jodelet & Milgram, 1977).

In addition, the social representations theory is distinguishable within psychological theories also for its incorporation of language and communication in the study it performs of the social psychological mechanisms in the common sense knowledge setting. Truly, it examines how the different communication means determine diversified representational outputs, as well as the manner in which language is employed to name and classify, thus securing the new in the well-known (Wagoner, 2016). The social representations theory indeed contains a binding binome between social representations and communication in relation to media and society (de Rosa, 2001) and -as perceived effectively by Moscovici- studying social representations that are found within common sense knowledge consequently entails the analysis and consideration of communication which is closely linked to the dynamic character of representations.

It is a given fact that between language and communication, and meaning and themes, there exists a link as there is a correspondence amongst the mental representation of events and the sense of the expressions which articulate them. Borrowing the words of Ivana Marková "…. thought and language are social in their origin and …. therefore they are – or should be- the main concern of social psychology…. Dialogicality is the capacity of the human mind to conceive, create and communicate about social realities in terms of the 'Alter' " (Marková, 2003, pp. xi and xiii). Besides, in the second edition of "La Psychanalyse, son image et son public" (Moscovici, 1976) it is stated that a representation is every time projected towards others as when it highlights something it is addressing and speaking, while when it illustrates something it is precisely communicating. Thus highlighting Moscovici's accentuation of the importance of language and communication in the creation, functioning and effectiveness of social representations (Jodelet, 2008).

2.1.3. Social Representations Production Processes: Anchoring and Objectifying

It is accepted that in modern society information and events proliferate and communication increases. These elements are multiplied and replicated, and they become more accelerated and outreaching. In such way an original dynamism is determined as information and experiences are transformed into a consensual space and are then re-elaborated becoming collectively effective. That is so, just like common sense knowledge derives from scientific knowledge and is made common (Farr & Moscovici, 1984).

Correspondingly, to achieve such grasp upon social reality and such function of orientation which can favor, organize and introduce into society the transmission and the diffusion of science (de Rosa, 2001), the goal and purpose of social representations is to make familiar something which is unfamiliar and unacquainted, and to get those new objects, ideas, or events to become comprehensible, intimate, and integrated. For such familiarization process to occur it is required that two cognitive communicative mechanisms of thought based on memory and past outcomes are activated, i.e. anchoring and objectifying (Moscovici 1961/2000).

Anchoring is the process that takes an alien element into the group's standing system of classes and puts it next to a category considered appropriate for it. Therefore, the concept or object in question captures the characteristics of an identified category and adapts to fall into it even if with approximation, so as to have congruity between the unfamiliar and the familiar. Anchoring thus means categorizing and then naming an element, as by doing so the element can be pictured, understood, and represented.

The advantage of establishing a category is that it offers what Moscovici calls a "prototype" for all aspects and elements that are assumed to fit in it. Classifying is selecting a model from the consolidated ones in a given culture and setting-up a connection with it. Thus, the prototype promotes the use of previously shaped references as classifying always implies a referral to a chosen model. However, to classify and to categorize, it is necessary to also attribute a name in order to define and place the anonymous within the specific cultural context. Otherwise, without a social identity, it could not be possible to understand, make visible, and convert into already available, and familiar, new concepts and objects.

Together, classifying and naming determine therefore the conferral of sense and identity to something which before did not have them, anchoring the element to an existing social representation. Precisely in such process, the current representations are to some extent adjusted, while the new elements being represented are altered, gaining a further renewed essence.

Another process also occurs to determine the presence of a social representation: *objectification*. It fills the unfamiliar with existence, transforms it into reality. The process occurs constantly and in relation to everything as to objectify means discover the recognizable emblematic characteristic of an indistinct something and create a meaningful image of it (Farr & Moscovici, 1984).

In such objectifying process, memory plays a central role for the layering of the common past with the new, as well as integrating the new within elements from previous reminiscences. Besides, the social representations theory not only links the

group and the individual, but also holds precisely the connection between the past and the present. Moscovici features how in many ways the past is often more tangible than the present within a social representation, for today's reality is perceived through the one of the past (Moscovici, 1984).

Especially in modern society, this activity is driven by culture which transfers into its common realm what firstly belonged to some specific field. Culture promotes the process through words and language to objectify and personify arbitrarily ideas, emotions, concepts, all of what we encounter. Thus, proceeding in this way, objectifying the labels that are devised, furnishes form to complex matter facilitating said labels to become themselves substance (Farr & Moscovici, 1984).

Hence, summing up the above, social representations are linked to processes of collective meaning creation and changes of the collective thinking. They produce social ties within groups and communities, and they develop through the method of anchorage which aims to induce strange and new ideas minimizing them to ordinary and common categories and images, placing them into a familiar environment. Anchoring is indeed a mechanism that illustrates how a social representation is formed, while the second instrument, objectification, pursues to transform an abstract element into something more solid, to transfer a matter that is in the mind to an item in the physical dimension. It is a process that reflects how a social representation is adjusted and accomplished with respect to the preexistent social context. Thus, manifestly the two mechanisms work jointly and alongside in order to then, on the overall, determine and create the social representation (Moscovici 1984).

2.1.4. Distinguishing Traits of Social Representations and Central Core Theory

As Robert Farr states, "Social representations, like scientific theories, religions or mythologies, are the representations of something or of someone. They have a specific content -specific implying, moreover, that it differs from one sphere or one society to another…, [*and*] these processes are significant only in so far as they reveal the birth of such content and its variations" (Farr, 1984, p. 75). Thus, the subject of a representation can be either views, data, persons, events, processes, or

beliefs tangibly developed into a system of thoughts in reference to a determined social object or concept. From this basis, the social representation is interpreted as an arrangement of cognitive elements that can be identified through four distinctive traits that determine the social representation itself (Rateau, Moliner, Guimelli & Abric, 2011).

The first feature within a social representation is *organization*, i.e. an authentic structure, not simply a grouping of cognitive factors, because the elements that form the social representation relate among themselves as do people connecting and communicating when shaping relations between the various aspects.

Secondly, even if a representation is normally partial and restricted within the group, a social representation is *shared* by all the members of a given community or cluster considering that its meaning reflects the homogeneity of that group as well as each member's position with respect to the given object or idea.

The third specificity is related to the creation method of a social representation which is *collectively constructed* through an all-encompassing process of communicating and relating. The interactions between members of the community, together with the influence of media, place the individuals of a certain group in the position of sharing and transforming the components that will make the social representation. Precisely this interactive methodology facilitates generalized accord, while contemporarily it awards social legitimacy with respect to a variety of views, ides, data and beliefs.

Lastly, the final quality of a social representation deals with its motive. The social representation must be *socially useful* for the need to comprehend the object or idea to which the social representation belongs to.

With such main features, social representations exist as patterns permitting to comprehend and give meaning to society as they provide the codes for understanding and justifying actions. In addition, social representations address and

record the ongoing exchanges related to an object, idea, or belief (Rateau P. et al., 2011).

Coming then to the intrinsic structure of a social representation, Moscovici discerns within the representation what he denominates the "figurative nucleus" which is composed by those words and elements that the given culture chooses to assign as deserving being represented, a collection of images that reflect an assemblage of ideas. Precisely those words that get entangled into the objectifying process consequently form the central essence of the representation, as not necessarily all words at random can reach that reifying function and role. In addition, it must be remarked that the words most often represented are also the most known and most entwined in the social fabric because society generally elects the terms depending on their accord with pre-existing and common models. Nevertheless, thereafter modifications occur just the same during the transfer of familiar elements into the new input when it turns into reality within the group, losing the abstract character, and achieving an innovative independent life and reality (Moscovici 1961/1984).

Thus, this structural construct of a representation established by Moscovici connected to objectification -the cognitive process noted earlier that determines when something abstract becomes concrete- is first based on the initial retention by individuals of just part of the information. Such screening results in the acquisition of only those elements that are homogeneous with the standards and beliefs of that culture. The second moment of the process is the detachment of the information from the initial environment and the subsequent possession of it. The last aspect will be that the selected information will be rearranged resulting finally in the core or "figurative nucleus" of the representation. Once the nucleus is in place, the social representation has its heart, its origin and it will provide to the individuals the codes with which to comprehend and arrange knowledge about an object or concept.

Jean-Claude Abric's central core theory (Abric, 1976/2001) indeed amplifies and details the analysis of the structure of the representation considering it as a concentric building of elements and words, involving also peripheral elements and concepts which arrange themselves about the main nucleus. Properly, the central

core is composed by a smaller number of elements which however possess a considerable agreement and favor within the entire community, and which are firm and steady within the group and in time. The peripheral elements on the contrary are multiple, irregularly widespread within the community, and with time they modify more fluidly.

According to the figurative nucleus paradigm, said key center fulfills three important functions:
-*meaning function* - the core originates and adjusts the sense of the various elements involved in the representation and essentially gives the full comprehensive significance;

-*organizational function* - conjunctions among the various peripheral elements depend necessarily from the center focus that provides the meaning as it tunes accordingly the various elements and modulates the sense of the peripheral aspects of the representation. Thus, the central hub of the representation establishes the essence of the different links and connections binding together those elements that make-up the representation;

-*stabilization function* - in the representation the main core is the most embedded and firm part of the representation. Such third function is the outcome of the previous ones joined to the homogeneous and agreeing features of central elements.

Thereupon it can be stated that central elements and ideas are the most universally shared and partaken, thus setting the structure of the representation and determining its overall signification. The occurrence of some change in the central core essence causes the subsequent modification of the sense of the whole representation. As changes in social representations can dictate instability and threats within the groups' unity and harmony, the central core theory adopts the presupposition that changes in the central traits of the representation find a vigorous and deep opposition.

Moreover, the heart of the representation is what keeps a symbolic relation and a connection to the representation's object or idea. Therefore, every reference to such object or idea, direct or indirect, is also referred to the representation's center. Contrariwise, every reference to the core of the representation is also attached to the object or idea at the basis of the whole system.

Coming to the peripheral aspects, these are dominated by two characteristics:
- they involve *individualized* factors, actions, ideas and beliefs that even if linked to the core elements nevertheless contemplate the individual's sphere; and
- they are influenceable and *conditional* to other matters.

Nonetheless, the periphery's function and role are to *safeguard the core*, while contemporarily permitting that changes or new information and ideas are in any case included and integrated without requiring a transformation of the nucleus.

The fluidity of a social representation and the consequent modification in the periphery or nucleus begin in the community where precisely the changes take place. Such novelties and modifications drive the individuals to act differently adapting to novel situations and thoughts. A new behavior in the group can affect its social representations in two possible manners: the innovation does not reflect on the central core and it can smoothly be handled by the peripheral structure thus determining only lesser changes in the external system of the representation; indeed the innovation actually does affect the central part of the representation and in this case deep transformation inevitably occurs on the overall representation as always the central core system is directly involved in the process of altering or changing a social representation (Moliner & Abric, 2016)

Clearly, core and periphery are correlated and complementary explaining the social representations' firmness and flexibility, their common traits next to the individual features. "Therefore, central core theory appears as a particularly useful tool for the study of the dynamics of social representations" (Moliner & Abric, 2016, p. 89) and Moscovici's figurative nucleus is confirmed as the most vibrant portion of a social representation.

2.2. Solidarity Sentiment of Humanity and Universal Values

The communities and societies where the social representations develop and change, if looked at from the perspective of mankind's history, show a continuous fluctuation throughout the entire regions of the globe -and within a culture or a number of cultures- of periods of time dominated by aggressions and conflicts with the consequent defense on the opposite side, alternated to more peaceful and serene epochs. Such instability is intrinsic to human nature and is expressed by populations' and individuals' actions and decisions.

The attempt to live and inhabit satisfactorily the planet, in a varied world in which there is propensity towards self-determination and personal fulfillment, is a human need for growth and progress. Such necessity permits to master and prevail over problems and burdens of life, grasping from experiences and occurrences, moving in the direction of development and accomplishment (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

In particular, choices that humanity takes within society determine that a civilization either thrives and advances, or otherwise declines and perishes. In modern times even more so, as there is an increased risk of surrendering and of destruction due to new environmental hazards, public health vulnerabilities, increasing mis-information tendencies, global economic and financial instability, as well as -last but not least- the advancement of military technical strategies and of the incredible weapon innovations available nowadays which constitute a dangerous threat to human existence. It becomes therefore all the more significant that everyone, and every community, assumes the responsibility to place human beings at the center, protecting the human race and avoiding it to succumb to barbarism. The key being to instead move towards the direction of expressions and emotions of benignity which clearly are the necessary element for the survival and advent of civilization and society (Todorov, 2010).

Fortunately, there are positive indicators of a solidarity nature underlying humankind which in one of its highest expressions produced the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights[21] in 1948, following devastating and dramatic widespread world events such as the conflicts and suffering of World War II, which more than ever placed countries in front of a momentous choice between solidarity or enmity to guide everyone for the construction or elimination of society.

At that time and at that crossroad, fortuitously people decided to tread the path of maturity and enlightenment widely acknowledging such universal and absolute values expressed in that noteworthy document. Indeed, the first article of the UDHR states "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" thenceforth recognizing the centrality of respect and equality of all persons who should live together on the foundations of absolute and indisputable rights and fundamental freedoms for a world of justice and peace.

However, the events of recent years, including how the current migration phenomenon is being looked at and addressed, raise concern about the direction humans are taking and where they are projecting themselves and their society. As well expressed by Tzvetan Todorov "In today's and tomorrow's world, encounters between people and communities belonging to different cultures are destined to become more and more frequent; the participants alone can prevent them turning into conflicts…. This is why it is necessary to do something to avoid it" (Todorov, 2010, p. 11) "For the separation and enclosure of cultures or communities is closer to the pole of barbarity, while mutual recognition between them is a step towards civilization… There can be no hesitation about the choice we need to take. The time has come for each person to assume his or her responsibilities: we must protect our fragile planet and its inhabitants (however imperfect), human beings" (Todorov, 2010, p. 199).

[21] Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), United Nations General Assembly Resolution 217 A, Paris, 10 December 1948

CHAPTER III
Research Aims and Hypotheses

3.1. Neutral / Positive Migration Social Representations and Reference Meta-Theoretical Analysis

Migration and human displacement, with all the varieties of distinctive features and viewpoints which characterize them, have attracted and intrigued many researchers from numerous fields to study and reason about such phenomena observing them from diverse angles. Indeed, in the sphere of social psychology too there are a great number of investigations inspired by these current movements of humanity. A considerable amount of said works involves the social representations theory, its paradigms, patterns and understandings using a range of data gathering tools and analysis methods: either quantitative or qualitative, or both.

Something that can be noticed quite distinctly observing such social representations investigations on migration is the wider array of research focusing on all those aspects mostly involving the tragedy and criticalities of the migration phenomenon, while there are fewer studies regarding more neutral or positive elements involved in this reality of mass movements and fluidity occurring in our days.

Opportunely, because of the large multiplicity of scientific observations addressing the subject of migration even when taking into consideration more specific study lines of the theme, such as the more favorable and encouraging approaches with respect to human flows and mobility, a useful task has been to also run a meta-theoretical analysis so as to focus further on a selected number of the more inclusive, or at least steadier, research documents produced on the subject and involving the social representations theory.

Indeed, the meta-theoretical analysis has been a useful starting point of acquisition and assimilation of the specific literature, as well as it has allowed to have a clearer picture and to organize multiple findings highlighting interesting conclusions in a systematic manner. The meta-theoretical analytical method applied is the one created by Annamaria Silvana de Rosa since the 1990s for the SoReCom “A.S. de

Rosa" @ library, a research means and multi-purpose web platform for documentation, research and networking involving the use of a specially designed grid which effectively extrapolates in a given document, or set of documents, the elements the social representations theory addresses, the constructs of the theory referred to, the research methods, and the paradigmatic contributions to the theory, all in relation to the chosen subject of investigation (de Rosa, 1994/2020).

What emerges vividly from the examined literature, referred mostly to empirical studies elaborated within our selected subject (migration) and sub-topic (neutral / positive migration social representations), is the lively ongoing discussion on social change occurring in the multicultural reality of today's world involving scopes of investigation dedicated to concerns such as solidarity, integration, identity, collective memory, and conflict management. For instance, for this study, among the most fitting references it is important to recall the work focusing on the dynamics of solidarity as expressions and temporary developments of intergroup understanding which are most relevant for policy making (Tsirogianni & Andreouli, 2011), or the attention directed - in different socio-cultural environments - to the local meanings of trust interpreted as a social construction of social representations built following interpersonal and collective creation of networks of meaning (Pirttilä-Backman, Menar, Verm & Kasse, 2017).

Furthermore, worthy of note as of great guidance and orientation are in particular the analyses on the feelings of belonging in given bodies that can be different when observed in the diverse cultural groups of the locals and of the immigrants, and their intra-cultural interactions (Mannarini & Rochira, 2014), as well as - within that same broader research - the component concentrating on the relation between citizen participation and sense of community theorization in the framework context of studying social identities of European citizens (Rochira, De Simone, Mannarini, Salvatore, 2019), or the inclusion-exclusion investigations based on perceptions of the incoming group's consciousness of its alien national origin, together with the conditioning element of working-class sector belonging (Torres G. & Garcés H., 2013).

Most inspiring have in addition been: the identity construction studies exploring the self-other relations in reference to the positioning theory validated by research on naturalization and citizenship development (Andreouli, 2010), together with the ethnic and cultural representations of citizenship perceptions from different social categories acting from their exclusive or inclusive outlooks (Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2017), and similarly the emphasis on adaptation, selectivity, and assimilation of alternated identities intrinsic in commuter foreign laborers displacing themselves from place of origin to work site, displacement which conditions their social representations and categorizations of feelings of appropriateness (García Lirios, Carreón Guillén, Hernández Valdés, Aguilar Fuentes & Rosas Ferrusca, 2015).

Of note is also the research on reconciliation based on intra-national and inter-group cooperation and collective memory for peace building among communities (Obradovic & Howarth, 2016), and, always regarding collective memory and the past, the case of solidified social representations which in certain contexts become barriers to the possibility of changing, but that nevertheless need to be demolished in order to allow common group recollection to contribute in determining present-day socio-cultural development of new collective identities (Nicholson, 2017).

Likewise, worth mentioning are the insights underlined in a work involving respondents alien to historical conditioning regarding the Turk-EU relations, work in which social representations of the European idea are developed on ideological foundations more than on geographical grounds (Sudas & Goregenli, 2013). Just as interesting, are the common sense knowledge classifications which move away from strict identity constructs when addressing the issue of Western Muslims (Younis & Hassan, 2018).

In addition to the authors recalled above and their aforesaid investigations which have also been object of meta-theoretical analysis with the above mentioned methodology, other significant researches which have constituted a useful basis for this study are on the one hand the work expressing an emphasis on identity negotiation in relation to modern types of civic solidarity and its centrality for the

community's welfare (Sammut, 2011), and on the other hand with the reflections on the essence of plural societies and how individuals and groups within them liaise interculturally, with the consequent analysis of the social solidarity in the outputs of such cross-cultural and multicultural relations (Barry, 2007/2011).

Markedly denotative is also the exploratory study on what determines migration within a social reality, study which resulted in the determination that permanent migration is a choice involving economic conditions contemporarily with subjective representations that are expression of personal values and feelings (Negura, 2017). Equally significant is the exploration in local native communities of migrant perceptions that resulted quite concordant throughout the groups involved but with still a portion of more individual and particular differences among the representations (Rochira, Fasanelli & Liguori, 2015).

Meaningful too for this research is the pursuit to comprehend how the social categories that are consistent with stable fundamentals or essences of common sense knowledge determine the behavioral tendencies of a group, nonetheless leaving space for the social representations to develop towards a more equitable society (Augoustinos, Hanson-Easey & Due, 2016). Just as important is the focus on the worldwide increasing cultural diversity challenges to the identity of countries, an identity that needs to be reconstructed to accommodate this growing multiplicity (Andreouli & Chryssochoou, 2016).

3.2. Research General Aim and Principles

Endorsed and encouraged by the dynamic and vivacious current academic debate and inputs recalled above, which concern the enriching and beneficial - or at least revitalizing - aspects of migration within communities, solid foundations are established and defined for this research to unfold.

In consideration that in our era migration is indeed an escalating universal reality involving more and more people and communities, and taking notice that in history human mobility has had beneficial and productive effects on societies when the newcomers have been acknowledged and provided with unprejudiced opportunities

to deliver and contribute to the receiving societies, this investigation intends to look at the migration phenomenon from the perspective of the human fundamental rights and values of freedom, of equality, of due concern and respect of all human beings, regardless of gender, race, religion, and status for the final common good and for society's progress.

Indeed, the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity states in article 2: "In our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life." and in article 3: "Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence[22]".

Therefore, this study places the human being at the center, elevating the image of mankind above unfavorable interpretations of cultural diversity by releasing irrelevant furnishings and mechanisms constructed and permeated with ideologies and politics. In particular, when specifically considering the migration concept, it seems useful to dismiss many distortions, just as it is important that misinterpretations of effects and impacts of peoples' displacement - which feed inaccurate perceptions and fears leading to always more recurrent conflicts and tensions - should be swept away for the positive involvement and appreciation of all diversity and all cultures, as well as for the advancement and prosperity of the human race (Todorov, 2010).

[22] Universal Declaration on Cultural diversity, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), General Conference thirty-first session, Resolution adopted on 2 November 2001

The general purpose of this work is thereby to combine the social representations theory, so entrenched in mankind's society, with the higher and more powerful vision of humanity seen from the perspective of the "flourishing of feelings of benevolence necessary to the advent of civilization" (Todorov, 2010, p 25) so as to offer insights and cognizance regarding the existing valuable and fruitful aspects in the interactions of persons and groups from diverse backgrounds, which is fundamental for the peaceful encounter of different cultures and their successful and harmonious coexistence for humankind's development and growth.

The social representations theory indeed can facilitate the acquisition of new and modern mediation tools useful for the achievement of such objective since it enables and smooths comprehension of the various cultures involved in migration, thus easing the understanding of the communication between them. Quoting Serge Moscovici: "… the processes of revolution, of innovation, of the irreducibility of conflict are an inherent part of the evolution of human groups" (Moscovici, 2000, p. 117), however "The theory of social representations … takes as its point of departure the diversity of individuals, attitudes and phenomena, in all their strangeness and unpredictability. Its aim is to discover how individuals and groups can construct a stable, predictable world out of such diversity" (Moscovici, 2000, p. 55).

Moreover, Serge Moscovici and Tzvetan Todorov, both sharing themselves personal stories of migration and of rewarding experiences and renewed lives built in foreign countries, are a perfect and pertinent testimony of the idea at the root of this study, i.e. the enriching outcome of the encounter of different peoples and the possibility of overcoming negative connotations when focusing on the centrality of the human being and of humanity: "I am grateful to them for treating me like a human being, without distinguishing me from other people,…." (Moscovici, 1997, p. 553, our translation from his "Chronique des années égarées") and "... I sometimes feel that I am the inhabitant of a single city, or even a district; on other occasions, however, I am the inhabitant of the entire continent… or even of the world!" (Todorov, 2010, p. 212).

3.3. Specific Research Objectives and Hypothesis

Having asserted that the world is experiencing epochal global human displacement, and that individuals' and communities' encounters, confrontations, and new relations are here to stay, there is the opportunity to head towards constructive and enriching outcomes of such events for the benefit of the entire human race.

Therefore, this research wishes to reveal, and has as *objectives*:

I) to extrapolate the human sentiments, experiences, and background of migrants and receiving communities in relation to the migration phenomenon;

II) to identify in both groups the solidarity actions which are instrumental for the achievement of peaceful and constructive coexistence acquiring reconciliation and collaboration elements and data;

III) to look into mirror social representations developed following the encounter between the two identified groups;

IV) to detect the structure of the social representations produced by migrants and locals comparing them and highlighting their common characteristics fundamental for harmonious concordance and fraternization.

In addition, the specific *hypotheses* this work wishes to analyze and verify are:

1) directly lived experiences of the migrants and indirect captured and sedimented knowledge on migration by the receiving community are a common and parallel fundamental point of departure for a society to better comprehend and accept the migration concept;

2) solidarity actions and feelings developed on occasion of immediate, open, and continued reciprocal personal relations between the members of the two groups determine similar new positive social representations;

3) the central nucleus of the social representations of both migrants and locals with respect to their encounter as consequence of migration is homogeneous and alike;

4) highlighting and promoting the enriching exchanges and the common positive representations developed in the encounter of migrants with receiving community members favors peaceful coexistence and nonviolent human association.

CHAPTER IV
Research Methodology

4.1. Context of the Research

The selected terrain for this research has been Germany. Indeed, especially in the last seventy years it has been a country of immigration, besides the fact that influxes and arrivals of new peoples have been throughout its history a central component of its population development. Just to mention a few examples: the French Huguenots escaping religious persecution in the 17th century; laborers arriving from Southern and Eastern Europe during the industrialization of the 19th century; many that have travelled to Germany in relation to the political crisis in Turkey and Iran in the 1980s; asylum-seekers from Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War; until the increased trend of immigration since 2014 because of the Iraq and Syria wars determining large waves of migrants incoming into the country[23].

Germany, with its stratified social fibre, its extensive experience in receiving foreigners from a variety of dissimilar cultures travelling from different parts of the world, its capability to establish a satisfactory multicultural environment, and the heterogeneous and diverse ongoing interactions within its boundaries, has encouraged and motivated the Researcher to select precisely such context as suitable setting where to conduct this study.

4.1.1. Research Location

In particular, the investigation has included: (i) Viersen – the capital of the district of Viersen in North Rhine-Westphalia – a Fair-Trade town with a total population of 76,380 and a population density of 840 persons/km (data of 2017), that hosts a migration center that accommodates at its maximum capacity about 100 refugees or migrants[24]; (ii) Berlin, the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany, with a population of 3.8 million and a population density of 117 persons/ha (data of 2018), the largest and most international city in the country that maintains partnerships with

[23] Malteser Migration Report 2017, *Facts Instead of Sentiment*, Foundation Malteser Migration Report

[24] Viersen Municipality, *www.viersen.de*

17 cities from all over the world[25]; (iii) the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, where the great majority of the data-gathering for this exploration was carried out and accomplished due to the fact that it is part of the country among the least conventional and accustomed to immigration and foreigners, thus a more appropriate social realm for developing this analysis.

The State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern lies to the north-east of the Federal Republic of Germany and borders with Poland in the east, with Brandenburg in the south and with Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein in the west. In the north, the Baltic Sea forms a natural border along a length of almost 400 km. Schwerin is the state capital, and therefore the seat of government, administration and of the state parliament, while the largest city is Rostock with approximately 205,000 people. The total population of the State is 1.6 million inhabitants with a population density of 69 persons/km (data of 2015) in an overall area of 23,213 km. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is divided into 12 administrative and 6 municipal districts. Especially small and medium sized cities, as well as a large number of village settlements characterize the State.

The food industry is one of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's most important industrial sectors, while the maritime industry is another significant economic segment and it is subdivided into ship and boat building, maritime suppliers as well as marine and offshore technology. Tourism is also one of the main profitable sectors of its economy thanks to its beaches and lakes, islands, national parks, and the Baltic Sea. Moreover, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has natural geographical advantages when it comes to energies of the future: a strong wind from the Baltic, the most hours of sunlight in Germany, and free space for innovation. With almost 68 % of electricity coming from wind, bio, water, and sun energy, it is number one in Germany for renewable energies. In addition, the IT sector is of growing importance in this part of the country.

[25] Berlin Official Website, *https://www.berlin.de/en/*

Extremely important in this State, is education and learning. Two of the oldest universities in Germany and Europe, the university of Rostock and of Greifswald, still among the most honored universities in Northern Europe, are located in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern together with five modern universities of applied sciences. In addition, as authorized course providers of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, all adult education centers in the State make a significant contribution to the linguistic and cultural integration of foreigners and repatriates in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Having the status of a privileged partner of the naturalization authorities of the State, they assess the German language skills of naturalization candidates in numerous exams and conduct naturalization tests[26].

Significant for the research contextualization is also the fact that in 2018 Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's quota of asylum seekers to accommodate was 1.98 % of the migrants in Germany, according to the "*Königsteiner Schlüssel*" system that establishes the migrant distribution proportions being applied throughout the 16 German Federal States and in compliance with which the reception capacities are calculated taking into account the tax revenue (accounting for 2/3 of the quota) and the number of inhabitants (1/3) of each Federal State[27].

Additionally, to understand further the local situation and background regarding said number of migrants to welcome in the State, it is important to recall that migration in this part of Germany has been marked with a sad and serious incident that still remains today as an acute and intense wound in the local community: in 1992 a mob of local residents and neo-Nazis in Rostock shocked the world by attacking and setting fire to an apartment building that housed asylum-seekers and Vietnamese immigrants who were working legally in the city. The event, a potent symbol of prejudice, has haunted the country ever since and is one of the darkest episodes in the history of postwar Germany. Citizens of Rostock today are tired of

[26] Mecklenburg-Vorpommern State, *https://en.mecklenburg-vorpommern.de/homepage/*; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern State Government, *https://www.government-mv.de/Mecklenburg%E2%80%93Vorpommern/*; and Statistical Office of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, *https://www.laiv-mv.de/Statistik/*

[27] AIDA - Asylum Information Database, *https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/reception-conditions/access-and-forms-reception-conditions/freedom-movement*

the media attention, but many to some extent still live in fear of that extremist violence.

The incident took place in the Lichtenhagen area, at the so-called “Sunflower House”, an 11-storey apartment block housing the Central Reception Center for asylum-seekers. Most of the people staying there were Sinti and Roma from Romania, and Vietnamese workers who had come to eastern Germany on temporary work assignments when it was still a fellow communist state.

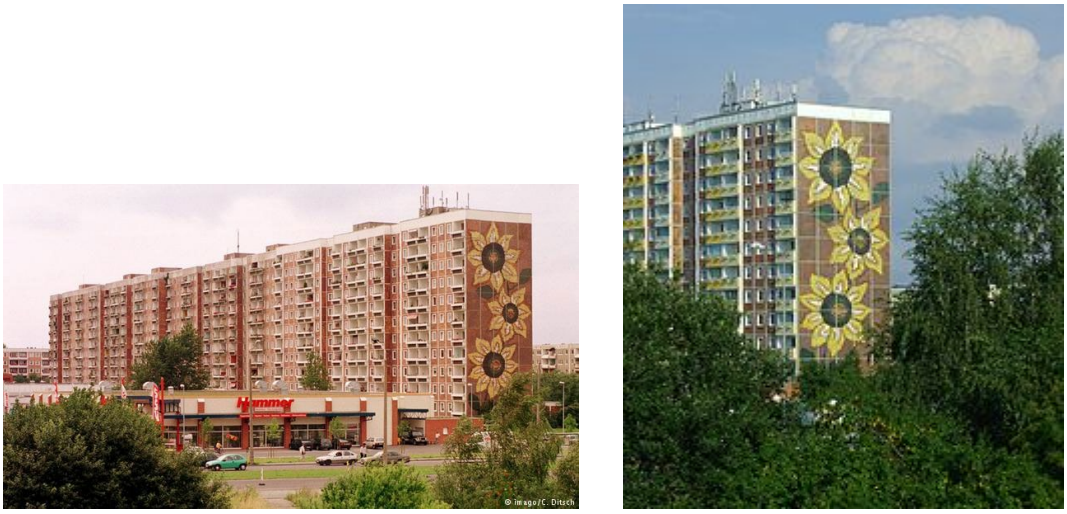


Figure 1 - “Sunflower House” apartment block housing the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern asylum-seekers’ Central Reception Center

On August 22, 1992 the building was attacked by a mob who threw stones and Molotov cocktails at the high-rise. According to eyewitnesses the crowd of up to 3,000 people was made up of both curious onlookers and rioters, including many people from Rostock. For five days the area was gripped by a tragic atmosphere. Images of enraged youths, burning buildings, and of retreating police officers circled the globe. It was the most violent xenophobic riot in the recent German chronicles and fortunately there was no loss of lives.

Today, the general impression is that the situation had actually been unbearable due to the hard life conditions worsened by a very hot summer. In addition, politicians

did not handle too well the matter allowing violence to explode. Many locals now would prefer to forget about the episode, but the city, the country, and civil society institutions want to continue debating the matter. Indeed, especially on anniversaries there are recollections of this episode: in Rostock events against racism and intolerance are held and teachers work to sensitize their students as regards such issues expressing a significant concern with respect to said articulate and unsettling intergroup actions and reactions[28].

4.1.2. Research Timeframe, Venues, and Logistics

The data collection for this study was carried out during five missions of more or less one week each, within a timeframe of several months from December 2018 to August 2019.

The venues where the necessary information and data were acquired have been: various types of reception centers for migrants and refugees (long and medium term accommodation centers), migrants' homes, as well as university facilities, associations' and NGOs' premises and offices.

For the contacts with the Respondents, and throughout the data gathering process, the Researcher received the valuable support of Malteser Werke, a locally well-known charity organization founded in 1989 and responsible of managing facilities for refugees and migrants on behalf of the German Federal States and Municipalities. Furthermore, this social aid organization, in addition to providing accommodation to asylum-seekers, assists them with their integration into German society. Malteser Werke is also involved in supporting youth, family cohesion and addiction treatments. Moreover, it is engaged in social work and runs high schools, and educational and training centers.

In 2018 it managed 51 housing facilities across the country with 1,312 employees and approximately 30,000 refugees and migrants assisted. Malteser Werke's accommodation sites provide support to people in every-day-issues, in

[28] Spiegel Online, *http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/rostock-residents-dread-20th-anniversary-of-neo-nazi-racist-riot-a-851479.html*

administrative matters, with healthcare provision, with the enrollment in institutions like nurseries, schools, universities, language and integration classes, as well as housing and job searches.

In the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, it takes care of migrants since the early 1990s on behalf of the State Government. The accommodations that it runs are located all over the State's territory as Malteser Werke manages there 19 long and medium term welcome centers and is therefore the largest and main organization in this field in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern[29].

For this research work, Malteser Werke played an essential role enabling the Researcher to reach out to migrants and local community members interested and available to take part in this study making it possible to conduct the interviews and interact with an overall relevant number of migrants and local community Respondents. Malteser Werke's contribution was indeed fundamental for the data gathering phase of this investigation.

4.2. Research Participants

In particular, the Malteser Werke's Office in the Federal State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern assisted in setting-up all the visits to their various locations. The Director of the Regional Office and the Managers of each welcome facility introduced in advance the research project to migrants and local communities and to all those individuals that could be interested in getting involved in this study activity on an absolutely confidential and volunteer basis. They then helped in planning the logistics for the Researcher to reach the various identified sites and organized the necessary schedules at each location.

Even if at the beginning, when the Researcher travelled for the first times to the various selected venues, there was some perplexity - especially among the migrants who feared some other bureaucratic enquiry regarding their asylum status - once the news about this study started to spread around and people began telling others what

[29] Malteser Werke website, *https://www.malteser-werke.de/*

it was really about, there was indeed in both identified groups - migrants and locals - a remarkable expression of curiosity and interest towards a good cause and project perceived as positive and constructive. Many were thus happy to contribute providing their personal testimonies, experiences, emotional stories and acquired knowledge on the subject.

As to the migrant group, the initial idea had been that of targeting in particular young single males as the most difficult group integrating in the new community. However, others in the migrant group, such as women and married older men, declared to be interested in contributing to the research. Thus, it was decided to widen the sample group to these additional categories of migrants as their contribution turned out to be valuable for the final outcomes of the research. This choice indeed provided positive results as the feedback from the women and the men travelling with their wives and families resulted in interesting data which widened the perspective of the investigation focus providing a more realistic picture of the given context.

Apart from just very few last-minute defections, it was possible to successfully relate with 76 adult Respondents aged from 19 to over 60: 43 migrants (11 women, 32 men) and 33 local community members working or living adjacent to various migrant welcome centers (15 women, 18 men).

The reach-out of this research was truly international as it involved people from 32 different countries spread throughout 4 continents: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Austria, Benin, Canada, Costa Rica, Egypt, Eritrea, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Lithuania, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Syria, Togo, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Figure 2 – Nationalities involved in this research

Almost all of the interviews with the migrants were run personally by the Researcher in English, French, Spanish or Italian. For the German nationals, the Researcher submitted the research tools and performed directly the interviews in English.

The assistance of a German–English translator was necessary on the overall only for 16 Respondents, mostly from the local community who spoke just German and a few migrants who could express themselves in either German or in their native tongues such as Turkish and Russian. There was one case among those needing translation for whom it was necessary to have linguistic support from Pashtu and Kurdish.

It is important to note that the Translator provided by Malteser Werke was herself a former migrant fully integrated into the local community and therefore a precious support to the Researcher for the direct knowledge of the theme being investigated.

All sessions with the various Respondents involved approximately the same amount of time to accomplish all the tasks requested in administering the different tools. For the local community, normally the time necessary was for each person 1.15 h., while for the migrants the average time was of 1.45 h., as they had one additional tool related to their journey. Interviews that required the Translator took about 30/40 additional minutes with respect to the ones performed without the aid of the linguistic support.

4.3. Research Instruments

For this empirical research project fully performed in the field, four quantitative and qualitative instruments were chosen for the data gathering and acquisition of information. These tools were expressly adapted and modulated to the specificities of the investigation context and participants. Thus, the instruments submitted in parallel to the Respondents of both groups - migrants and local community members - were:

- the *associative network technique* (de Rosa, 1996/2019). “This instrument, …. is aimed at investigating some of the latent and evaluative components of Social Representations” (de Rosa, 1996, p. 390) and it focuses on detecting the contents and structure of the social representational field as well as its related polarity and neutrality indexes.

In this study the selected stimulus words for the construction of the network were directed towards identity and its correlated feelings of belonging as they took into consideration: 1) the personal identity, 2) the roots from the country of origin, 3) the new environment, and 4) the distinctive positioning within the wider world (see Appendix A);

- the *semi-structured contextual socio-demographic interview* was developed around certain fundamental themes of interest for the research such as: interpersonal relations with relatives, friends, acquaintances (direct and virtual interactions), memories, new habitat and new life, personal perceptions, as well as future expectations and anticipations (see Appendix B);

- the *World Euro Sky Compass technique* (de Rosa, 2007/2017), which derived from the *EuroSkyCompass* relational tool (de Rosa, 2007), is a projective instrument used to acquire geographical and geopolitical parameters in terms of 1) value systems (best and most favourably perceived countries / worst and most displeasing sites) and 2) orientation within spatial reality; both with respect to direct personal experience or believed assumptions regarding humankind and the world with its peaceful and its conflict areas (see Annex C);

- the *figurative technique integrated with storytelling* (de Rosa, 2004/2017) is an instrument which has as objective to record relevant experiential elements, symbols, emotions and expectations through the interpretation of the drawings produced by the Respondents in order to look into "The impact of evoked and selected images and social sharing of emotions on the construction of social memory" (de Rosa, 2004, p. 19).
For the migrants, the focus of the drawing was on their journey from their home country to the new site where they have settled (intermediate or final destination country) with also the option of the imagined return to the country of origin. They also had the opportunity of illustrating future prospective scenarios. The locals, on the other side, addressed through a figurative tool only the projections of possible future environments. Both groups were thus asked to illustrate in a life timeline their envisaged five-years ahead forecast of their surroundings and of the world (see Annex D).

4.3.1. Implementation of the Research Instruments

The wide variety of countries involved in this research project is certainly an indicator of strength, an added value for the final goal of this work. However, such

cultural diversity fully expresses the complexity of the implementation phase of the research instruments. For example, there were practical limitations to be overcome for some from the migrant group, such as the difficulty holding pens or colors, as several had not received any regular schooling or had not written or drawn for many years, because of wars, poor backgrounds that did not allow regular schooling, or continued displacement and uncertainty. Adaptability and creativity on the part of the Researcher was therefore required to appropriately present each tool and explain its functioning to every Respondent in order to effectively run the data gathering and gain useful findings.

Practically all interviewed Respondents reacted with interest and certain curiosity to the *associative network technique*, which was the first tool proposed in each data gathering session. Indeed, following the presentation of the research project and signature of the informed consent, it was a highly effective "ice breaker" element as it helped create a more relaxed atmosphere and facilitated getting in connection with each person. Nearly all the Respondents focused attentively on the stimulus words and expressed their emotions and impressions carefully. Only in very rare cases there was a sort of initial pull-back with respect to this instrument, as the Respondents declared finding it hard to accomplish a task involving thinking deeply about themselves, their feelings, and perceptions, something many among them stated they were not used doing.

Overall, the general results for this instrument were undeniably successful. For each stimulus every Respondent thought as many words as possible and numbered them in the order of their evocation. The following task was to draw connections among the various words, including the stimulus, and after that to mark each word with a "plus", a 'minus", or a "zero" to indicate if it had a positive, negative or neutral significance. Last, the words had to be classified using the letters of the alphabet according to the level of importance they had for the Respondent.

The *semi-structured contextual socio-demographic interview* offered the opportunity to obtain basic statistical information regarding the Respondent (age, level of education, country of origin, family status, etc.) and, during the open

conversation, many emotionally insightful narratives and memories related to the research topic of migration and encounter of different cultures emerged.

The basic frame questionnaire was a useful starting point of communication from which each Respondent, within the wider identified subjects, directed the dialogue with the Researcher towards the issues and themes personally considered more significant to address or which he/she felt more comfortable discussing about. The practical result of this trend was the production of effective multifaceted outcomes which fell within macro themes related to the wider topic of this work. For instance, some of the main issues discussed with the Respondents were: identity, prejudice, integration, multiculturalism, religion, and humanity. In fact, those features were interestingly best expressed through the stories and anecdotes occurred to each of them as they provided a rich reservoir of very special and unique experiences which turned out to be useful in anchoring many aspects described and reported.

Almost all Respondents - especially those from the migrant group - when presented with the world map of the *World Euro Sky Compass technique,* gave a first worried feedback, reasonably due to the fact that there was certainly a somewhat widespread lack of knowledge of geography. On the one hand, the weak familiarity with cartography rendered challenging the submission of this research instrument perceived as somewhat intimidating. On the other hand, it allowed to collect interesting spontaneous and unfiltered impressions and convictions. Each Respondent indicated three positive countries and three negative ones, also giving an order of preference or of dislike and, when possible, providing explanations regarding the reasons for such choices and classifications.

Finally, the *figurative technique integrated with storytelling* was certainly the most complex tool to implement with the identified sample groups that were made up of adults who in general reacted with surprise and reluctance to the proposal of drawing pictures. Indeed, at least on a first impact, a remarkably high number of Respondents was hesitant to perform the task requested, which for many, especially from the migrant group, also implied the resurgence of strong and painful memories and

experiences. Fortunately, most accepted to proceed and the results have been rewarding for the remarkable data produced.

In particular, for the migrants the main part of the drawing, which allowed to also include written words, was the recollection of the journey and the imagined return. They were also asked to reproduce all the emblematic elements representing the events as well as their experiences, feelings and hopes during such travels. The Respondent was then required to proceed so that every picture on the paper was numbered following the order of recollection, while the letters of the alphabet were used to identify the degree of importance. Along with the drawing exercise, the Respondent would tell his/her story giving meaning to the images produced.

Both groups were finally asked to illustrate with an iconographic image the vision they had of their lives and community in the near future. They all were requested to explain and give sense to the pictures sketched on the sheet of paper as they went along with the drawing work thus providing the keys to the interpretation of the elements reproduced.

4.4. Considerations on Research Methodologies

Social representations are a structure, a frame, that enables to adapt and live within a given society notwithstanding the diversity of individuals, approaches and events. They involve all their peculiarities and unpredictability. (Moscovici, 2000). Indeed, "…. contemporary societies are characterized by a diversity of representations about the same issue or object. The transformational mechanism captures the ways in which the outcomes of micro-level processes impinge on the macro – the social – context" (Abreu Lopes & Gaskell, 2016, p. 41).

Therefore, as reality is multidimensional, it seems inevitable and necessary to adopt a multimethod study approach when looking into society and when analysing social representations to compare the various elements (Bauer and Gaskell, 1999). Furthermore, the fact that representations can sometimes also be unconscious should similarly be taken into consideration, as well as the case when the respondents involved in empirical researches do not always feel fully comfortable in openly

expressing themselves despite the skills of the investigator in obtaining a complete picture. Thus, because of the complexity of the social representations phenomenon, having the possibility of using multiple and diverse ways of gathering data and information, together with observation of the participants to the study on the part of the researcher, is of great significance for the study undertaken (Flick U., Foster J. & Caillaud S., 2016).

"Triangulation of different levels is central; …. to determine core and peripheral elements through the comparison of levels and data, and to determine the function of representations in different contexts" (Bauer, 2016, p. 57). As objective reality cannot be grappled and it can be comprehended only through its social representations, the use of multiple methods – or triangulation – should be the effort to the compendious understanding of the matter being studied. Consequently, triangulation is not an investigation instrument but an opportunity of validation (Denzin, 1978/2012) which combines several stances in a systemic way producing correlated outcomes (Flick, 1992) allowing to have a fuller view and comprehension of what is being investigated.

In addition, triangulation can involve both theory and methodology, while the methodological triangulation can involve quantitative as well as qualitative techniques. In recent years there have been lively discussions on mixed methodology which seem to focus on the combination of precisely quantitative and qualitative methods. Less attention has for instance been directed towards a mixture of different qualitative approaches, or towards the theories at the basis and behind every research. Such concept of triangulation, or mixed method, in combining quantitative and qualitative aspects could be blended further with a more articulate approach that would reflect the complexity of the phenomenon (Flick U., Foster J. & Caillaud S., 2016).

4.4.1. The Modelling Approach

One of the possible mixed method approaches available for empirical research which emerges as offering not only the combination of quantitative and qualitative

methods, but also of a somewhat broader and more expanded attention to wider necessary investigation elements, is the *modelling approach* (de Rosa, 2012/2014).

This articulated methodology, which reflects a comprehensive building plan for a study being developed, is based on the involvement of differentiated multi-theoretical ideas and diversified techniques interconnected and amalgamated in a movable and lively manner among themselves, avoiding the more common cumulative models that add up a number of methods or that are used in subsequent studies, often involving even different respondents, following a linear overlaying scheme (de Rosa 2014). "In the modelling approach it is fundamental to not restrict the focus of the investigation to its 'objects'. Therefore it is crucial to operationalize one of the key epistemological assumptions founding the Social Representation Theory: i.e. to assume the interplay between the social actors (and their positioning), the social objects and multiple forms, channels, tools, contexts and scenarios of communication, essential to explore the social process of knowledge building, as a set of interrelated systems of social representations dynamically co-constructed and circulating within society" (de Rosa, 2012, p. 5).

Among the range of possible qualitative and quantitative manners of investigation open to empirical studies involving social representations which can be used as independent procedures or in combination, it is important that said qualitative and quantitative methods be selected according to their suitability with respect to the subject of research. "If social representations of a phenomenon include the views of various groups, then we may need to use several methods for studying it." (Flick U., Foster J. & Caillaud S., 2016, p. 77). Moreover, for the social representations theory, the primary interest is directed towards natural groups selected according to the representations they hold. The social representations theory is also especially suitable and fitting when different social groups come across each other (Bauer, 2016).

Consequently, the modelling approach seems to be the sensible and fitting methodology for this research work as it is directed to participants from two natural social groups (migrants and local community members) that have come across each

other due to the human mobility flows of our times. Furthermore, it touches diverse theoretical concepts, it applies quantitative and qualitative investigation instruments addressing verbal, textual, iconic, and projective aspects, as well as their related analysis procedures in order to identify the social representations from diverse perspectives such as multidimensional identities, collective memory, group emotions and social expectations.

Lastly, as participant observation can facilitate accord with the respondents and allow the researcher to produce hypotheses about what is observed, a triangulation approach with diverse models can be the optimal choice in cases in which there are problems of expression (Flick U., Foster J. & Caillaud S., 2016). Indeed, the modelling approach proved to be a convenient methodology for this research, as it involved observation and the diversity of the data gathering tools, which benefitted those Respondents of this project who did not have the full practical skills necessary for some of the tasks required.

PARTICIPANTS: *Migrants* and *Local Community Members*				
Theoretical Perspective	**Analytical Focus**	**Dimension**	**Instrument**	**Analysis Modalities**
Structural	Identification of polarity and neutrality indexes, of inductive power and general structure to determine in particular the central core of the representations of migrants and local community members in relation to renewed identity in the changed environment and with respect to world positioning.	Semantic	Associative Network	T-lab software
Contextual	Provision of background, frame, and terrain within which the human mobility and displacement is occurring with the point of convergence on the common ground of the human being without irrelevant superstruct distinguishments.	Thematic	Semi Structured Interview	verbal and textual contents
Cartographic	Comprehension of the environment and fabric constructed within the migrant group and the local community members group concerning their understanding and interiorization of the world geography as well as peoples' global dislocation across the world map.	Locational	World Euro Sky Compass Technique	political world map
Symbolic	Breakdown, evaluation, and interpretation of iconic images concerning the migratory phenomenon and experience: migrants' direct testimonies and local community members' indirect impressions and knowledge.	Emblematic	Figurative Technique	specifically designed coded table

Table I – Implementation of the Modelling Approach to this research investigation

CHAPTER V
Research Analysis and Findings

5.1. Sample Groups

This study is based on data provided by adult Respondents, involved in the project through snowball sampling, who formed two trial groups: migrants and local community members engaged to some extent with the newcomers.

	Migrants		**Local Community Members**	
GENDER	Participants	*Percentages %*	Participants	*Percentages %*
Women	11	*26*	15	*45*
Men	32	*74*	18	*55*
TOTALS	43	*100*	33	*100*

Table II – The 76 adult Participants of this research investigation

The sociodemographic outline of the 76 adult Participants to the study takes into account mainly five principal underlying factors considered pertinent to this work which is projected towards understanding the human race as a whole and focusing on humanity. These basic variables are gender, age, place and context of origin, level of education, and spiritual beliefs.

For what concerns *gender* balance of the Respondents, the number of men is higher in both groups. However, among the migrant group the predominance of the males is more evident. This reflects what is reported in worldwide statistics, i.e. men are the largest group among the people on the move. At times this is due to cultural traditions, as in many countries of origin of the migrants the head of the family – generally the most senior man – is the one recognized by all as apt to be entrusted to express the claims and opinions of the entire household with no need of including other family members. Nevertheless, there were still some cases of single women travelling alone or wives who decided wholeheartedly to contribute to the study.

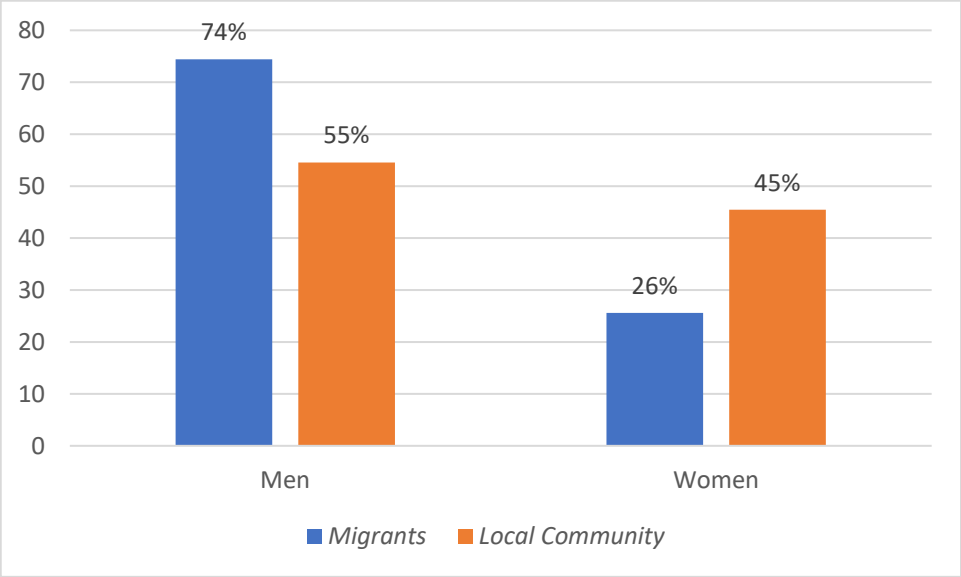


Figure 3 –Gender percentages of the sample groups

Regarding the *age* groups, in the samples selected for this research there is a higher presence of younger people among the migrants than among the local community members.

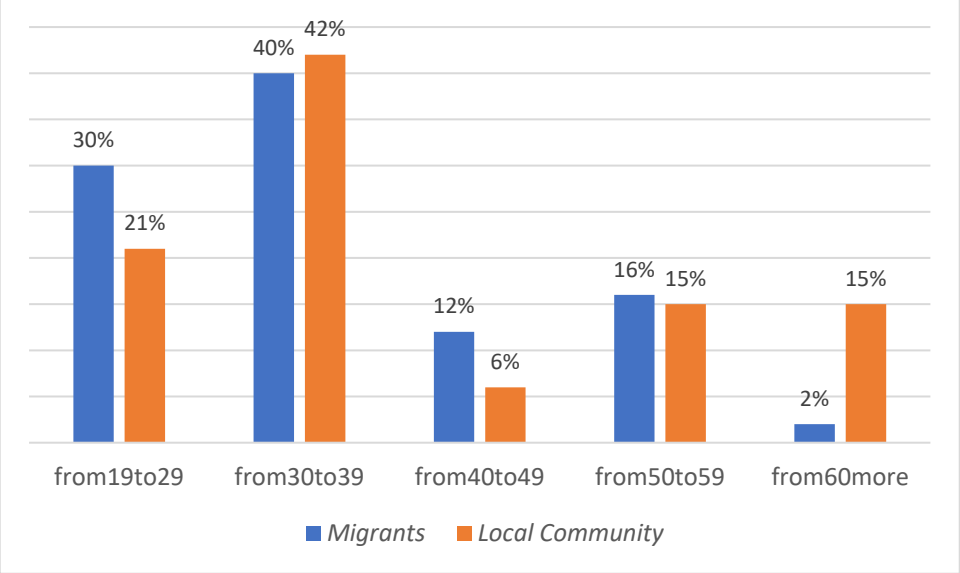


Figure 4 –Age percentages of the sample groups

As to the *place and context of origin*, the urban backgrounds predominate in the two groups. However, there is a slightly higher rural surrounding experience among the migrants. Indeed, when looking into the Respondents' place and context of origin, it is necessary to bear in mind the different socio-economic and cultural realities which exist between, for instance, African and European cities, or between Latin American and Central Asian villages.

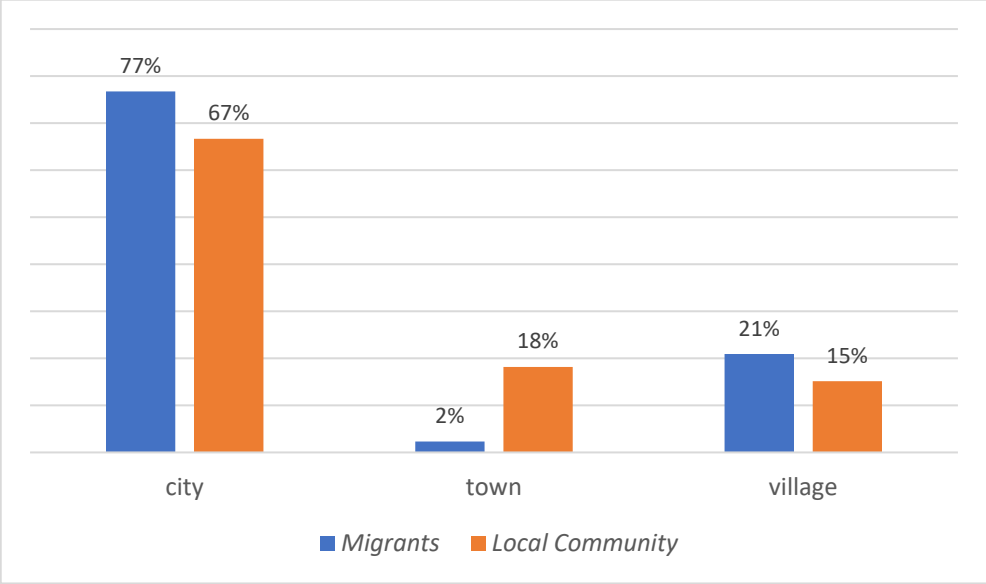


Figure 5 –Place and context of origin percentages of the sample groups

The greatest differences between the two sample groups emerge when comparing the *level of education* of the Participants to this study. The migrants indeed have much lower instruction and literacy levels, and the reason for this condition is determined by: poor backgrounds, very traditional communities of origin, war zones from which they have escaped, or continued and lifelong displacement experiences.

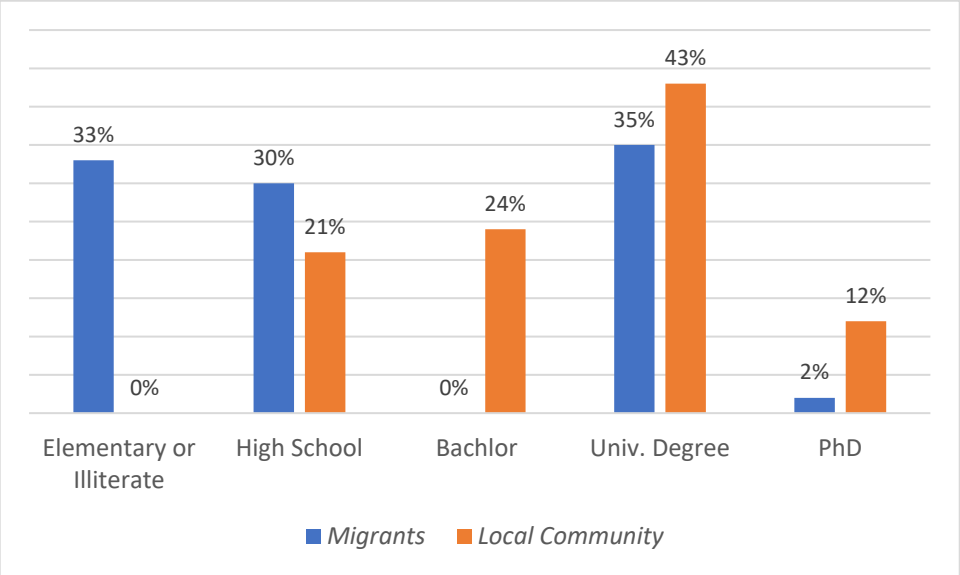


Figure 6 –Level of education percentages of the sample groups

The last variable taken into consideration was *spiritual beliefs*: the religious faith or reference to a superior being. The migrant group showed a greater inclination towards spirituality and mysticism if compared to the local community's more widespread laity.

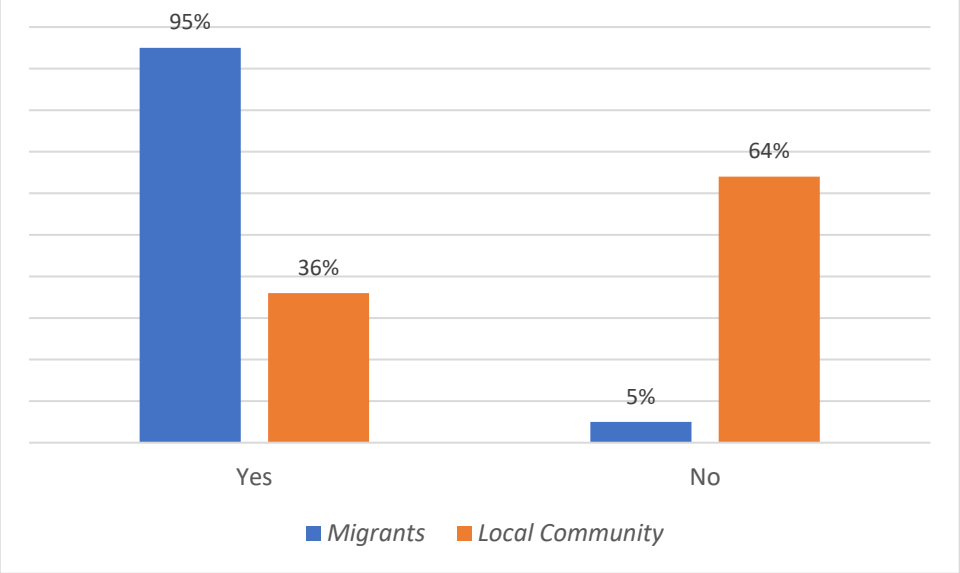


Figure 7 –Spiritual beliefs percentages of the sample groups

This investigation has also noted a few extra reference variables just for the migrant group, according to the specificities determined by their condition and life story.

Travel companions in their migratory experience were mostly relatives and very rarely friends. However, over half of the Respondents from the migrant group underwent solitarily by themselves their lifechanging journey.

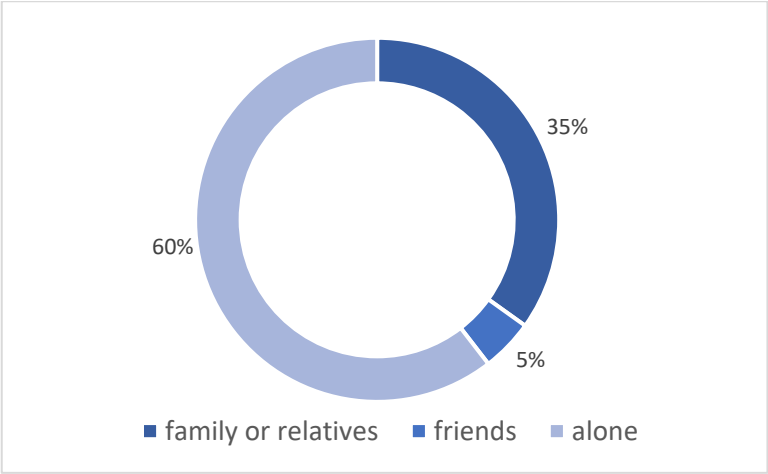


Figure 8 –Travel companions of the migrant group

With respect to the *travel conditions*, the sample group is practically divided almost evenly between those who had dramatic journeys and those - such as for example students, persons travelling for health reasons or for family reunification - who had more acceptable mobility experiences.

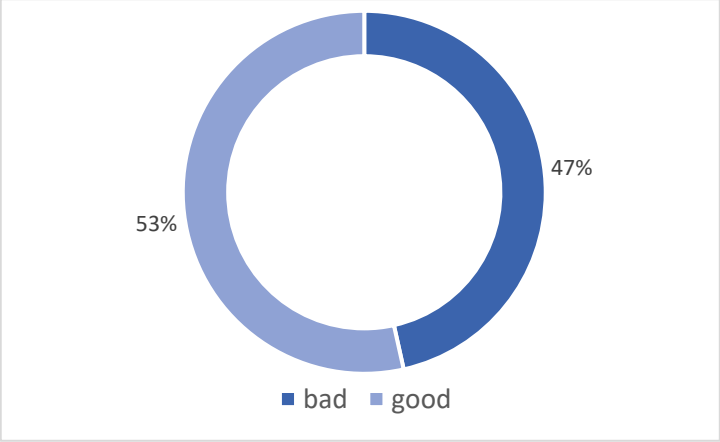


Figure 9 –Travel conditions of the migrant group

Settlement time. Another noteworthy aspect is the length of time the displaced persons have spent in the host country. The majority of the Respondents of the study - most of them asylum seekers - were people with a time in the new country between some months and five years. A much smaller number had obtained a double nationality or was a naturalized citizen.

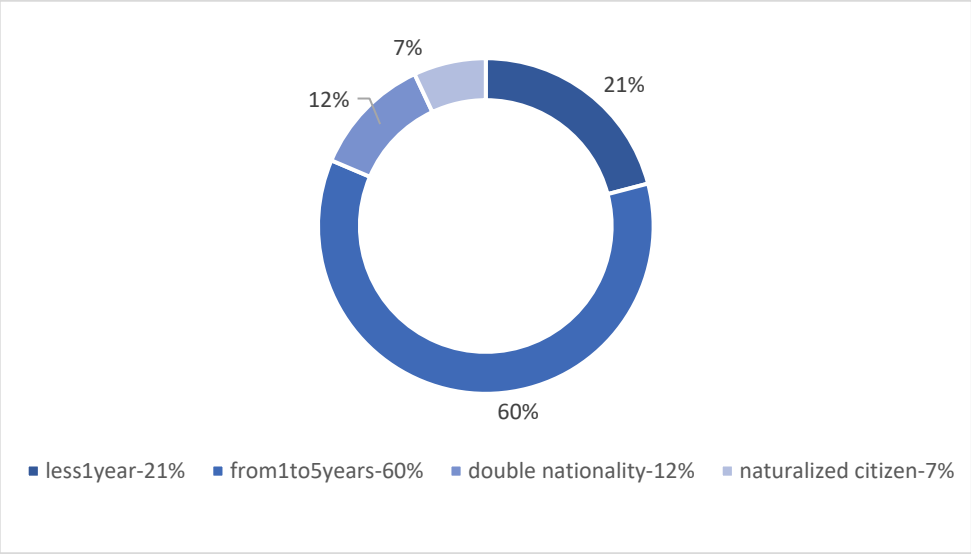


Figure 10 –Settlement time in new environment and status of the migrant group

5.2. Associative Network

This instrument allows to show "not only the contents, but also the structure of the representational field..." as it allows to "create an *index of polarity* as a systematic measurement of evaluation and attitude implicit in the representational field and an *index of neutrality* as a control measurement (assuming that a high positive polarity corresponds to lack of neutrality and vice versa)." (de Rosa, 2002, pp. 184 - 185).

Respondents themselves attribute a polarity to each word (positive, negative and neutral) and, on the basis of the total number of words associated by each person,

two formulas have been identified to determine the polarity (**P**) and neutrality (**N**) indexes:

$$\text{POLARITY INDEX (P)} = \frac{\text{number of positive words} - \text{number of negative words}}{\text{number of total words associated}}$$

This index ranges between -1 and +1. If P is between -1 and -.05 (this value may be later recorded as 1 or as -1), most words are connotated negatively. If P is between -.04 and +.04 (this value may be later recorded as 2, or as 0), positive and negative words tend to be equal. If P is between +.04 and +1 (this value may be later recorded as 3, or as +1), most words are connotated positively" (de Rosa, 2002, p. 185).

"The second index is as follows:

$$\text{NEUTRALITY INDEX (N)} = \frac{[\text{n. of neutral words} - (\text{n. of positive words})] + \text{n. negative words}}{\text{number of total words associated}}$$

This index also ranges between -1 and +1. If N is between -1 and -.05 few words are connotated neutrally (=low neutrality). If N is between -.04 and +.04, neutral words tend to be equal to the sum of positive and negative words. If N is between +.04 and +1, most words are connotated neutrally (=high neutrality)" (de Rosa, 2002, p. 186).

Moreover, from the data of the associative network, *frequencies* and *average rank* can be calculated as well as the *inductive power* (**IP**) which expresses the breadth of the semantic corpus developed from each stimulus: the more associations are formulated, the higher will the inductive power be.

$$\text{INDUCTIVE POWER (IP)} = \frac{\text{total number of words}}{\text{number of Respondents}}$$

5.2.1. Associative Network Outcomes

The selected stimulus words submitted to the Respondents for the construction of the network data for this migration research were:

-"*Me*" to detect elements of self identity;

-*"Nationality of Origin*" versus "*German*" for the migrant group, while for the local community the mirror words were "*German*" versus "*Migrant*". These words were selected in order to identify in each group feelings of belonging to individual origins as well as to the new environment determined by the arrival and encounter of the newcomers with the original community members; and

-"*World Citizen*" to identify the positioning of all Respondents within a wider interpretation of a more global society. (see Appendix A).

All the data, gathered in different languages, was first translated into English and then recorded in excel spreadsheets, thus allowing to classify the words: (i) in order of evocation; (ii) highlighting the positive, negative or neutral significance attributed by each Respondent to every term; and (iii) noting the importance attributed to each text.

Thereafter, this database was imported into T-lab Plus 2020 version 5.1.0.7. to execute: the analysis involving lemmatization for the extraction of words with the highest frequency, the correspondence analysis, the cluster analysis and the concept mapping.

Indeed, as noted in the T-lab guidelines, its tools allowed to calculate and perform:
-lemmatization to obtain a lexical unit, or "lemma", from each word produced by the Respondents and the organization of such lemmas according to linguistic criteria;
-lemmas' co-occurrence analyses and production of co-occurrence patterns;
-lemmas' computation of association index (Cosine);
-ordered and stratified clustering, performing top-down classifications; and
-explanatory tables and graphs.

Prior to proceeding with the analysis, the linguistic set-up of the database was rearranged. For instance, in case of synonyms just one word was chosen to represent them all, or words were modified to have only their singular form eliminating plurals. In addition, the terms less fitting to the investigation were not taken into consideration by placing a threshold of a frequency of ≥ 3 to identify the rate of occurrence with which the lemmas appeared. Lastly, connected to the frequency, also the average rank was elaborated to express the importance each lemma had for the Respondents.

Stimulus 1: "Me"

For the stimulus "Me" the migrant group evoked 242 terms that the software transformed into 134 lemmas, while for the local community group the words produced were 194 which became 130 lemmas.

Coming to the *inductive power*, the result was very similar between the two sets of Respondents: there were 5.62 words evoked by the migrant group and 5.87 by the local community members.

Then, as can be seen below, the terms with frequencies that range from ≥ 5 and average ranks generally lower than 3.3 express interesting concurrence of in particular 6 words recurrent alike for both the migrants and the receiving community: "openminded", "friendly", "helpful", "family", "happy", and "sporty", from which an unrestrained and sociable self-image appears to be the overall common characteristic of all the Respondents of this research.

Migrants			Local Community Members		
LEMMA	FREQUENCY	AVERGE RANK	*LEMMA*	*FREQUENCY*	*AVERGE RANK*
openminded	16	2.5	***family***	*15*	*2.1*
helpful	14	3.0	***friendly***	*12*	*2.3*
friendly	13	2.5	***openminded***	*11*	*1.7*
happy	12	1.9	*citizen*	*10*	*3.0*
hardworking	11	2.5	*empathic*	*9*	*2.3*
kind	10	2.6	*environmentalist*	*9*	*3.1*
family	9	2.2	***sporty***	*9*	*2.6*
active	7	1.6	***helpful***	*8*	*2.6*
sporty	7	1.9	*teaching*	*7*	*3.3*
strong	7	2.0	*reliable*	*6*	*2.0*
sincere	6	1.3	***happy***	*5*	*2.8*

Table III – Frequencies and average rank comparative analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from stimulus "Me"

Interestingly, the *polarity index* has a 0.70 value for the migrants, while a slightly lower one for the local community, 0.64. Such difference in the self-identity perception may be explained by the personal strength of the displaced which is clearly reflected in their life history and their resolute attitude in undertaking change and enduring hardships linked to their mobility. Aspects which are not necessarily encountered in the local group.

For what concerns the *neutrality index*, it is -0.57 for the newcomers and -0.41 for the locals. Such low neutrality references confirm the outcomes expressed by the polarity index which is positive for both groups and especially for the migrants.

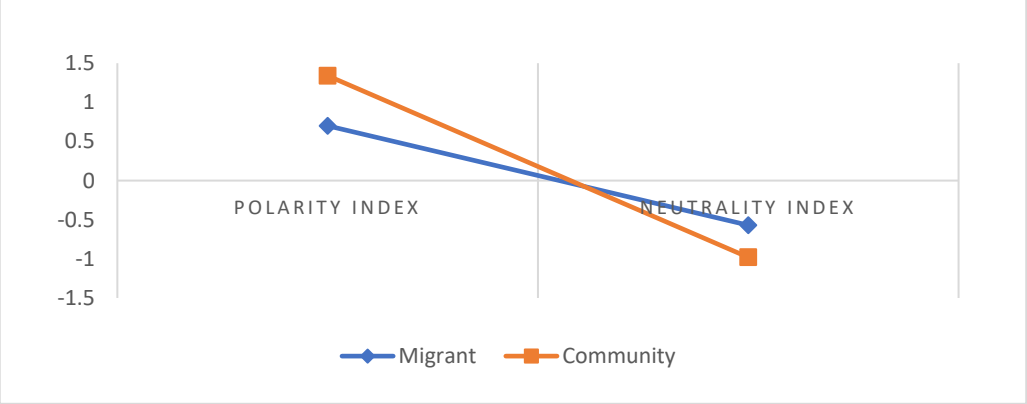


Figure 11 – Polarity and neutrality indexes of migrant and local community corpuses developed from stimulus "Me"

Adding up the results from the "Me" stimulus with the two sample units and developing a lexical correspondence analysis illustrated in the graph below, there is the immediate visualization of a concentration in the positive polarity area for both Respondent groups for what concerns the social representation of the self.

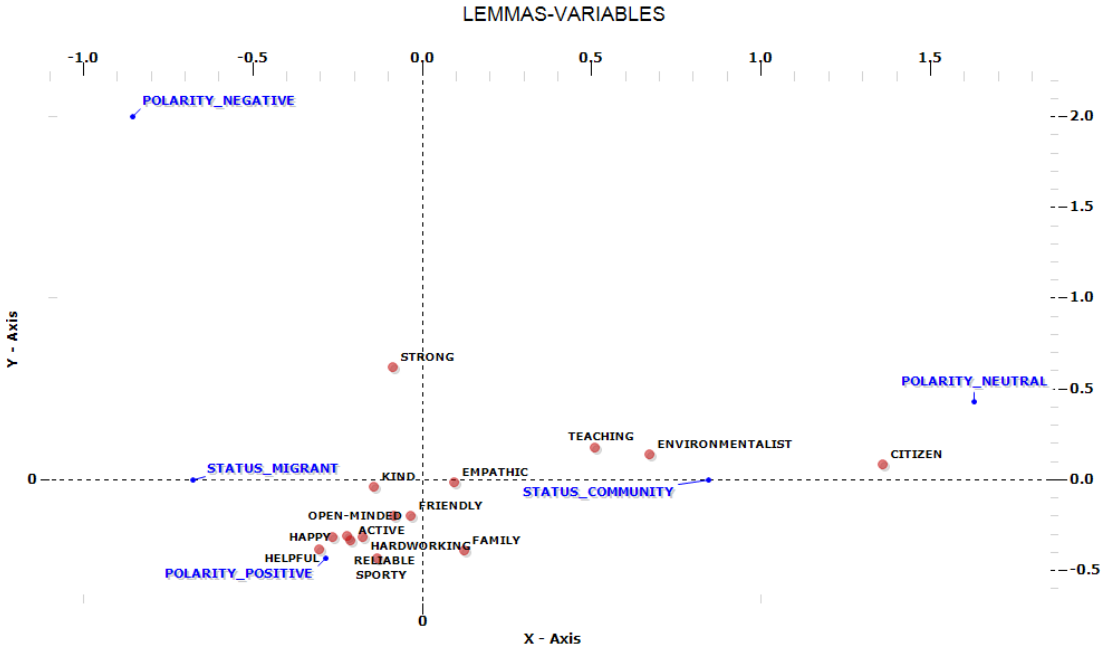


Figure 12 – Lexical correspondence analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from stimulus "Me"

Regarding the structure of the representation drawn from the stimulus "Me", the central element in the two selected groups has "openminded" and "friendly" at the pure center and "helpful" and "family" just along. The two quite similar cores can thus be pictured with the aid of the word cloud below:

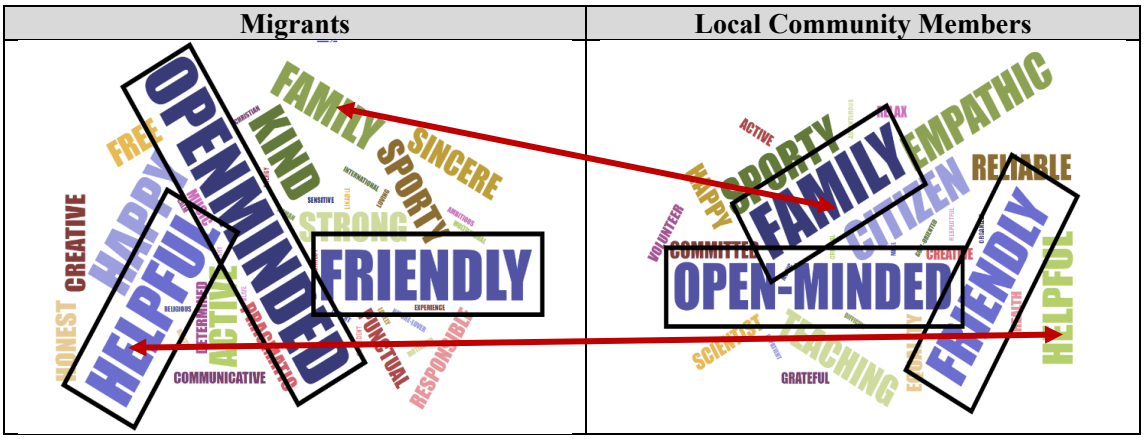


Figure 13 – Word clouds of migrant and local community corpuses from stimulus "Me" expressing the central elements of the social representations

Stimulus:2 -"Nationality of Origin" / "German" **and** ***"German" / "Migrant"***

In relation to the stimulus "Nationality of Origin" / "German", the migrant group produced 253 terms that the software transformed into 169 lemmas; while for the mirror stimulus "German" / "Migrant" of the local community group the words evoked were 210 which became 146 lemmas.

The *inductive power* was 5.88 words produced by the migrant group whilst 6.36 terms were evoked by the local community members. This slightly higher number among the locals confirms what was also observed by the Researcher: a greater wish to share thoughts or to more openly express interest in the subject being presented through the stimulus as compared to the migrants who at times had a more negative approach due to direct unfortunate experiences they had gone through.

In particular for this stimulus addressing the relational element between the two groups of this investigation, it is interesting to also examine the most recurrent words and their importance for each group, aspects which are illustrated in the table that follows which shows frequencies ranging from ≥ 4 and average ranks lower than 3.0 for the migrants and lower than 4.0 for the locals.

The common words expressed here by both sets of Respondents are "education", "equality" "integration" and "friendly". They are all voicing a reciprocal disposition to consolidate the relationship which has come to be after the arrival of the newcomers into the receiving community, and remarkably so by stressing the significance of education acquired through learning and schooling. Moreover, the importance given to mutual knowledge is also expressed through other noteworthy words reported below, like for instance: "community", "future" and "international" for the migrants, or "enrichment", "multicultural" and "openminded" for the receiving population.

An additional positive note just for the migrant group is the very low average rank recorded for the word "safe" which highlights the relief and importance of this feeling among them.

In any case, the complexity of working together for a peaceful coexistence and for the necessary complicated path to tread to reach such objective, is reflected in expressions such as "lonesome" and "different" among the newcomers, and "complex", "misunderstanding" and "vulnerable" among the locals.

Migrants			**Local Community Members**		
LEMMA	FREQUENCY	AVERGE RANK	*LEMMA*	*FREQUENCY*	*AVERGE RANK*
kindness	10	1.9	*enrichment*	*13*	*3.4*
lonesome	9	1.8	***friendly***	*12*	*3.1*
different	8	2.0	*complex*	*11*	*2.4*
education	8	2.4	***equality***	*8*	*2.8*
equality	8	1.6	***education***	*8*	*3.1*
happy	8	1.6	*openminded*	*8*	*3.1*

freedom	7	2.1	*opportunity*	*8*	*3.0*
friendly	7	2.0	*misunderstanding*	*7*	*3.4*
future	7	2.6	*multicultural*	*6*	*4.8*
community	6	2.3	***integration***	*6*	*3.2*
satisfied	6	2.3	*culture*	*6*	*2.0*
family	5	2.0	*development*	*4*	*2.3*
international	5	2.8	*workforce*	*4*	*2.5*
integration	4	1.8	*diversity*	*4*	*3.0*
safe	4	**1.5**	*vulnerable*	*4*	*4.5*

Table IV – Frequencies and average rank comparative analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from mirror stimuli – "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant"

The *polarity index* value for the migrants is 0.42 while for the local community it is 0.33, and the *neutrality index* is -0.25 for the newcomers and -0.10 for the locals. These figures express among all Respondents a positivity with respect to the stimulus proposed, notwithstanding the complications linked to the adaptation and modification process important for the future community they will all be finding themselves living in.

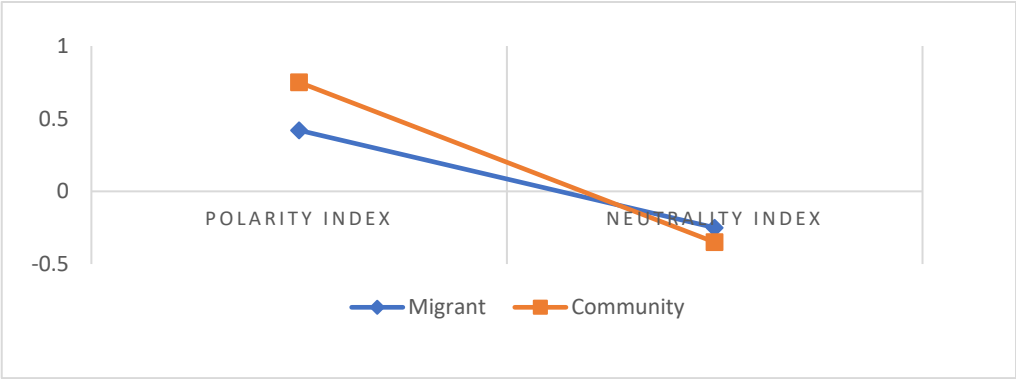


Figure 14 – Polarity and neutrality indexes of migrant and local community corpuses developed from mirror stimuli "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant"

Executing an analysis of the lexical correspondence resulted from the mirror stimuli "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant" presented to the Respondents of this study and which is shown in the below diagram, it is possible to see the picture of both groups directed towards a positive polarity with respect to the social representation of the new environment and society in which, following their encounter, the selected groups find themselves into.

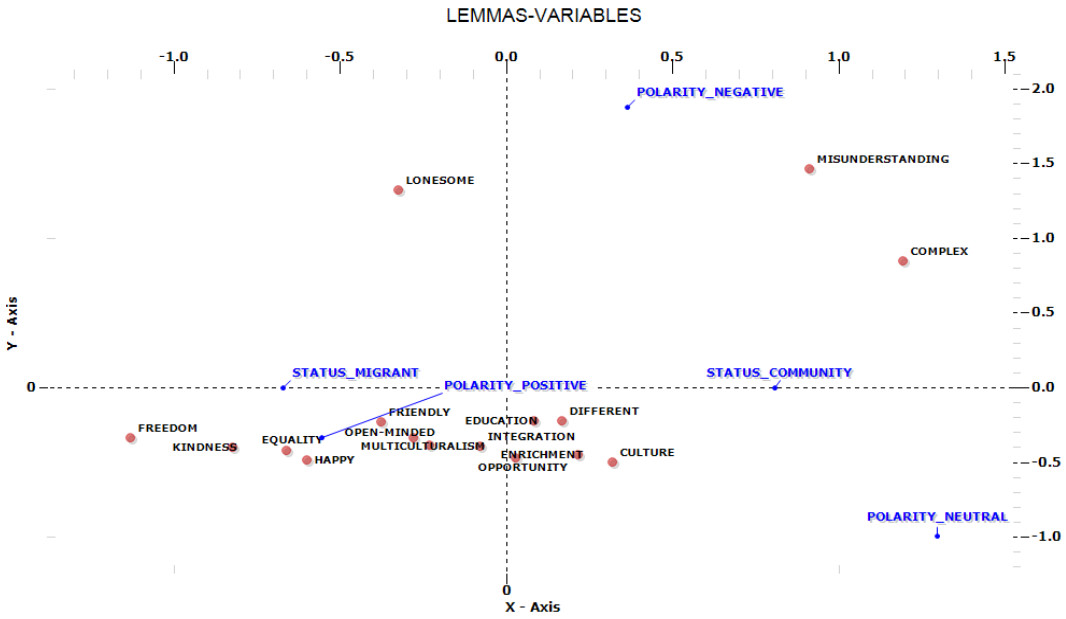


Figure 15 – Lexical correspondence analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from mirror stimuli "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant"

Looking at the candidates for the core of the representations delineated by the mirror stimuli "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant", the following images assist in identifying more easily the two central elements made up by the common "education" and "equality" at the center. In addition, the migrants also have "kindness" and "lonesome" in the heart of their representation while the locals have "enrichment" and "friendly".

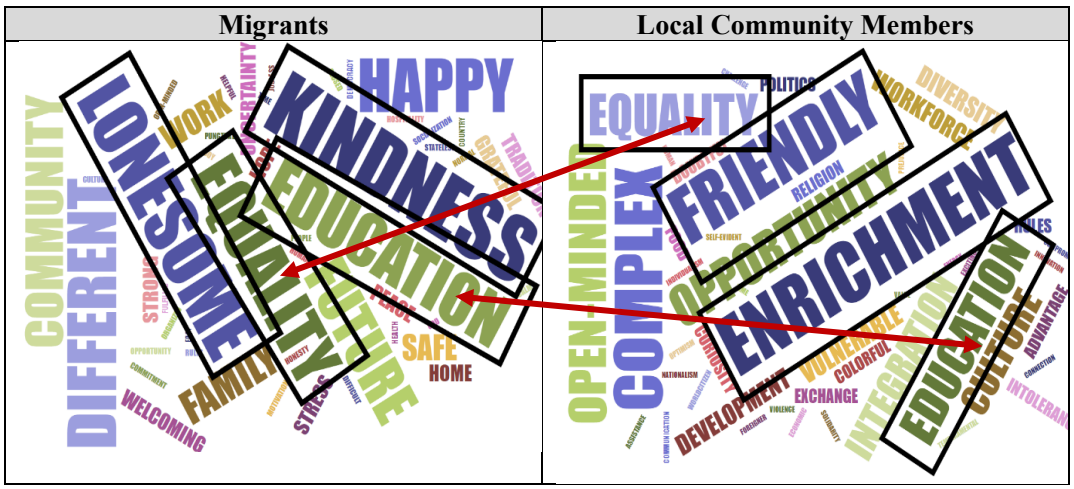


Figure 16 – Word clouds of migrant and local community corpuses from mirror stimuli "Nationality of Origin" / "German" and "German" / "Migrant" expressing the central elements of the social representations

Stimulus 3: "World Citizen"

Finally, in the case of the third stimulus, "World Citizen", the migrant group provided 228 texts that the software transformed into 141 lemmas, while for what concerns the locals the words evoked were 201 which became 126 lemmas.

5.30 terms for the migrant group and 6.09 words for the receiving community member group are the *inductive power* values expressed through this stimulus. The higher inductive power number registered among the locals can be explained by the overall upper educational level of this group which permitted, in the case of a more abstract stimulus such as this one, a wider and more diversified output in terms of linguistic expressions.

Nevertheless, paying attention to the texts of both groups ranging ≥ 5 and average ranks around ≤ 3.3, there is the parallelism of a very high number of words present contemporarily in the results of both the migrant and local groups. Indeed, there are 9 common texts: "peace", "equality", "respect", "culture", "community", "utopia",

"together", "freedom" and "opportunity" which not only reflect all the Respondents' broad and positively pervasive interpretation of their position and that of humanity when it comes to the wider look towards an extended concept of society, but also show in both groups an aligned and common enthusiastic drive towards a future change in the direction of a more diverse and inclusive environment.

Migrants			**Local Community Members**		
LEMMA	FREQUENCY	AVERGE RANK	*LEMMA*	*FREQUENCY*	*AVERGE RANK*
peace	13	2.3	***equality***	*9*	*3.7*
equality	11	2.5	*education*	*8*	*2.6*
respect	10	1.5	*openminded*	*8*	*3.1*
utopia	10	2.3	***peace***	*8*	*3.3*
community	10	2.5	***culture***	*7*	*2.0*
together	10	3.3	***community***	*7*	*2.4*
culture	9	1.7	***respect***	*7*	*2.4*
solidarity	9	2.4	*same*	*7*	*2.4*
freedom	8	1.8	*no borders*	*7*	*2.9*
kindness	6	2.0	***utopia***	*7*	*3.6*
God	6	2.2	*ideal*	*6*	*2.5*
difference	5	1.6	***freedom***	*6*	*2.7*
humanity	5	2.0	***together***	*6*	*3.0*
language	5	2.8	*difficult*	*6*	*3.7*
objective	5	3.0	***opportunity***	*5*	*2.8*
opportunity	5	3.6	*happiness*	*5*	*3.6*

Table V – Frequencies and average rank comparative analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from stimulus "World Citizen"

With reference to the *polarity index*, the value obtained for the migrant group is 0.60, whereas it is 0.67 for the receiving community group. The difference is quite

small but reflects nonetheless a somewhat higher positivity with the locals which can be due to their different life stories: the migrant group includes also individuals with extremely harsh and negative experiences that inevitably may have affected their confidence towards brotherhood and a more humane world.

Indeed, the *neutrality index* values, which for this stimulus resulted in -0.40 for the migrants and -0.50 for the locals, are in line with the results of the polarity index mentioned above.

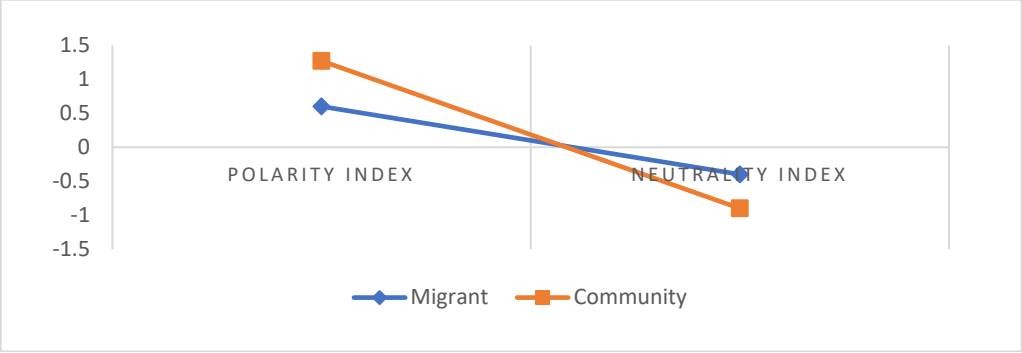


Figure 17 – Polarity and neutrality indexes of migrant and local community corpuses developed from mirror stimulus "World Citizen"

The lexical correspondence analysis of the words produced by the Respondents following the submission of the "World Citizen" stimulus shows that the two sample groups stand very firmly on a positive axis in their social representations of the best new society of the future.

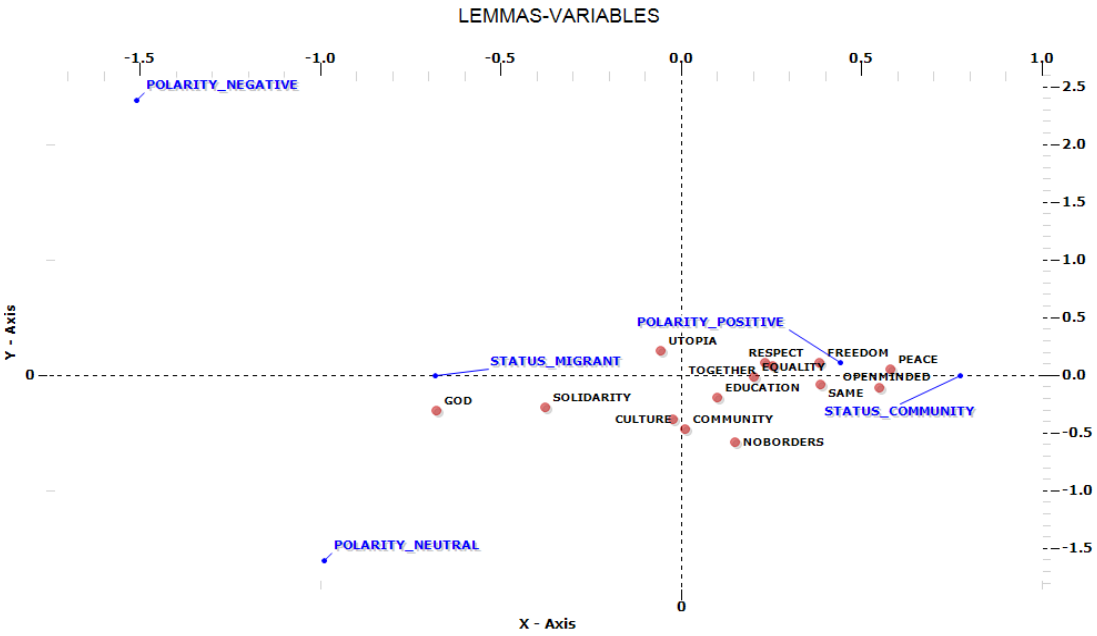


Figure 18 – Lexical correspondence analysis of migrant and local community corpuses developed from mirror stimulus "World Citizen"

Arriving at the point of setting the essence of the social representations identified from the stimulus "World Citizen", the images hereafter assist in viewing the central elements that are so similar for the two groups as they include many identical words. Among these, the key texts "peace", "equality", "respect", "culture" and "community" should certainly be highlighted. For the migrants, relevant is also the recurrent word "humanity" that can be linked to "same" among the locals as well as "objective" expressed by the newcomers connected to "ideal" of the receiving community.

The identification of the essence of these social representations is revealing for the purposes of this study as it shows how diversity and international experiences among peoples allow individuals and groups to have a more extensive and openminded image of society and of humankind's positioning in the world.

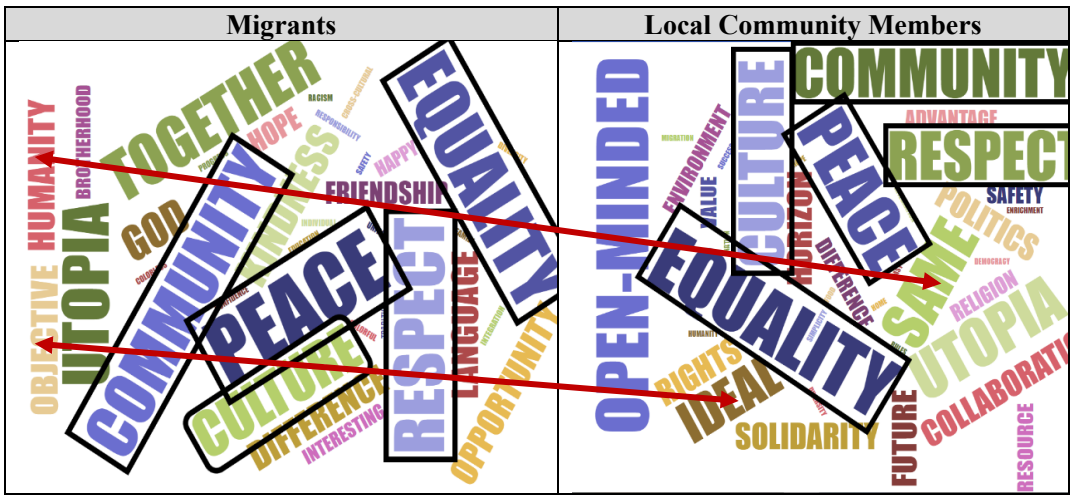


Figure 19 – Word clouds of migrant and local community corpuses from stimulus "World Citizen" expressing the central elements of the social representations

5.3. Semi-Structured Contextual Socio-Demographic Interview

One of the most common tools used in investigations involving social representations is the interview, indeed the substance and foundation of the social representations theory lies on the concept of the value of common sense which is linked to people's ideas and thoughts. Through dialogue, individuals are asked about their thoughts, feelings and experiences which are then analyzed by the researcher who compares the different responses looking for resemblances and variations, then proposing possible themes and social representations.

There are different types of interviews, as for instance the individual interview in which questions are asked to persons in order to learn what they think about a given subject; the narrative interview which results in participants telling their personal stories; the episodic interview which focuses on questions driving the respondents to provide narratives of specific episodes; or group interviews for gathering information concerning shared and common opinions (Flick, Foster & Caillaud, 2016).

Interviews can be conceived according to different formats. The informal conversational interview, which has absolutely extemporaneous and spontaneous questions taking place in a natural interaction determining quite a degree of unpredictability and uncertainty due to the irregularity in the questions and which however usually causes difficulties in coding the results (Creswell, 2007). The general guide approach interview, which is more organized although it allows to still have a degree of flexibility and specific adaptation as the order in which the questions are presented can vary (McNamara, 2009). The standardized open-ended interview, which is instead structured for what concerns the questions which are the same for all interviewees, whereas the responses are open-ended allowing full expression and articulation of thoughts. For this type of interview the weakness lies in the complexity in the coding phase, due to the open-ended replies (Creswell, 2007). Finally, with the closed fixed-response interview, all participants are asked identical queries and are required to select the answers among a fixed set of options. The coding for the outputs of this type of questionnaire is certainly smooth and more direct (Turner, 2010).

This research, focusing on the migration phenomenon, has adopted for the data gathering a semi-structured contextual socio-demographic interview with a combination of the above-mentioned elements. The interviews were carried out individually with each migrant and local community member and looked for emotions and life narratives as well as precise episodic stories relating to significant issues linked to the concept of human mobility and consequent group encounters. Most of the themes chosen were equivalent for both migrants and locals and there were just minor differences especially determined by the diverse life experiences. The reference questionnaire was designed following a general guide approach interview model with standardized open-ended questions which included a number of specific queries, nevertheless leaving the respondent the complete freedom to direct his/her responses in the preferred direction (see Appendix B).

5.3.1. Processing of the Results of the Semi-Structured Contextual Socio-Demographic Interviews

The statements and testimonies provided by the Respondents were recorded on paper through notetaking during the interviews. All the collected raw data was then transcribed and recorded into an excel spreadsheet following a coding grid specifically set up by the Researcher for this study, including the various identified themes and fields of concern. The information provided by each person participating to the research was classified and organized accordingly.

The context in which the interview took place (office, recreational area, Respondent's home, etc.) together with elements observed by the Researcher during the interview were also taken into consideration for the analysis of the data and additional notes with such information were added to the chart of the coded answers.

CONTEXT ELEMENTS	OBSERVATION NOTES	MACRO THEMES	**Migrants**	**Local Community Members**
			interpersonal relations (relatives & friends)	*interpersonal relations (relatives & friends)*
			identity	*identity*
			memories	*memories*
			new habitat and new life	*migration knowledge*
			personal perceptions	*personal perceptions*
			future prospects	*future prospects*
			journey storytelling	*encounter storytelling*

Table VI – Elements and macro themes for the classification of the 76 Respondents' narratives

The tabulation which resulted allowed to detect the salient points regarding identity in the aftermath of transnational and transcultural exchanges due to the encounter with another cultural group determined following the mobility of the subjects involved in the study. Moreover, it made it possible to observe the details and outcomes of these interactions occurring in a new social environment. Lastly, it enabled the Researcher to work on the interpretation and comparison of the social representations of the newcomers and of the natives.

5.3.2. Insights from the Semi-Structured Contextual Socio-Demographic Interviews

To identify the salient elements resulting from the encounter of the migrant and local community groups, the Researcher looked through the lens of the connection between social representations and identity processes theory as the latter concentrates on the complete identity of each person. Indeed, such theory embraces all elements deriving from the individual's experiences such as interpersonal relations, new knowledge, memories, etc. and also probes into the changeability and adaptability of identity developed from personal and social experiences. Precisely, identity construction does not occur in an isolated manner within the individual, but rather has a social essence namely defining itself specifically in the interaction and in contacts with other components of a given environment and cultural setting. Identity is therefore regarded to be perpetually in development according to the new occurrences and experiences that cause change unceasingly (Breakwell, 1978/2016). "… identity processes theory does suggest that changes in the social structures or influence processes will stimulate some change in identity" (Breakwell, 2016, p. 256).

As also investigated in conflict resolution studies, new ranges of features must be formed and spread among the members of a given environment to solve discord between the two sides and determine a peaceful and positive change with the elaboration of new representations. "It is clear that reduction of delegitimization of the rival and construction of trust towards him depends also on the reciprocal and joint actions of both parties… the awareness that there is need to change the goals may emerge as a result of internal processes in one society" (Bar-Tal, 2010, p. 8). Furthermore, there is the central role played by the intergroup emotions with a consequent attitude change when there is precisely a transformation of such emotions (Halperin, Cohen-Chen & Goldenberg, 2014).

Indeed, this interpretation of the identity construction process and the role of emotions in intergroup relations have allowed to investigate the interactions between the migrant and local groups after their encounter highlighting the dynamicity of their identities. The latter include the personal and the social

dimensions that form the total identity, as well as the new shared social context in which the migrants and locals find themselves together and which they contribute jointly to shape.

Important to mention as starting point is that in the two sample groups of this study there are, or there have been, contacts and relations with members of the other group. In fact, all the persons involved in this research have related directly and to some extent with some representative of the counterpart.

Interpersonal Relations

Within the migrant group, what emerged clearly were wider and tighter interpersonal relations with relatives and their more extended families in the new environments they have come to live in, but also - when possible - continued contacts especially through social media with their homeland.

For instance, Respondent *<M-8-W>,* a 30-year-old woman original from Central America, stated:

> *"With my husband we had to leave due to the dangerous situation in our country as we risked our lives. I am here in Germany with him and our two boys. A cousin of my husband has come along with us too. My mother is in Honduras as well as cousins and many friends. I have an aunt that lives in Spain. I am in contact with my relatives as often as possible, sometimes I am able to call them and get in touch every day while other times only once a week.*
> *I am happy to have two friends also here in Germany. One is a German lady from the accommodation center and another is a lady from Ukraine."*

or interviewee *<M-T-2-M>,* a young man in his early twenties with an international background:

> *"My family is Yazidi and originally we lived in Syrian territory. Then, we moved to Russia and Armenia, and it is there that all my relatives that are still alive live. I keep in contact everyday with my family and friends in Russia with whatsapp, skype and social media. I also try to travel home once a year. I have new friends here too.*

They are mostly from Russia, Syria and Georgia. The majority of my friends though, are German."

When the interactions with the locals are not yet possible due to weak language knowledge or to the need of more time to adjust, there is a strong desire of adaptation and of making new local friends, as for instance noted by the migrant <*M-35-M*>, a man aged 31 from Western Asia:

"My father was killed by Saddam Hussein in 1987 and I was born 2 months after his death. I have 4 sisters and a brother. I am married and I have a small son.
I am in contact with family and friends at home through whatsapp calling them 2 or 3 times a week.
I still don't have friends here in Germany, mostly because I don't speak the language. I hope to make some friends in the near future.

and <*M-31-W*>, a woman in her early thirties with mixed origins, who said:

"I am married, and I live here now with my husband and our 3 children. My parents are in Russia while my brother and sister live in Azerbaijan as my mother is from there and I have relatives in that country. I keep in touch with my family mostly through whataspp. I really had no special friends in Russia, just my parents.
In Germany I have many acquaintances. They are from Russia, Thailand, Iran, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan but I still don't have German friends. However, I look forward to make some soon. It is difficult right now to relate at a deeper level with Germans when you are still living in migrants' accommodation center."

As regards the local community, relatives and friendships are central in their lives too, but the difference lies in the family nucleuses which are indeed smaller as they include just very close and direct relations.

<*C-25-W*>, a young 28-year-old woman, said:

"My boyfriend and I live together. We have a dog. Other relatives live elsewhere."

or Respondent <*C-28-M*>, a man aged 44:

> *"My family is all from this part of the country. I have a partner and a son and many friends. I don't really have close foreign friends except for a Polish and a Dane."*

Nevertheless, the most interesting overall outcome is the same attachment to kinship and amicability even with the different cultural characteristics mentioned above, as well as the attention in both migrants and locals to how the other group engages in family and friendship relations, appreciating some aspects and discarding others, as is well expressed by <*C-2-W*>, a 31 year-old local community woman:

> *"The cultural diversity the migrants bring is something I appreciate. They have more color and their family values are very different from ours. I am very interested in the tight relations they have among the enlarged family. The other side of the coin though is that in the family, the women are only visible in the homes."*

or the migrant man <*M-32-M*> aged 26 from a West African country:

> *"Here I feel even more that we are all equal and valuable, all human beings are the same and each one is important. Something that has however struck me in Germany is the difference with respect to the elderly. In Africa if you meet someone older in the street you greet him/her even if a stranger. This does not happen in Germany."*

Identity

As recognized by the identity processes theory recalled earlier, when taking into consideration the expressions of all the Respondents of this research regarding their present identity, it clearly comes into view the occurrence of a dynamic identity change following the encounter and the ongoing relationships in the new multicultural society determined by the arrival of the migrants.

Starting with the migrant group, after the arrival in the new environment and after relating with the receiving community, they expressed important onward development of identity.

A young 20-year-old woman, *<M-2-W>,* from the Balkans said:

> *"I was born elsewhere and have some traditions with me that I like and will keep. However, I love so much the life and the people here that I have well integrated and feel for a great part also to belong here which is the place I live now and in which I wish to live my life.*
>
> *Since I left my country of origin many things have happened to me, both positive and negative. These experiences have helped me change. I have matured. I question more things now which I did not do so much before".*

Likewise, another woman of the same age but from the Horn of Africa, *<M-14-W>*:

> *"Here I feel so much different and renewed in a most positive way. I often ask myself: "are you born only now?". I ask myself this because here I am doing things I could not do in my homeland. I am free and I can choose and decide for myself and for my future."*

While *<M-C-S-2-W>,* an older woman of 53 from Eastern Europe, declared:

> *"Since I live in Germany I have changed. I am punctual, I am always friendly as before, but at the same time I control my emotions more, I am more disciplined and correct. When I return to Russia for visits many people there say that I am a different person."*

For what concerns men, they too spoke about how they felt different.
For instance, *<M-4-M>* from Northern Africa and aged 32 said:

> *"I have changed since I arrived in Europe, as now I feel free, safe, relaxed. Most importantly, here I feel human, I can express my opinion without fear."*

and *<M-13-M>* aged 31 from Central America:

> *"After leaving my country, here I feel relieved, cared for and above all I feel free. I also feel stronger and more open to give to others."*

or *<M-21-M>* 50-year-old from Western Asia:

> *"I feel different here because I have been in contact with people from many backgrounds. I feel enriched."*

Coming to analyze the evolvement and transformation of identity of the members of the local community, there are, for example, testimonies such as the ones reported below in which the Respondents recognize the progress which has occurred.

A 29-year-old woman, <*C-S-15-W*>, said:

> *"I feel positively for the arrival of migrants in my country and in my community even if there are hurtful incidents. The foreigners and migrants that I have been interacting with have affected me. I have lost some of my positiveness and perfectionism as I sometimes feel sad for the world as it is today. However, I try every day to make an effort to see in any case the positive of life or at least make an attempt to understand the reasons of what happens."*

and <*C-21-W*>, a slightly older woman of 34:

> *"Since the very first day I interacted with foreigners everything changed in me. My view of the world changed, the food I eat, the music I listen to, etc.… My whole life perspectives changed, and I am so thankful to be so privileged*.

Also men underlined how they had been affected by the newcomers, like <*C-22-M*>, aged 24, who said:

> *"I am happy to say that I belong to an international students' association. I volunteer at the association helping foreign students integrate themselves here. The times I work as volunteer make me feel good, satisfied and happy as I am growing and improving myself as a person. After having more contacts with people from different places I feel stronger in general in my life. I am more careful to body language. It has become clearer to me and I can thus communicate and relate better with others."*

In very similar terms also <*C-27-M*>, another man, aged 34, who observed:

> *"I am not a traveler, but I like to hear stories of people that travel, I like to meet people from other countries which for me is a bit like travelling. You get another viewpoint. I have also learned that people have different ways of finding solutions and that we must learn and respect that.*

Since I have been relating with migrants I have tasted and started eating more types of food. I have also learned to consider matters from another point of view. For instance, us Germans have so many rules and we are very stressed. Now I am more relaxed and take life with more calmness."

Memories

Memory certainly has a fundamental role in the social representations theory. Indeed the past helps in identifying the characteristics of something indefinite, and then, together with the new, gives life to a meaningful object and representation.

The memories recalled by the migrant group can be classified in two main categories: (i) recollections of emotions and events (happy and traumatic) occurred in their country of origin and during the migration journey, and (ii) remembrances of feelings of relief upon rescue after the travel dangers and of safety and freedom experienced in the new society.

19-year-old <*M-10-M*>, who survived a terrible journey from West Africa, stated:

"I have happy memories of when I went to school back at home. I miss my childhood and that life but I especially miss my mother so very much. I recall how pleased I was when I passed the exam to be admitted to the 7th grade, I was happy and proud of my achievement. However the most important moment of my life was when I entered the Mediterranean Sea and I could see and perceive hope and a future.

I have many bad memories too as the ones that forced me to leave my home and the journey to reach Europe. Also, the rejection of my asylum request hit me hard and I am now waiting the response to the appeal."

and from the southwest coast of West Africa another 19-year-old, <*M-16-M*>, said:

"I have many memories of my school and the work I did assisting my father in his butcher shop.

One of the most important moments in my life was when I was able to leave Libya and when I arrived alive in Italy. I am lonesome of my mother and often recall the first time I spoke to her on the phone when I was safe in Europe, it was a very

emotional moment for both of us as I had survived that terrible journey and was alive and safe.

*A nice memory here is when I received the first call from the soccer team I play with. I felt so good when they said, "*We need you*". I was overwhelmed with joy and I felt useful."*

<*M-28-M*>, an older man of 51 from a Eurasian country, recalled significant moments:

"A nice memory of my childhood is when I used to go fishing with my friends. I remember fondly that we would fish with our bare hands and we had lots of fun.

Another pleasant memory for me was that I had taken with me some soil from my village when I had to leave my country. I thought that it would remind me of my land and make me feel close to it even when I would be away. At a certain point though I realized that my new land was here and that that soil had nothing more in it as everything it meant was inside of me, so I threw it away."

Worthy of mention are also the words of <*M-1-W*>, 22, from a village in the Horn of Africa:

"*Every day of my life I remember what my grandmother used to say: "*Only you can make yourself happy*" and this is what makes me go on each day of my life forgetting all the bad experiences such as the horrible voyage I went through."*

As to the memories expressed by the local group in relation to their involvement with migrants, it is interesting to note there have been many direct and openhearted recollections of episodes cherished following the interplay with the newcomers.

<*C-3-M*>, a man of 64, declared:

"I have many memories of my relations with the migrants. Once a boy that had to prepare himself for his German class exam asked me to help him study. Another time one of the kids in the center asked me to show him how to fix his bicycle. Also, at the beginning I was very skeptical in tasting the foreign foods I was offered because of the strong smells, but when I finally tried some, I loved it. It smells

horrible but it tastes really good!! Offering the food, and I accepting it is an attitude of welcoming and solidarity which I feel strongly about today.
I am so happy when they connect with me, but I also have very sad remembrances such as in the case of the deportation of two families with whom I had become very close. I will never forget that terrible moment when they were taken away, I embraced them all, and then I had to go away quickly as I was crying.

76-year-old <*C-10-M*> had similar recollections:

"I have a very nice memory of a Christmas party I was invited to attend. About forty people had been invited to participate together with their wives and families. I was very happy to be there and had the opportunity to discuss three cultural roots: Christians, Jews and Muslims. I told them that from these roots there is one beautiful tree. We all wept together, them and me."

Likewise, there was a woman aged 37, <*C-S-14-W*>, who remembered:

"I can't forget the times when the children hug me to thank me for something, or when a migrant is grateful for some help, maybe with the language class homework. They are all very sweet and make me enjoy assisting them. A migrant woman called one of her twin girls after me!! I am still in contact with her and the children. Indeed, with some of the migrants I entertain special relationships and friendships."

Similarly, <*C-20-W*>, a woman of 33, said:

"One of the most positive things I have experienced with migrants, especially here at work, is their gratitude. Their gratitude is great, they are warmer in expressing their emotions, they show their feelings more openly."

Another older woman, 49 years of age, <*C-31-W*>, evoked a couple of incidents involving migrants:

"I have a funny and nice memory of when I was teaching language class to a group of young migrants. Once, for a class fieldtrip, I took-out swimming fourteen very young Afghani men from my class. Many didn't know anything about water

activities: they couldn't swim, didn't know they needed a bathing suit nor a towel. It was very amusing, and we all had a great time.
Many young migrant men among my students also ask me to find them a wife and I reply that it does not work like this here. They answer that in their country a friend does that, and I am their teacher and friend so for them I should help them find a wife!!"

New Environment and Personal Perceptions

Exploring into the narratives of the Respondents and looking at the way they refer to the new environment, the recurrent elements that must be noted among the migrant group are principally the feelings of gratefulness, freedom, and safety. Moreover, even in the few cases of some hints to experienced racism, nevertheless there is the generalized recognition and acknowledgment of the greater opportunities available for them in their new community together with the broad awareness that the work they can do and the contribution they can offer while adapting and getting involved in this new life are important also for the receiving population.

The above is certainly expressed by a 28-year-old woman of Yazidi origins, <*M-18-W*>:

"I never thought of having to move from my country but then the situation there become very dangerous due to the war so my family and I had to get ourselves to safety. When I arrived in Europe, at the beginning it was very hard because I did not understand the language, I was scared and lost. Now my family and I are happy with what we have and find that here everything is fine. I am thankful for all the support we have received, and I hope that studying and working in particular in the health sector will be a way to return such assistance we have received and contribute to my new community. Also, I think that integrating well in this new society is a way to give back."

Comparably the same kind of thoughts come from a woman from Western Asia, <*M-27-W*>, aged 38 who said:

> *"My life here is safer, I can walk around alone even in the evening. I am happy to have been able to learn a new language and to acquire elements from a different culture. The idea of Europe was the result of stories I heard from relatives but it has been better than what I expected. I really appreciate the punctuality and the tidiness. Also, very important for me is that there is no corruption. Nevertheless, there are some negative aspects as for instance sometimes there are racist actions against refugees. In any case I feel grateful as I received from the people here, but I also feel that I am giving back through my work."*

And from a young woman of 20, <*M-14-W*>, from the Horn of Africa:

> *"The only information I had of Europe before leaving were stories heard from people, stories of freedom. That word, freedom, was the knowledge I had, and it was enough for starting-off. When I arrived here, I found what I wanted and expected: safety and freedom. Here I can decide about my own life and I can choose what to do. I can wear colorful dresses and even if I still wear the hijab, it is my own decision to wear it. In addition, I am so happy to be able to attend lessons and to learn. I went to school only for elementary classes because in many parts of Africa women are considered apt only to be mothers and housewives, so it was not necessary that I continue studying which instead I very much enjoy."*

The men from the migrant group made consistent remarks, as for instance <*M-33-M*>, a longer-term resident, 52 years old, original from a country in the Gulf of Guinea:

> *"Germans have done a lot for me and for so many migrants. On the other hand, migrants and foreigners too have to do their part, make efforts once they are here. I am really committed to my social work. I believe that with my work and with the cultural activities I do in my spare time I am introducing my heritage, African music, food, ideas, etc... I am doing my part for the community I live in now. For a man it is very sad and hard to take the decision to leave his country and his family. Here there are many welcoming people even if at the beginning it was hard for me*

to adapt and on some occasions I was insulted. However, today I really feel at home here."

Another man of the same age and from another country always in the Gulf of Guinea, <*M-6-M*>, highlighted:

"*Europe is a place of peace and has a society in which you get what you work for not as in my country of origin where you work but you are not rewarded for your efforts and commitment.*

Here people are a bit withdrawn, they are conservative. Nevertheless, they are helpful even if you don't speak their language yet. They are also very generous. They have given my family and me a house and the possibility to take a language curse. The greatest joy and satisfaction I have is that I have secured a future for my children having survived the risks I run.

<*M-15-M*> too, a younger man of 37 from Northeast Africa, said:

"The idea I had of Europe before arriving was that Europe was a land of freedom, peace and education. Once I arrived, I found some of the things I imagined but it was a sensation of neutrality. People are peaceful but still there is also some racism. Then, I have to note that in my country we live all together and we help each other. Here it is not like that, everyone thinks about himself and is more solitary but then also helps others. The manner of helping is different, it is a sounder and better way to do it. I prefer so much more the way here as in my country we are obliged to help the family (a very enlarged family) and you can't escape from this bond of responsibility which is so tight that it strangles you."

The locals when referring to their changed community following the arrival of the foreigners, have mainly positive viewpoints even if they note the complexities of this ongoing bilateral adaptation process. They express understanding towards the problems faced by the migrants and see them as means of rejuvenation and renewal, as well as of colorful enrichment and economic strength for the benefit of the entire society. Some reference is nonetheless made to the need for the newcomers to fully adapt to the local rules especially the ones of mutual respect and commitment to

children's and women's rights as well as learn the language to facilitate communication and interaction.

The testimony of a woman of 62, <*C-6-W*>, reflects the above-mentioned feelings:

> "*I am relaxed to know that there are migrants in the community where I live. I am used to relate with them, and I am perfectly fine with people from different countries. They are people in need, many escaping from the war. Then there are also a lot of economic migrants that make no difference for me as they too are in difficulty and require support. It is so positive to see how most of these migrants are so willing to work.*
>
> *There are however some negative aspects like the fact that some are lazy, they don't want to work or study but just receive relief from the authorities. In addition, the women are discriminated by some of the men. This different mentality can indeed be a problem sometimes.*
>
> *In any case I believe that the most important thing is that the migrants respect and follow the rules. In such way the migration process will settle smoothly. I think that there can be a good reciprocal and mutual learning, an exchange. The migrants can learn from us to be on time, the work attitude and new activities. We can learn from them their traditions, their recipes, some of their family values."*

Similar thought are expressed by another woman aged 31, <*C-11-W*>:

> *"I believe that the positive aspect of migration is the possibility to be in relation with diversity, to get involved in new ideas and different ways of life. For me, the negative element of migration is how we have managed immigration while on the migrants' side, when they refuse to learn the language even if one should investigate the reason for this attitude, maybe they are not able."*

and by <*C-24-W*>, a woman of 28:

> *"I am perfectly fine with the fact that there are migrants and foreigners in my community. Actually, I like to hear people speaking many different languages and I think that migrants have determined that people are more open. However, the negative aspect is that it is hard to include them. It is hard because they have a different culture and a different religion. We have to learn too, just like them.*

At work my two foreign colleagues have different attitudes, one tries in every way to integrate while the other doesn't want to integrate at all. I think that as they live here now, they should make efforts in mixing-up. I believe that integration is possible. Sharing is the key, not closing them up in ghettos but actually doing the opposite, have them get mixed in the community, start being all together since children, grow together."

The men alike have equal positions. For example, 32 years old <*C-S-1-M*> said:

"The new challenge is integration and this time there is the opportunity to do even better than what was done for first aid in emergency when the large numbers of migrants arrived. From my experience I have learned that these are people that generally don't want to leave their country. It is very hard for them to make such choice which they do for a number of difficult reasons.

For me, the most positive aspect of migration is people speaking many languages and that foreigners arriving open the mind of the local communities.

The percentage of criminality creates problems and damages the relations as well as it enhances racist reactions. However, multiculturality is something positive for me and I believe that also the economy can benefit from migration. Migrants also have more children than the local community and this helps our own population that is getting older. In addition, their arrival improves the attitudes of the local people as I believe that democratic openminded societies are the best situations for the future."

Likewise, an older man, <*C-5-M*>, aged 70:

"The positivity of migration is that I think the Western world has had its time when it went to developing countries getting their resources. The migration flows of today teach us that the time to pay for what we have taken has come. I see migration as a step in the right direction from the humanitarian point of view and I believe that integration comes before inclusion as the values of a society have to be observed and everyone needs to go by them. However, society has to evolve and change including the new people, while these people should have a chance to enter the society and contribute to it."

and also <*C-12-M*>, a 34-year-old man:

> *"There are indeed difficulties, starting with the initial problem in communicating. The first cultural impact too can be stunning for the migrants. For instance, understanding the rights and the local culture, as for example often happens with some families that have problems in fully comprehending the importance of children's rights. In any case it is most important to explain very well to the people arriving here what they can do, which are the opportunities they can take advantage of.*
>
> *Here people are convinced that these migrants want to leave their countries. I think that the migrants are not free to decide but that they take such hard decision under great pressure and stress that derives from war, persecution, poverty. However, I was indeed very happy to see many people of the local community get involved as volunteers helping the migrants. Civil society is so much ahead of the institutions.*
>
> *I have some problems with the term integration. Indeed, many aspects of integration are important, but I prefer to use the word "participation" as there are basic elements that have to be in place to have participation, such as have integration attitudes on both ways."*

Future Prospects

The idea of what lies ahead for both the migrants and the locals has first of all a personal perspective. Indeed, all Respondents provided initially their thoughts from an individualistic dimension. Then they addressed a wider scope picturing the community they imagined they would be living in in the future.

As to the migrants, a deep desire for settlement, security, and peace emerged. They also saw themselves studying, working, and in such a way returning the kindness received. There was a desire to contribute to building their new community next to the natives.

Almost all of the locals as well had a quite positive vision of a more homogeneous society, or at least of a society moving in that direction, with responsibility and dedication on the part of everyone involved in the construction of a common social

environment. Only a few among the 60 and over age group were slightly more pessimistic declaring that nothing would change in comparison to today.

From the migrants' group, <*M-C-1-M*>, a 59-year-old man original from the Middle East and naturalized German citizen after over 30 years in Europe, summed up these thoughts illustrating the road that such intermingled and blended community should take:

> *"From my knowledge and experience of 2 cultures, I help and support in integration. I can teach to be flexible and I can provide answers to both communities, I can create bridges. This is precisely the positivity of migration, it brings along new ideas, it refreshes society and it promotes future innovation."*

On the local community side, two men, the first in his seventies and the other one in his thirties, show in a very similar way how the locals imagine the future of their community should be:

<*C-10-M*>, the older man, said:

> *"I see the future as a time of cooperation and exchange of ideas as well as different rituals, but the key will be that people will be together."*

and <*C-S-13-M*>:

> *"For what concerns the local community, I hope there will be more respect among people disregarding where they come from. I hope there will be more empathy.".*

5.3.3. Thematic Analysis of the Semi-Structured Contextual Socio-Demographic Interviews

The corpus of data obtained from the narratives of the Respondents from the two groups was also further examined with the aid of the T-lab software, already used for the information collected with the associative network instrument. This software in fact also allows to set "elementary contexts (i.e. sentences, paragraphs or short texts like responses to open-ended questions) characterized by the same patterns of key-words …. [*and*] by the co-occurrences of semantic traits" (T-lab Plus user manual 2019).

The first step was to set two frameworks in which to work out the information obtained from the migrants and the locals in order to subsequently apply the lemmatization procedure. Following, the acquired words were driven towards the process of thematic analysis of elementary contexts based on the bisecting K-means method that results in a hierarchical cluster analysis. Proceeding with the breakdown, clusters with key terms were produced and the Researcher chose to use the main 3 thematic clusters for each sample unit - migrants and locals - applying a threshold of 25 to the number of co-occurrences. Finally, the main texts were classified by *Chi* ^{2} to determine the importance of the terms identified.

For the migrants, the total number of words considered was 2,916, which became 2,326 lemmas applying the lemmatization process. Three main clusters resulted from the software analysis: "**MEMORY**", "**INTEGRATION**", and "**HOPE**".

Indeed, the three blocks fully illustrate the various stages through which the dynamic identity change occurred in the migrant sample since their departure from the country of origin and arrival in a new environment. There is the base of their background structured on the memories, then there is the dimension in the arrival destination, and the hopes and dreams for the future new community where they are settling.

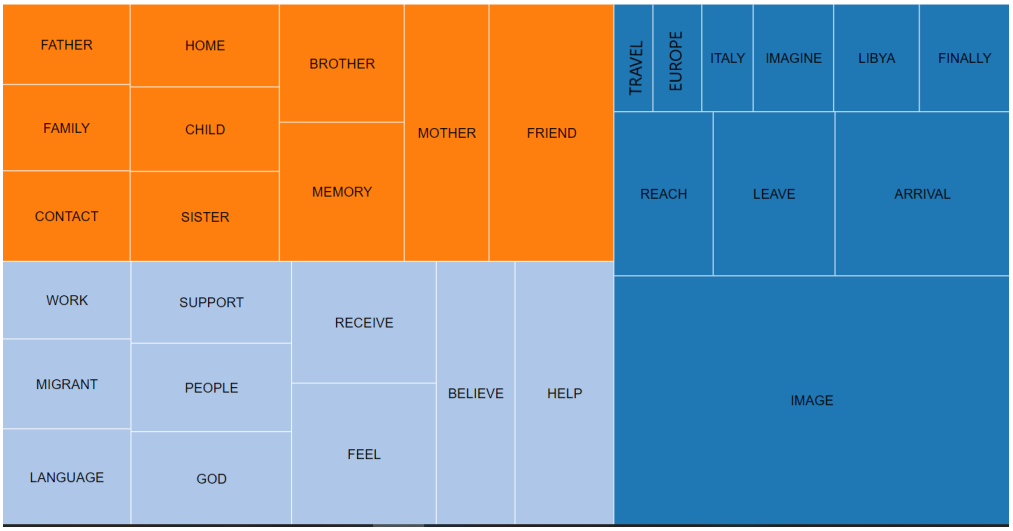


Figure 20 – Thematic Map of clusters for the migrant group

More in detail, as can be observed in the table below, in the thematic cluster *Memory* the highest *Chi* ^{2} for terms such as "friend", "mother" and "memory" clearly express the attachment to emotions and to the identity component linked to the family and to the place of origin. The second cluster, *Integration*, has instead more diversified expressions describing the feelings experienced and ongoing upon arrival and settlement in the new community as it includes terms such as "help", "believe", "language", "work", "community" and so on. Last but not least, *Hope*, the third cluster, has very high *Chi* ^{2} values for terms such as "image" and "arrival", but also for "reach", acknowledging expectation and confidence towards the future in a new society.

Cluster 1 **Memory**	**Cluster1** **Chi 2**	***Cluster 2*** **Integration**	**Cluster2** **Chi 2**	***Cluster 3*** **Hope**	**Cluster3** **Chi 2**
friend	*122.175*	help	*99.461*	image	*375.085*
mother	*83.156*	believe	*78.698*	arrival	*109.034*
memory	*66.074*	feel	*78.048*	leave	*75.714*
brother	*56.437*	receive	*66.646*	reach	*62.351*
sister	*50.545*	God	*57.302*	finally	*36.889*
child	*47.814*	people	*54.108*	Libya	*34.736*
home	*46.867*	support	*50.228*	imagine	*32.923*
contact	*44.186*	language	*46.945*	Italy	*21.025*
family	*41.799*	migrant	*44.495*	Europe	*19.642*
father	*39.085*	work	*37.860*	travel	*16.470*
situation	*24.236*	different	*33.642*	continue	*12.951*
school	*24.087*	experience	*33.385*	life	*9.892*
relatives	*22.052*	culture	*31.461*	Turkey	*8.825*
son	*17.748*	community	*28.952*	move	*8.683*
visit	*17.417*	learn	*28.931*	place	*8.576*
Syria	*15.990*	job	*28.786*	decide	*6.521*
Iran	*15.525*	Germany	*26.282*	happy	*6.258*
husband	*14.032*	integrate	*25.207*	moment	*5.559*
left	*13.512*	positive	*14.325*	start	*4.780*
die	*13.347*	opportunity	*13.098*	important	*4.149*

Table VII – Clustering and Chi ^{2} *calculations for the migrant group*

With respect to the receiving community group, the overall words were 2,487, transformed into 1,949 lemmas after the procedure of lemmatization. The clusters produced by the software analysis were respectively: "**SOCIETY**", "**HOPE**", and "**LEARN**".

These clusters reflect the locals' positioning and development in their progressing social fabric influenced by the changes and inputs deriving from the encounter with the migrants.

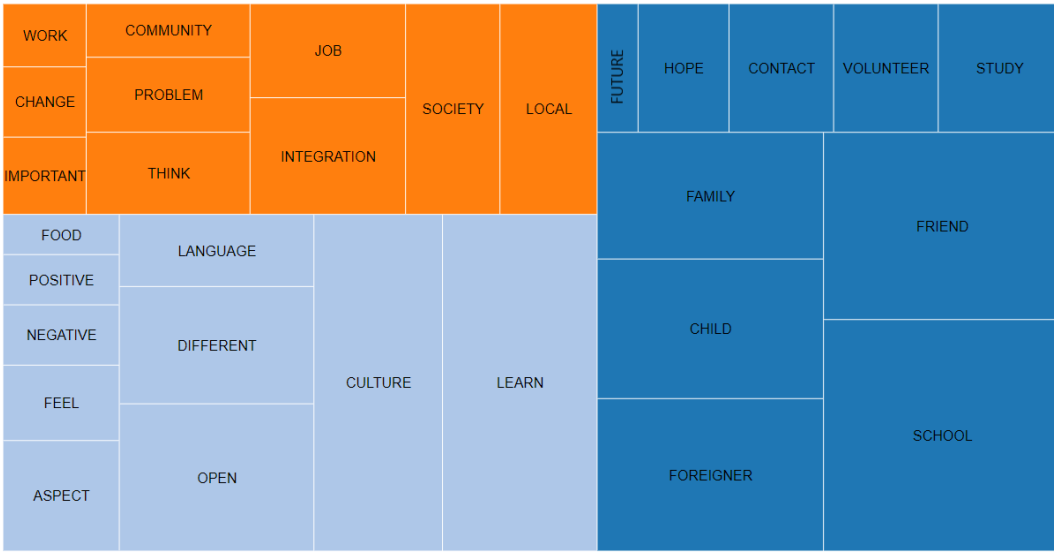


Figure 21 – Thematic Map of clusters for the local community group

Looking at the below chart, the thematic cluster *Society* includes expressions as "local" but also "integration", "change" and "good", of course without neglecting the complications expressed with the term "problem". The next cluster, *Hope*, has a high *Chi* ^{2} value for "school" and interestingly also relevant are "friend" and "foreigner". Moreover, there is mention as well of "contact", "future" and "life" showing a propensity towards welcoming and accepting the newcomers with the will of working together for the common future. *Learn,* the third cluster, acknowledges "learn", "culture" and "language" which are most significant for

building a mutual relationship with the migrant group and for the wellbeing of the entire community.

Cluster 1 **Society**	**Cluster1 Chi 2**	*Cluster 2* **Hope**	**Cluster2 Chi 2**	*Cluster 3* **Learn**	**Cluster3 Chi 2**
local	*34.657*	school	*93.810*	learn	*89.442*
society	*34.441*	friend	*75.969*	culture	*74.089*
integration	*31.275*	foreigner	*59.208*	open	*48.648*
job	*25.220*	child	*53.560*	different	*38.578*
think	*22.511*	family	*48.586*	language	*24.110*
problem	*21.216*	study	*27.469*	aspect	*22.193*
community	*15.359*	volunteer	*23.031*	feel	*14.955*
important	*10.992*	contact	*22.616*	negative	*11.599*
change	*10.081*	hope	*20.497*	positive	*9.800*
work	*9.355*	future	*8.728*	food	*7.513*
good	*7.880*	life	*6.643*	help	*6.656*

Table VIII – Clustering and Chi ^{2} calculations for the local community group

Interestingly both groups, migrants and locals, have the cluster *Hope* in common and it truly is for the two populations the body of lemmas with the highest *Chi* ^{2} values. This outcome thus denotes an optimistic projection to what lies ahead for them together in a common developing society.

5.4. World Euro Sky Compass Technique

Geo-literacy is a most relevant skill useful for building the identity of communities as well as for the subjective development of citizens enabling them to locate themselves within a given society. Moreover, it also fulfills the task of providing inspiration and reference for the advancement of people playing a central role in supplying a sense of belonging (Galani, 2016).

Therefore, precisely to better comprehend in this investigation the positioning and sense of community currently being experienced by the sample groups, they were administered the World Euro Sky Compass tool. This tool – in spite of the scarce

familiarity of some of the Respondents with geography and maps, in particular among the migrant group – allowed to look into the general socio-geographical mental pictures and networks linked to the perceptions and opinions that the newcomers and the locals acquired consequent to their individual and group experiences (see Annex C).

In some cases, the Respondents also explained their choices. Furthermore, it was possible to have an idea of their set of values and ethical standards with respect to the most appreciated countries and the least favored ones according to the personal knowledge and disposition within geo-spatial placement, each in consideration of immediate private past life stories or of assimilated convictions concerning the world and humanity in both their dimensions of peace and conflict. It was then possible to visualize on the world map which, for each sample group as a whole, are believed to be the most positive and least acceptable places in the world.

Not surprisingly, the favorite country for the migrant group is Germany, the dream site for most of the migrants and indeed the state that has opened its borders accepting them. Canada, known to be a hospitable and receiving country, stands second, while Australia stands third. In the imaginative dimension of many, Australia – even if it is indeed much more exclusionary on matters of immigration and citizenship – continues to be a nice and prosperous place, among their top preferred nations. A mention too must be made to Italy: it predominates for many African migrants of the sample group, as most of them have been saved precisely there after terrible experiences during their travels.

With regard to the least acceptable countries for the migrants, Russia holds first place, reflecting especially what was expressed by Eurasian Respondents, while Libya remains the most terrible possible place for many Africans who there have undergone very traumatic and distressing experiences of which they still carry visible emotional and physical scars. Saudi Arabia, especially for those originally from North Africa and Western Asian countries, is also perceived as one of the worst places on earth, for instance for the strict, restrictive and oppressive rules for women.

Interestingly, among the migrants often the country of origin is considered both the best and worst place in the world showing an emotional attachment to family and community as well as to childhood memories, but also recognizing the negative aspects that determined the need to escape or to just move on to a new life in a completely new location and country.

POSITIVE	
1st	Germany: 25%
2nd	Canada: 8%
3rd	Australia: 5%
NEGATIVE	
1st	Russia: 13%
2nd	Libya: 12.5%
3rd	Saudi Arabia:10%

Figure 22 – Migrant group positive and negative locations

The members of the local community group expressed satisfaction and a clear preference for their homeland, Germany, and secondly for Canada, followed by Sweden: all three countries among the most receptive and sensitive to migration issues. Some Respondents also indicated as nice locations countries such as Sri Lanka and Thailand motivating such choice with the beautiful landscapes, the friendly peoples and the pleasant vacations enjoyed there, but not addressing the natives' more complex realities.

For the receiving group, negative sites are North Korea and Russia, followed by Iran. The explanations provided by the Respondents were practically all related to the authorities and actually much regret for the people was expressed. Similar feelings of distancing from Governments and from the ruling forces were voiced for countries such as Syria and Somalia, afflicted by persistent conflicts.

POSITIVE	
1st	Germany: 24%
2nd	Canada: 12%
3rd	Sweden: 9%
NEGATIVE	
1st	North Korea:12.5%
2nd	Russia: 12.5%
3rd	Iran: 9%

Figure 23 – Local community group positive and negative locations

Interesting to note is the fact that both groups have the same feelings with respect to those they consider as the first two best countries: Germany and Canada. Moreover, another common element shared by the two groups is their opinion regarding Russia. These similarities could be explained either as the result of personal experience, or as the outcome of a direct and straightforward contact between the migrants and locals which has determined the transfer and sharing of many real life episodes and their emotional implications: possibly the root of a common social representation.

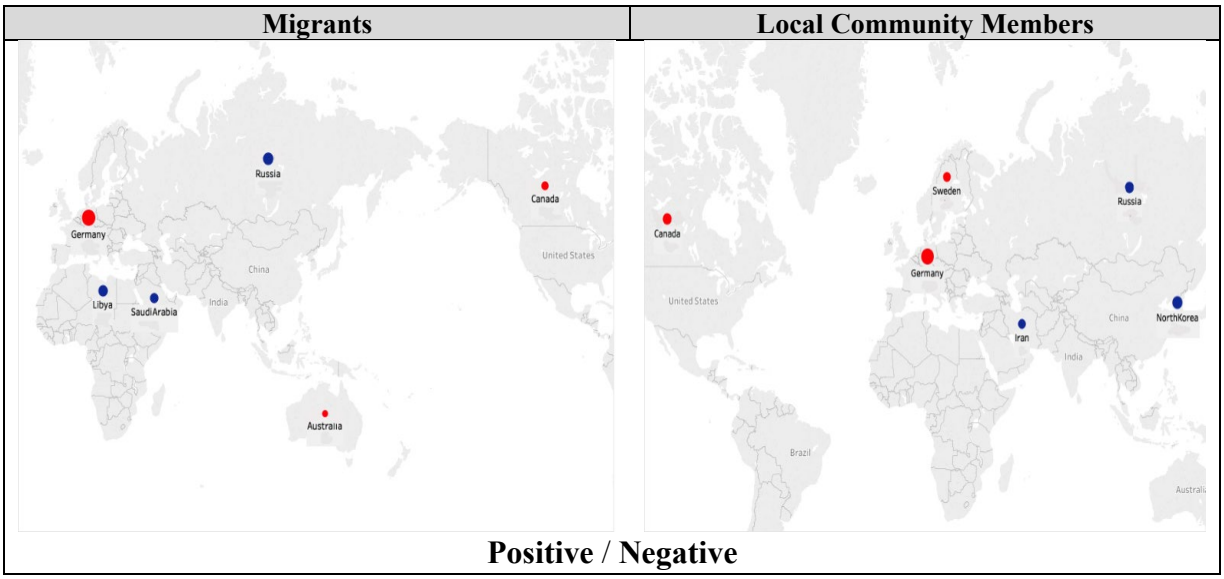


Figure 24 – Migrant and local community group positive and negative locations

5.5. Figurative Technique Integrated with Storytelling

For the social representations theory, the anchoring and objectifying processes are fundamental in the development of a social representation: anchoring gives sense to a new object bringing it into, and linking it to, the pre-existent amount of knowledge of a given community; objectification is the route that determines the reconstruction of the new element making it more concrete and visible. These two mechanisms certainly involve the imagining dimension of the social representation that "… comprises the ensemble of figurative elements and images (iconic, linguistic, etc.) existing within it," (Arruda, 2016, p. 130). Moreover, concrete as well as figurative elements and objects surely contribute to reviving memories and to reflecting the group's significance, nature, and cultural traits (Kalampalikis, 2002), and they consequently are simultaneously a source, a medium and an outcome of a social representation, having – the images as much as the lexical field – multicultural and

trans-historic characteristics that allow wider comprehension and meaning ascription (de Rosa & Farr, 2001).

A social representation within a given society is thus an articulate web of objects, images, and meanings undergoing the process of anchoring and objectification. It necessarily also includes pictures and visual symbols in its texture and involves dynamics related to the elaboration of iconographic forms and their definitions.

The visual and graphic illustration of an element has several characteristics. First, it has the capability of replacing the object it is reflecting, then it can provoke emotions, and lastly, within the margin of its vagueness, it allows the viewer to make choices and proceed with the appropriation of the image laid before him/her. In addition, at the cognitive level, the perceived image becomes mental as it connects to the mental recollection of a previous experience while at the same time it is also the route that carries a meaning shared collectively: a "social image" (Moliner, 2008). Indeed, "… the iconic medium often makes it possible to convey, inside one and the same communicative context, the semantic contents, antagonistic or complementary vis-à-vis those expressed through words." (de Rosa & Farr, 2001, p. 11).

For this research on migration it was therefore relevant to include also a figurative tool in the set of data gathering instruments: the figurative technique integrated with storytelling (de Rosa, 2004/2017). This technique allowed to acquire study material from the Respondents' iconic and symbolic images supported by their own storytelling which provided the key and the cultural context for the Researcher to understand and interpret the disclosed information and drawings.

Due to the nature of this study which includes two different groups that have come together, there was a slight differentiation in the administration of the instrument, determined by the diversity of their backgrounds. The migrants were invited to describe their travel account involving emotions and expectations from the departure point until arrival - including the intermediate stops - and had the choice to also refer to their imagined return journey home. The locals instead were asked

to illustrate the prospects they envisaged regarding their possible future community following the arrival and settlement of the newcomers. Finally, for both sample groups the Researcher requested to picture in a life timescale the image of their foreseen future environment and society arrangement and essence (see Annex D).

5.5.1. Figurative Technique Integrated with Storytelling - Outcomes

Following the precise inputs provided by the Respondents themselves, all the portrayed elements in every drawing were coded accordingly. Namely, every image represented on paper or text inserted in the picture was numbered in the order of its reminiscence; then letters were applied to specify the degree of importance attributed to every element reproduced; finally, through the storytelling, the meanings of each element were provided.

The coded details collected for both sample units were transferred and reproduced in a chart organized into four main bodies of information, with each one fragmented further into a number of sub-categories in order to include all the features identified in the pictures. The relative frequencies and percentages were then calculated and used to interpret the whole layout of the grid.

The principal ranking set-ups for the classification of the collected information were: (i) *experiential elements,* (ii) *symbolic place-identity elements,* (iii) *emotional elements*, and (iv) *material tools.*

The percentage of the presence of the *emotional elements* was higher among the newcomers due to their focus on the journey, which for many involved strong emotions such as fear and anxiety; but also for those for whom the journey had easier implications it was nevertheless linked to deep feelings such as detachment from relatives and friends, change, and loneliness. The locals' most frequent images were the ones with an attachment to *symbolic places* to which they identify themselves and their community. Both groups interestingly drew few *material tools* while they maintained more or less the same percentages for what concerns experiential aspects.

CATEGORIES	PRESENCE PERCENTAGE	
	Migrants	**Local Community**
EXPERIENTIAL ELEMENTS	33.33	21.29
SYMBOLIC PLACE-IDENTITY ELEMENTS	36.28	**43.03**
EMOTIONAL ELEMENTS	**43.80**	18.18
MATERIAL TOOLS	12.79	9.09

Table IX – Percentage comparison of categorized elements present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

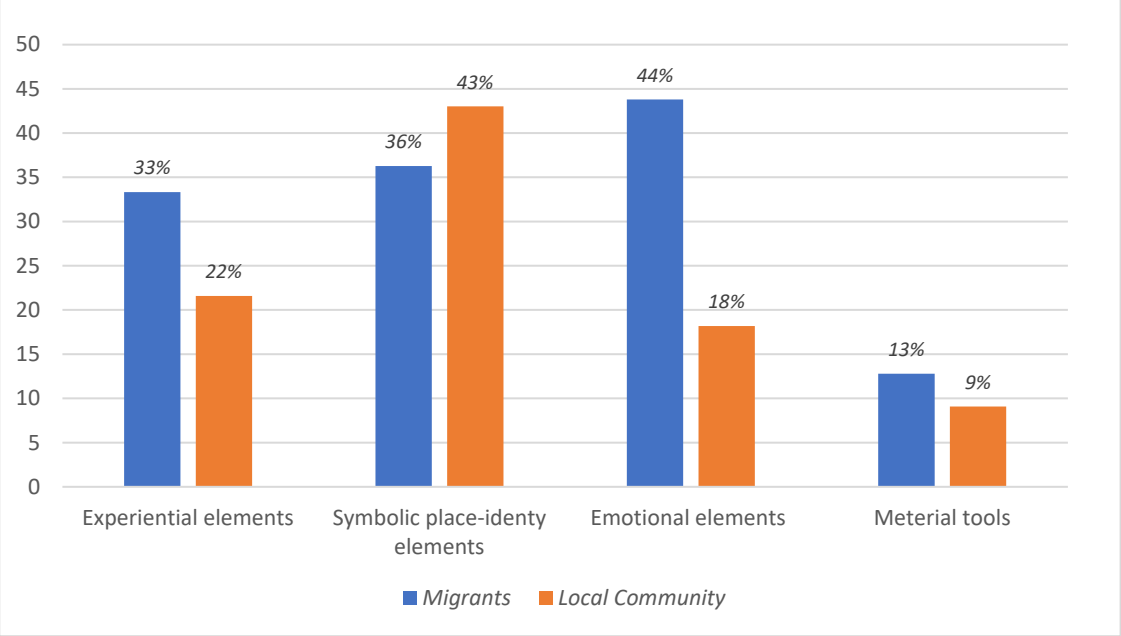


Figure 25 – Percentage comparison of categorized elements present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

Entering more in depth into the different classifications - always comparing the results of the migrant group with the ones of the local community - the data was further detailed registering the specificities in it contained. In such sub-categories

the description of each element drawn by the Respondents was recorded in the diagram according to its natural meaning supported by the explanatory narratives.

The *experiential elements* category was fragmented into eight sub-categories: "personal identity", "family dimension", "attention to animals", "social networks", "personal activities", "social activities", "travel elements" and "new opportunities". Indeed, it is the migrant group that for these classifications showed the higher frequencies and percentages of images sketched. In particular, the elements involving family, relatives and friends, as well as the travel elements, stand out as most recurrent especially for them and less present for the locals.

Focusing on the "personal identity" data, the frequency with which the elements occur in the two groups is very similar on the overall. However, for the migrants there is the breakdown between the country of origin and the host country with a predominance of personal identity drawings in the home country setting.

1

PERSONAL IDENTITY	Migrants				Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)		*Percentages (%)*		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	ORIGIN COUNTRY	HOST COUNTRY	*ORIGIN COUNTRY*	*HOST COUNTRY*	**12**	***36.36***
	11	**4**	***25.58***	***9.30***		
ABSENT	32	39	*74.42*	*90.70*	21	*63.64*
TOTAL	43	43	*100*	*100*	33	*100*

2

FAMILY DIMENSION (parents, spouse, children, siblings, etc.)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**28**	***65.12***	**8**	***24.24***
ABSENT	15	*34.88*	25	*75.76*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

3

ATTENTION TO ANIMALS	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**4**	***9.30***	**3**	***9.09***
ABSENT	39	*90.70*	30	*90.91*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

4	SOCIAL NETWORK (friends, social workers, travel companions, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**12**	***27.91***	**9**	***27.27***
	ABSENT	31	*72.09*	24	*72.73*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

5	PERSONAL ACTIVITIES (work, study, play, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**10**	***23.26***	**9**	***27.27***
	ABSENT	33	*76.74*	24	*72.73*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

6	SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (work, study, play, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**5**	***11.63***	**10**	***30.30***
	ABSENT	38	*88.37*	23	*69.70*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

7	TRAVEL ELEMENTS and SYMBOLS (arrows, airplanes, boats, vehicles, walking, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**38**	***88.37***	**3**	***9.09***
	ABSENT	5	*11.63*	30	*90.91*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

8	NEW OPPORTUNITIES and EXPERIENCES	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**17**	***39.53***	**3**	***9.09***
	ABSENT	26	*60.47*	30	*90.91*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

Table X – Percentage comparison of subcategories within the "experiential elements" category present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

The *symbolic place-identity elements* category was split into five sub-categories: "house/home", "iconic places", "natural elements", "geographical elements", and "place identity". Both sample groups have more or less similar frequencies and

percentages of elements drawn which are linked to significant locations, either representing nature or manmade buildings.

1 HOUSE / HOME	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**10**	***23.26***	**11**	***33.33***
ABSENT	33	*76.74*	22	*66.67*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

2 ICONIC PLACES (prisons, airports and ports, hospitals, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**12**	***27.91***	**7**	***21.21***
ABSENT	31	*72.09*	26	*78.79*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

3 NATURAL ELEMENTS (sun, rain, clouds, trees, flowers, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**24**	***55.81***	**20**	***60.61***
ABSENT	19	*44.19*	13	*39.39*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

4 GEOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**26**	***60.47***	**25**	***75.76***
ABSENT	17	*39.53*	8	*24.24*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

5 PLACE IDENTITY: CULTURAL SYMBOLS (food, music, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**6**	***13.95***	**8**	***24.24***
ABSENT	37	*86.05*	25	*75.76*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

Table XI – Percentage comparison of subcategories within the "symbolic place-identity elements" category present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

The *emotional elements* category was broken down into six sub-categories: "expressions of happiness", "expressions of sadness", "memories", "expressions of affection", "expressions of fear", and "religious symbols". Within the subgroupings of this category there are significant higher values among the migrants who drew many pictures with expressions of their emotions both positive, such as happiness, hope, and safety, and negative of anguish, sorrow, and terror. This disparity with the local community members can be explained by their different life histories: many of them went through greater hardships and traumas either at the starting point of their travel experiences or in the various legs of their journey, with feelings of relief upon arrival in a secure place.

1

EXPRESSIONS OF HAPPINESS (smile, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**29**	***67.44***	**14**	***42.42***
ABSENT	14	*32.56*	19	*57.58*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

2

EXPRESSIONS OF SADNESS (lips down, tears, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**17**	***39.53***	**3**	***9.09***
ABSENT	26	*60.47*	30	*90.91*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

3

MEMORIES	Migrants		Local Community	
	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies **(F.)**	*Percentages (%)*
PRESENT	**23**	***53.49***	**0**	***0.00***
ABSENT	20	*46.51*	33	*100.00*
TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

4	EXPRESSIONS OF AFFECTION	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**21**	***48.84***	**16**	***48.48***
	ABSENT	22	*51.16*	17	*51.52*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

5	EXPRESSIONS OF FEAR	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**21**	***48.84***	**1**	***3.03***
	ABSENT	22	*51.16*	32	*96.97*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

6	RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**2**	***4.65***	**2**	***6.06***
	ABSENT	41	*95.35*	31	*93.94*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

Table XII – Percentage comparison of subcategories within the "emotional elements" category present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

The *material tools* category was divided into two sub-categories: "school/work tools" and "personal objects", of which there were just few drawings from both sample groups.

1	SCHOOL/WORK TOOLS (books, scissors, sticks, etc…)	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**8**	***18.60***	**3**	***9.09***
	ABSENT	35	*81.40*	30	*90.91*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

2	PERSONAL OBJECTS	Migrants		Local Community	
		Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*	Frequencies (F.)	*Percentages (%)*
	PRESENT	**3**	***6.98***	**3**	***9.09***
	ABSENT	40	*93.02*	30	*90.91*
	TOTAL	43	100	*33*	*100*

Table XIII – Percentage comparison of subcategories within the "material tools elements" category present in the drawings of the migrants and of the local community

5.5.2. Figurative Technique Integrated with Storytelling - Map Accounts

Through their drawings the migrants shared interesting and revealing accounts, rich in meaningful emotional data useful for this research.

Four stories have been selected to present geographical, gender, and content balanced examples of the significant information collected related to the migrants' displacements.

For each selected story, first there is some reference data together with the travel narrative; following, the drawing of the selected Respondent is shown; then there is a map constructed with the aid of Tableau software in which the feelings expressed by each migrant are illustrated; and finally a travel emotional legend supports the visual layout of the itinerary.

The colors on the maps represent the ones through which the migrants expressed their emotions, not necessarily the Respondents of these four stories, but the migrant group in general. The key and range of shades chosen by the Researcher is based on the colors and shades voiced and drawn by the entire group, hence the scale used.

Story 1: "Young Somali Woman Travelling Alone"

STORY N. 1 *<M-14-W>*	
GENDER	woman
COUNTRY	Somalia
AGE	about 20
PLACE	village
EDUCATION	elementary
TRAVEL	alone/bad
FAITH	yes

Journey Itinerary	***Emotions***	**Imagined Return Journey**	***Emotions***
Somalia	*happy / afraid*	Germany	*safe*
Ethiopia	*courage*	Ethiopia	*love*
Sudan	*courage*	Germany	*peace*
Libya	*horror*		
Italy (Sicily)	*safe*		
Germany	*hope*		

Table XIV – References regarding journeys of Respondent <M-14-W>

STORY N. 1 <M-14-W>
TRAVEL NARRATIVE

JOURNEY (upper section of the drawing)

My travels started from my village in Somalia where there was the bright sun, my father and child, our house and the goats. An aunt of mine helped me to leave the country in a big car and go to Ethiopia and Sudan. Then I arrived in Libya, the most terrible place on earth. I will not draw Libya, I will just draw when I took the boat and crossed the sea. I finally arrived in Italy and was so happy, but I of course kept thinking and being lonesome for my child was so far away.

IMAGINED RETURN JOURNEY (middle section of the drawing)

I hope to be able to go back soon to take my child. I would leave from Germany with a big luggage and then I would take an airplane and fly up to the frontier between Ethiopia and Somalia and in the Ethiopian side I will meet my child. We would embrace tight and be overwhelmed with happiness of being together again.

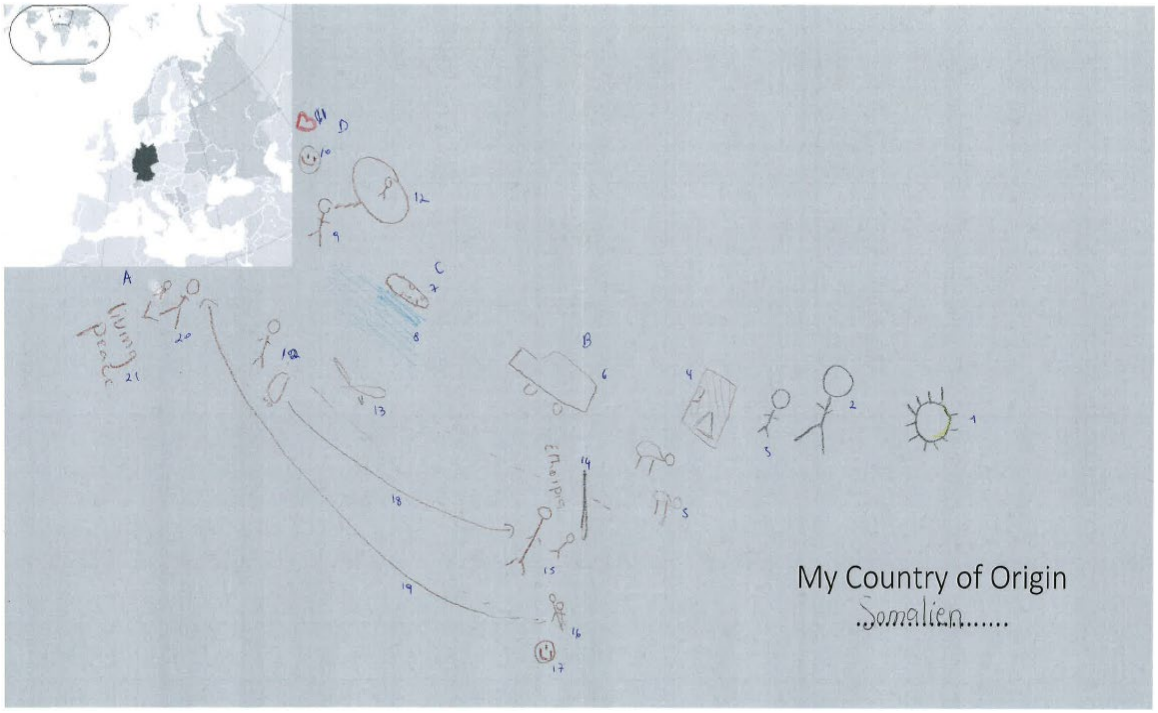


Figure 26 – Journey and imagined return travels of Respondent <M-14-W>

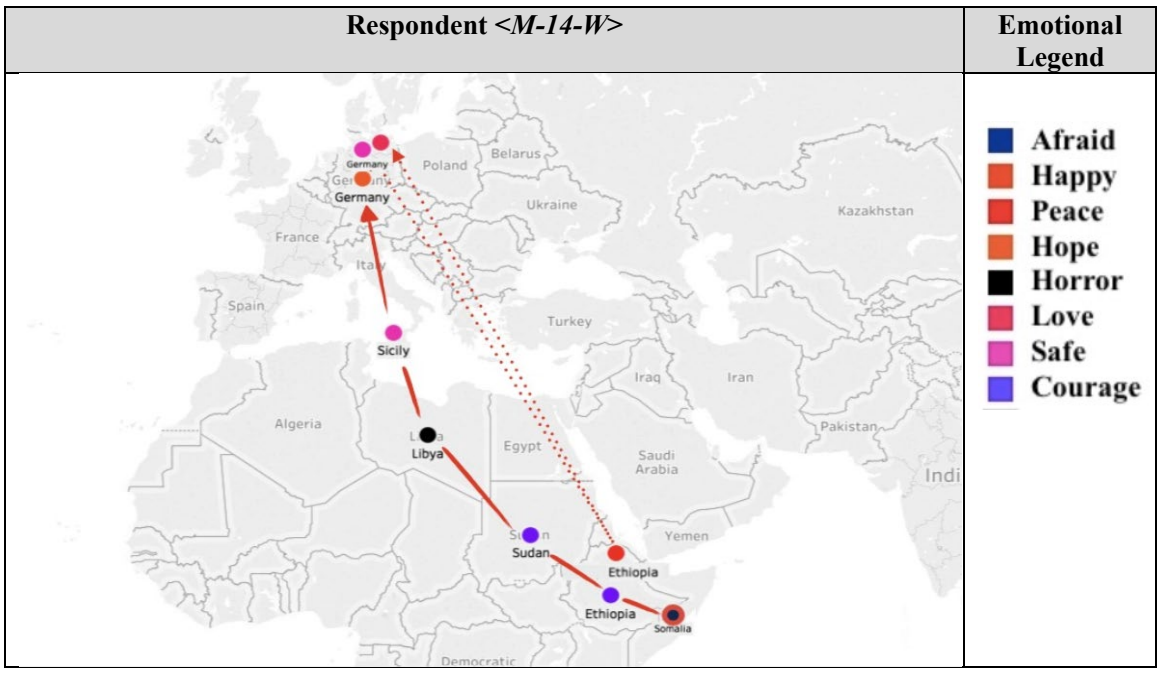


Figure 27 – Emotional journey and imagined return travels of Respondent <M-14-W>

Story 2: "Young Guinean Man Travelling with Brother and then Alone"

STORY N. 2 <M-10-M>	
GENDER	man
COUNTRY	Guinea
AGE	19
PLACE	city
EDUCATION	middle school
TRAVEL	alone/bad*
FAITH	yes

Journey Itinerary	***Emotions***	**Imagined Return Journey**	***Emotions***
Guinea	*happy / afraid*	Germany	*hope*
Mali	*patience*	Guinea	*happy / doubtful*
Burkina Faso	*courage*		
Niger	*afraid*		
Libya	*horror*		
Italy (Sardinia)	*safe*		
Germany	*stress / hope*		

*****brother died in the journey*

Table XV – References regarding journeys of Respondent <M-10-M>

STORY N. 2 <M-10-M>
TRAVEL NARRATIVE

JOURNEY (lower section of the drawing)

Something happened to my elder brother and me when I was in Guinea and we had to leave in a hurry. We were in great danger so we made a telephone call to our mother and she advised us to go to Mali and stay with her brother that lives there. So, we found a car with other people and we travelled on the road to Mali. Unfortunately, things did not go well in Mali. Thus, after 3 months living there, our uncle helped us to continue our journey through various African countries so to try and reach Europe. First, we took a bus to Burkina Faso and after to Niger. I remember the terrible landscape and difficult roads and that everyone was smoking so much on that bus. Then we had to cross the desert on a truck with other 29 persons plus the driver/guide. We spent 4 long days in the desert. You can see clearly on my skin the deep scars I have from the horrible sunburns I got. Finally, we arrived in that terrible place which is Libya. My brother and I, we were immediately jailed in a cell together with other 6 people. I don't want to speak about Libya, it was hell and my brother did not survive it. Then there was the boat I was able to take to go to Europe. The sea water was hope for me and even if I arrived in very bad conditions, I still was happy to have arrived alive in Sardinia.

IMAGINED RETURN JOURNEY (upper section of the drawing)

I don't know what will happen to me, if I will be able to stay in Germany and Europe or not. If I should return back home – but only in case I am sure that my mother is still there-, I would return with an airplane.

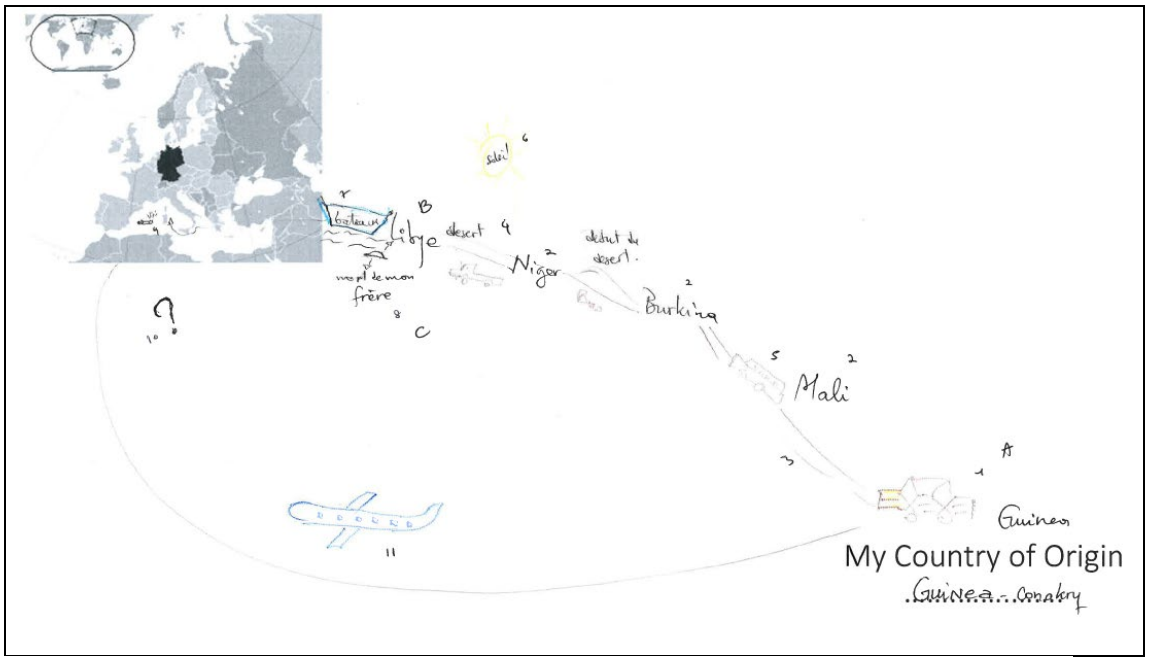


Figure 28 – Journey of Respondent <M-10-M>

Respondent <*M-10-M*>	Emotional Legend

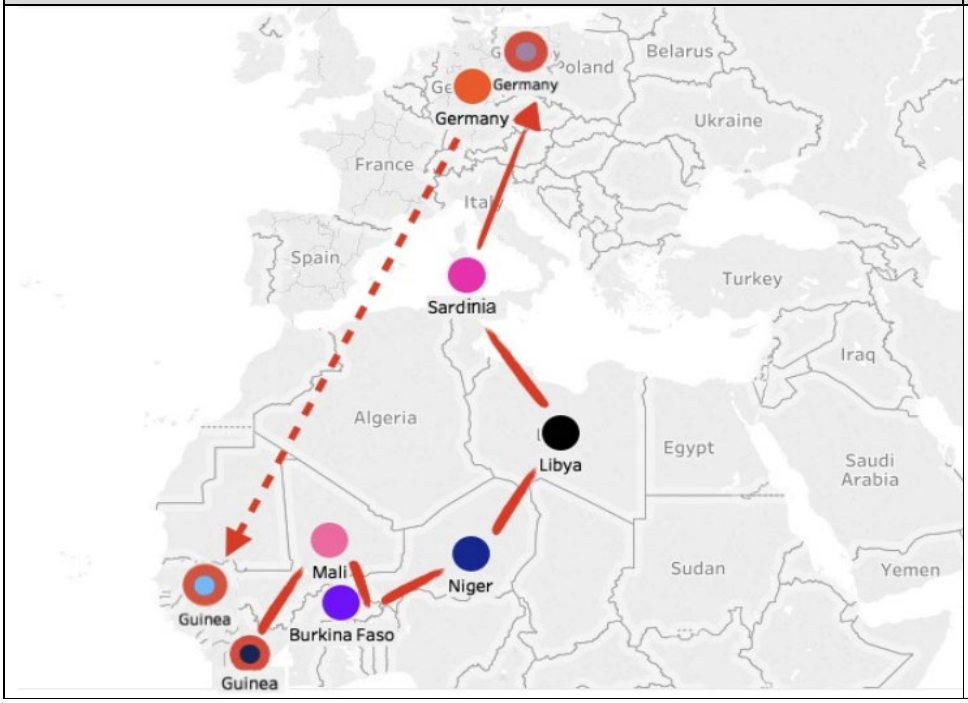


Figure 29 – Emotional journey and imagined return travels of Respondent <M-10-M>

Story 3: "Afghani Man Travelling with Family"

STORY N. 3 <M-22-M>	
GENDER	man
COUNTRY	Afghanistan
AGE	30
PLACE	city
EDUCATTION	elementary
TRAVEL	family/bad
FAITH	yes

Journey Itinerary	***Emotions***
Afghanistan	*afraid*
Iran	*courage*
Turkey	*patience*
Greece	*afraid*
Serbia	*endurance*
Slovenia	*courage*
Italy	*strength*
France	*strength*
Germany	*happy*

Table XVI – References regarding journey of Respondent <M-22-M>

STORY N. 3 <M-22-M>
TRAVEL NARRATIVE

JOURNEY

Due to the dangerous situation in Afghanistan, I decided that it was better that my wife, our son and I had to leave to escape from danger. We walked up to the border of Afghanistan with Iran and from there we continued with a car. Between Iran and Turkey there is a river that we crossed using a big truck tire and taking turns in passing one by one to the other side. I crossed with my son in my arms. In Turkey we stayed for a while and we had a house there. I used to take my wife and son to a park near our house. It was a beautiful garden near the seaside. But then we had to leave also from Turkey and passed the border between Turkey and Greece. There was nothing to eat, not even bread and cheese. There also was a small river near that border for water. When we arrived in Greece, we were caught by the Greek police, but we were able to escape and the three of us on foot walked a long way through forests. We had also to sleep in the forest even if we were afraid of the animals and the dangers of the forest. However, we were able to move forward and we arrived in Serbia. In Serbia we stayed over a year in a camp. After all those months we decided to continue

our journey and walked all the way from Serbia to Slovenia passing through other countries too. In Slovenia we stayed 3 days in another camp where they took our fingerprints. Then from Slovenia, walking and by car, we reached Italy where we remained 1 week and then moved on to France by car, train and walking. We finally arrived in Germany. I was happy and I liked it. I am starting to learn German and thus get the tool to begin a new life.

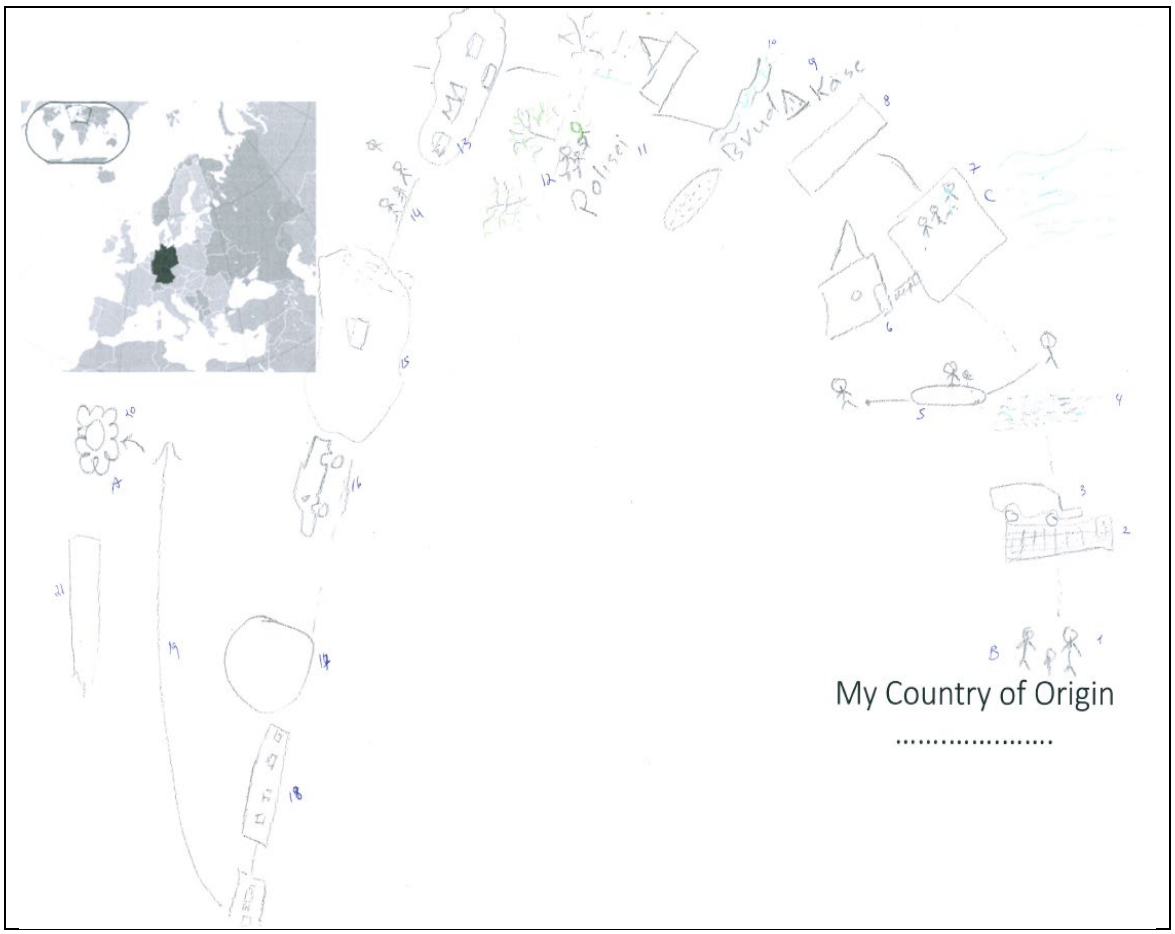


Figure 30 – Journey of Respondent <M-22-M>

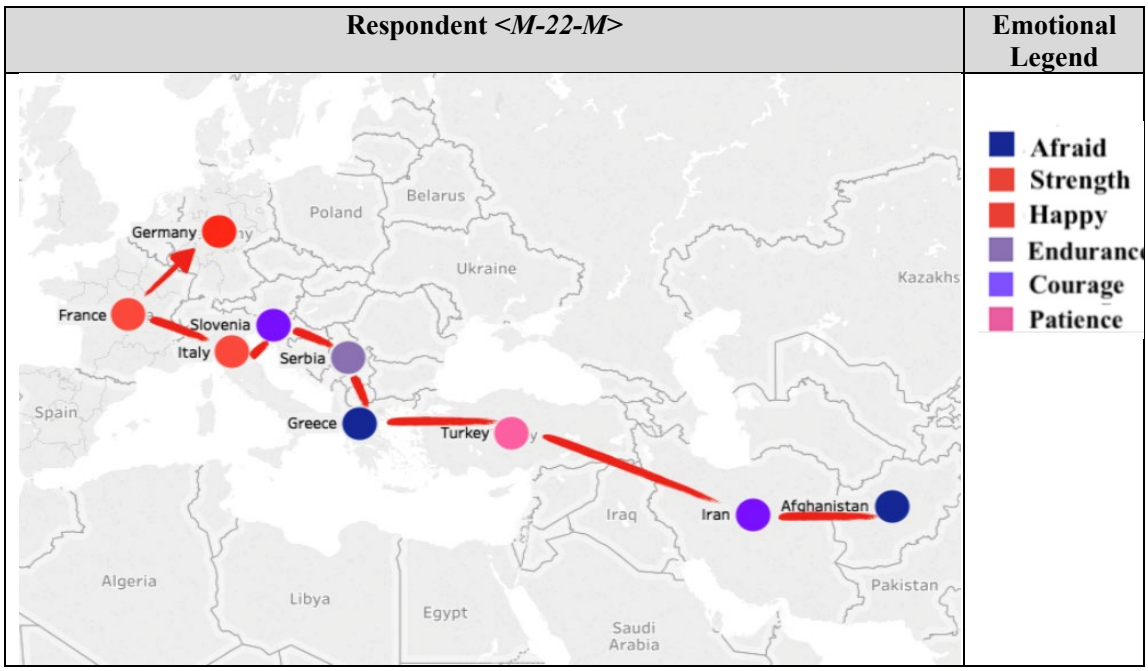


Figure 31 – Emotional journey of Respondent <M-22-M>

Story 4: "Ukrainian Woman Travelling with Family"

STORY N. 4 <M-18-W>	
GENDER	woman
COUNTRY	Ukraine
AGE	28
PLACE	city
EDUCATION	university degree
TRAVEL	family/bad
FAITH	yes

Journey Itinerary	***Emotions***
Ukraine	*happy / afraid*
Poland	*tired*
Sweden	*desperate*
Denmark	*desperate*
Germany	*happy / hope / lonely*

Table XVII – References regarding journey of Respondent <M-18-W>

STORY N. 4 <M-18-W>
TRAVEL NARRATIVE

JOURNEY

My life in Ukraine was happy and without problems before the various difficulties started. I had my family and many friends, there was our home and now I have wonderful memories of those days. Then, we had to leave and start the road which was long and arduous. We took the train to Poland and after that, a plane that took us to Sweden. Continuing our journey through Denmark, we moved on with a car and at a point we were so desperate that my husband, my little child and myself had to sleep in the street. When we were able to overcome that terrible moment and moved on, we took the train to Germany. I was exhausted but happy that the 3 of us (I was pregnant, so actually the 4 of us) had arrived safely and together to our destination. I wish to also express the joy we have today even if sometimes I feel lonely when I think of my relatives far away. I see my future here in Germany, this is the place we have started building our life in and where we are integrating. My children feel this as their home. I will not return to Ukraine because I am too afraid to go back.

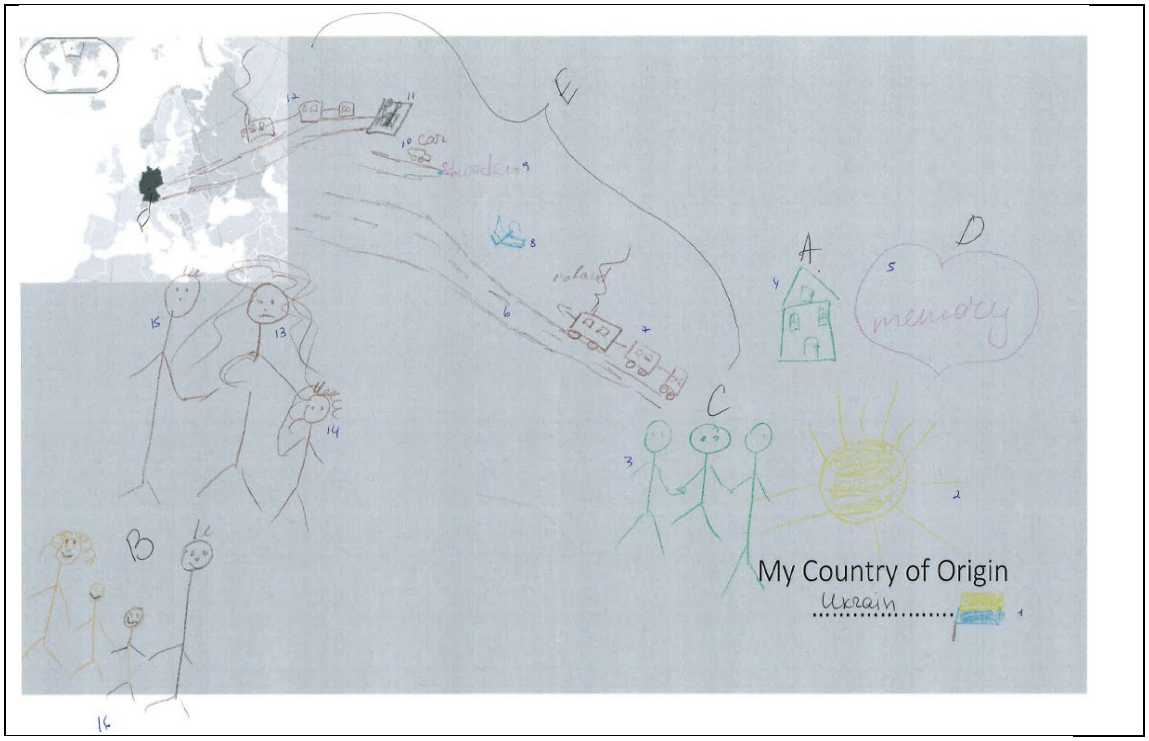


Figure 32 – Journey of Respondent <M-18-W>

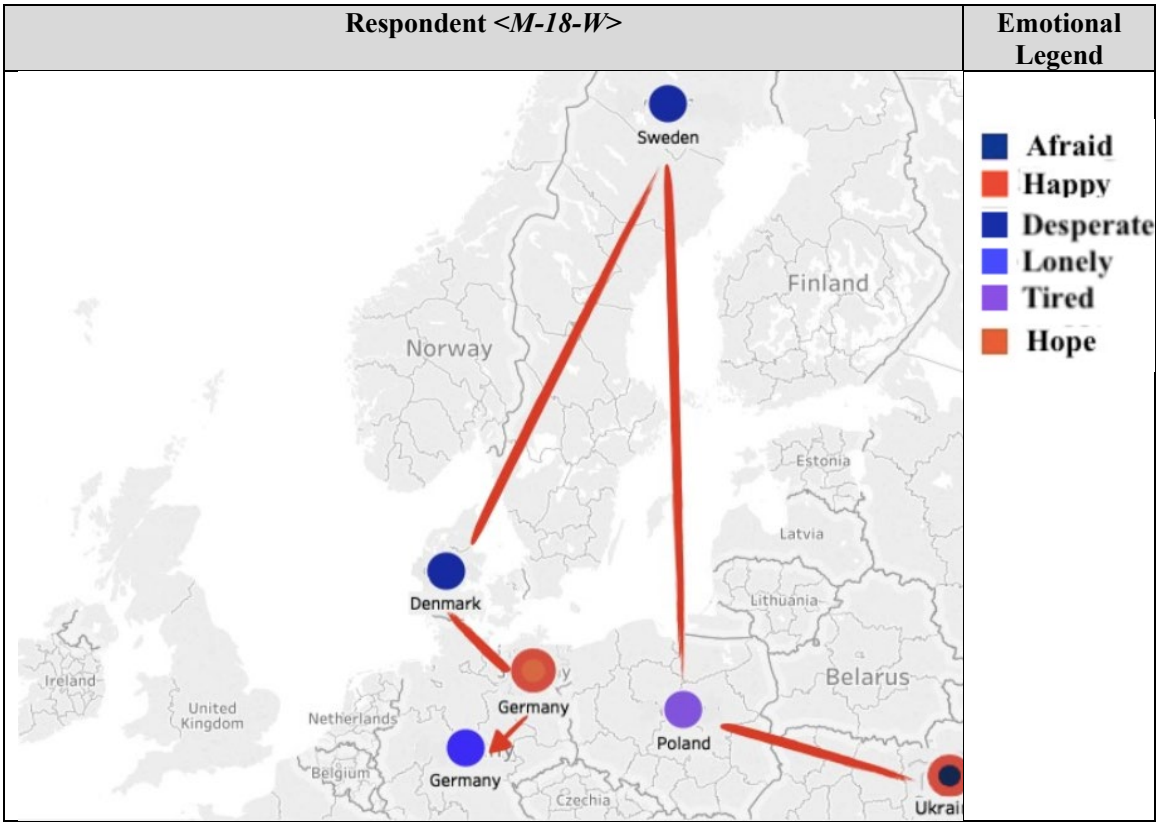


Figure 33 – Emotional journey of Respondent <M-18-W>

5.5.3. Figurative Technique Integrated with Storytelling - Perceptions and Projections

The data obtained from the Respondents with the figurative technique tool provided information on the perceptions of both the migrants and the locals concerning themselves and the new social environment which resulted following the encounter of the two groups. Moreover, with their pictures, the Respondents provided graphic insights on their future scenarios expressing visually their ideas and hopes regarding their own lives and their society in the near future.

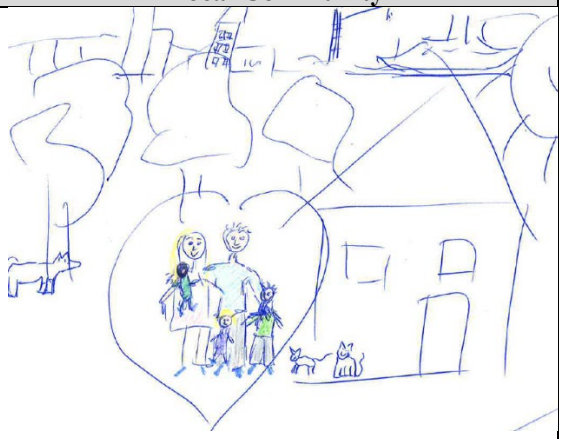
Interestingly, when carefully examining the drawings, there are indeed many parallels and resemblances in the details of the images produced by the newcomers

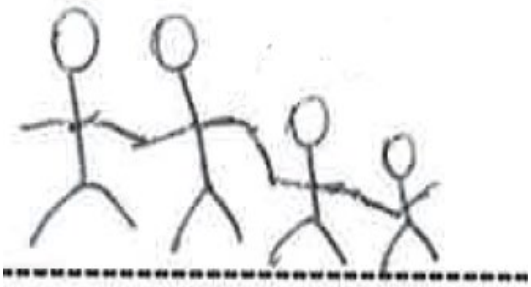
and by the receiving community members. All elements pictured mostly reflect the central importance of personal relations involving family circles and friendships, but there also is an attention with respect to the new social environment resulting from the arrival of the migrants in the host community.

Personal Relations: Family and Friendships

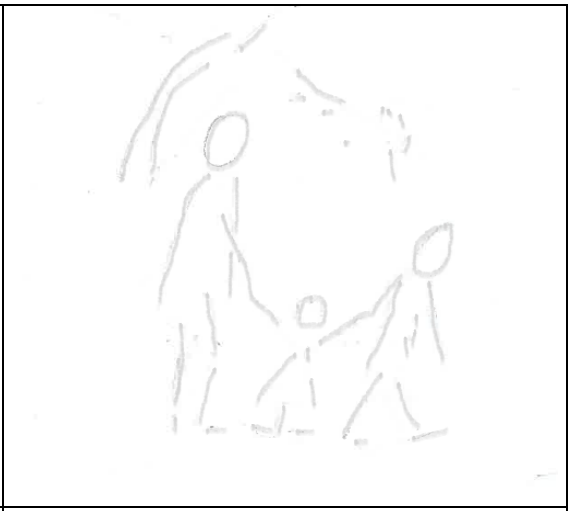
Below there is the comparison of a selection of drawings from both groups in which there is a focus on the more intimate relationships with relatives and friends. Important to note are the impressive similarities between the symbolic elements reproduced in the pictures of the migrants and those found in the drawings of the locals.

For instance, in the family drawings there are almost identical representations of affection and love within the family units, expressed through hearts, father-mother-children pictures, and household relationships including the family pets.

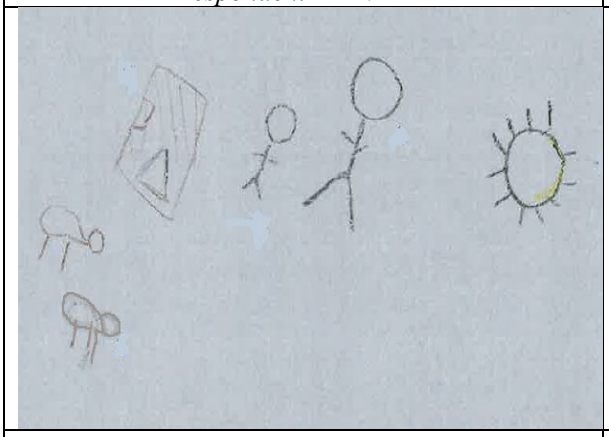
Migrants	**Local Community**
	
Respondent <M-C-3-W>	*Respondent <C-S-15-W>*



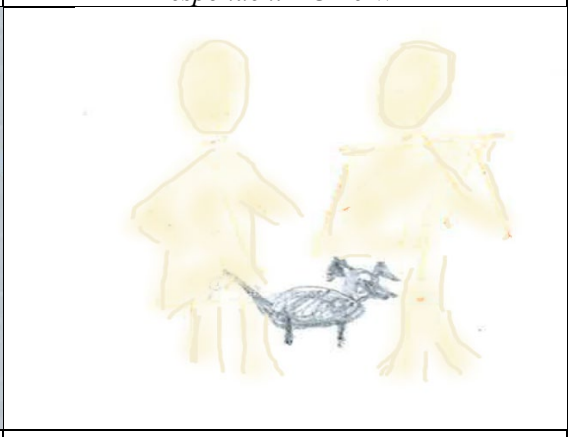
Respondent <M-7-M>



Respondent <C-16-W>



Respondent <M-14-W>



Respondent <C-25-W>

Figure 34 – Family representations in drawings of migrants and locals

Similarly, in the drawings of amicable interactions, there are comparable images of the connections with friends such as when enjoying sport activities, sharing food or socializing outdoors.

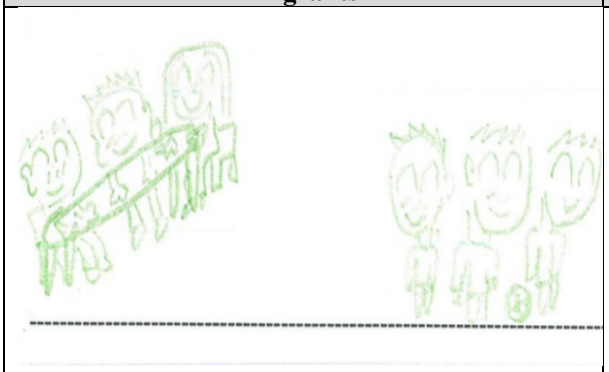
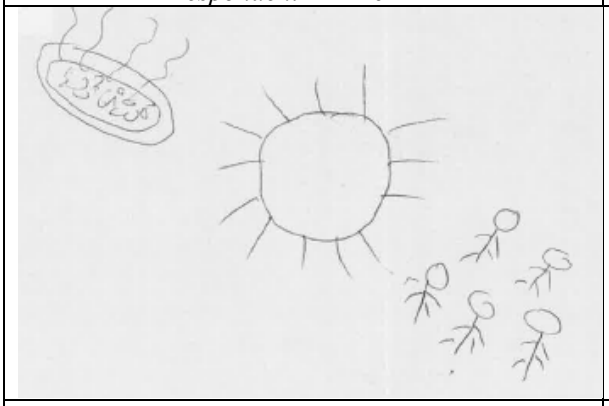
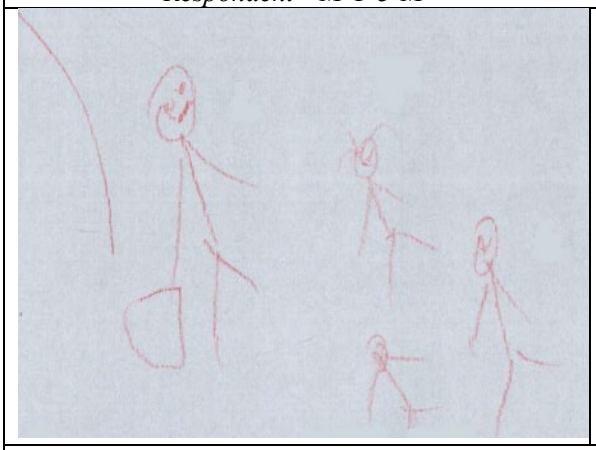
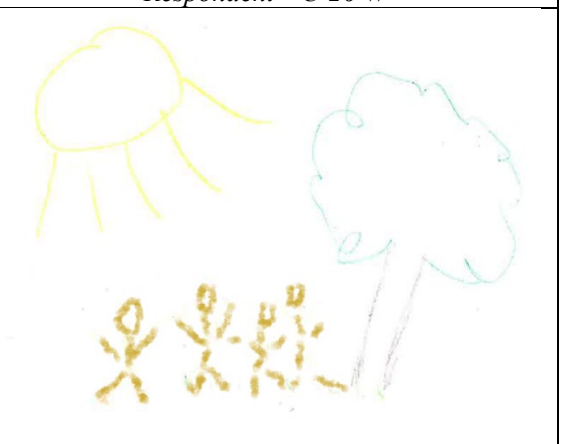
Migrants	Local Community
	
Respondent <M-26-M>	*Respondent <C-23-M>*
	
Respondent <M-T-3-M>	*Respondent <C-26-W>*
	
Respondent <M-23-M>	*Respondent <C-S-9-W>*

Figure 35 – Friendship representations in drawings of migrants and locals

Future New Social Environment

Coming now to the imagined and hoped visualization of the new community resulted from the encounter of the migrants with the natives, particularly meaningful are the drawings of the receiving community members that denote acknowledgment and the will to participate to a new future multicultural and inclusive space.

Below are a few examples of expressive images produced by the local group showing how they see their community in the near future.

Snapshot 1: "Peaceful Inclusion"

SNAPSHOT N. 1 <C-2-W>
PICTORIAL EXPLANATION
Age: 31
Gender: woman
Education: bachelor of arts
Occupation: social worker
Faith: no

I hope that in the future the local community will have settled down as there will be integration and all interactions will be natural with people living in a nice and green environment. My drawing shows colorful circles that overlap. I want to express that various aspects come together when there is migration. Nevertheless, while keeping some specificities, there is sharing with others from different cultures. In any case all circles are enclosed into one bigger green circle. Note that green for me resembles hope, therefore it reflects ***peaceful inclusion****.*

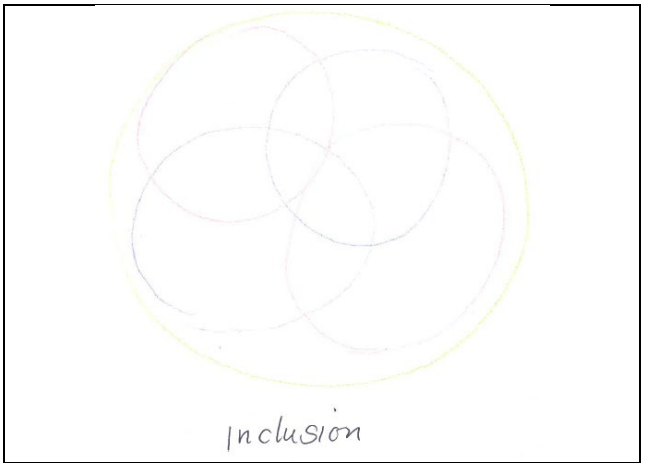


Figure 36 – Image of future social environment by Respondent <C-2-W>

Snapshot 2: "Multicultural Community"

SNAPSHOT N. 2 <C-S-3-M>
PICTORIAL EXPLANATION
Age: 31
Gender: man
Education: bachelor in management
Occupation: migrants accommodation center director
Faith: no

For me in the future we will still be addressing the issue of migration and I believe the key is integration, no more parallel communities living within our society. Hopefully in the near future I will live in a ***multicultural community****. For instance 2024, I see it as a time when there will be a place where there is a community flourishing around a river that does not separate but which is an integrative part of the whole picture of a multicultural society. There will be more houses built because the population will grow, and everyone will enjoy together nature: fields, river, trees, sea and beaches.*

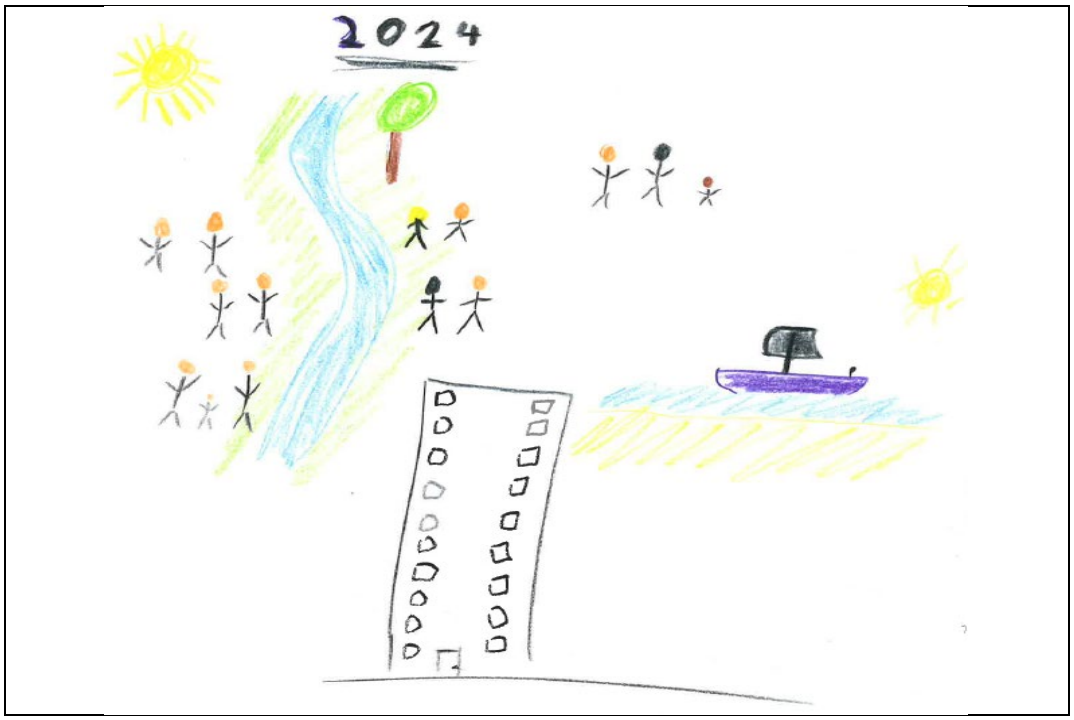


Figure 37 – Image of future social environment by Respondent <C-S-3-M>

Snapshot 3: "Planet Earth as One Whole Body"

SNAPSHOT N. 3 <C-S-13-M>
PICTORIAL EXPLANATION
Age: 30
Gender: man
Education: master of political sciences
Occupation: social worker
Faith: no

For what concerns the local community, I hope there will be more respect among people disregarding where they come from. I hope there will be more empathy.
I would like to draw the world. I will consider only the continents from a physical geography perspective, thus without borders, the ***planet earth as one whole body****.*

Figure 38 – Image of future social environment by Respondent <C-S-13-M>

Lastly, significant for this research are the pictures drawn at the end of the interview by Respondents <*C-27-M*> and <*C-11-W*>, a man and woman in their thirties, that show how they - as many others - imagine a future diversified community. Interestingly, the colors selected for the people in their drawings are green, pink, blue and orange with no reference to ethnic or racial characteristics.

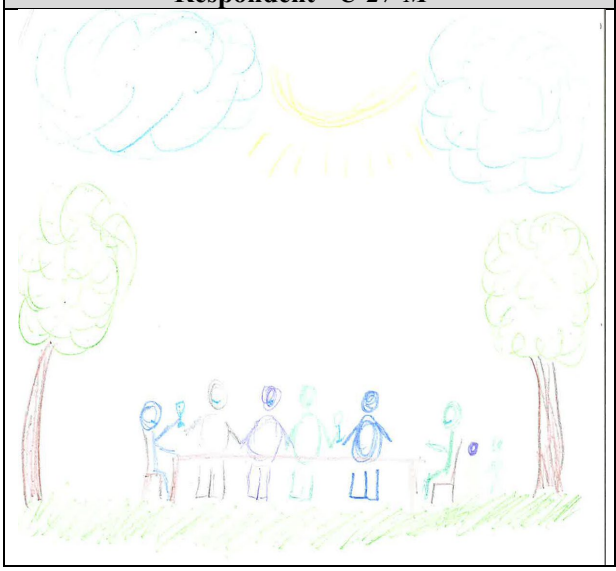
Respondent <*C-27-M*>	**Respondent <*C-11-W*>**
	

Figure 39 – Multicultural future community drawings

CHAPTER VI
Conclusions

"… a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind[30]" states one of the recitals in the preamble of the UNESCO Constitution highlighting the importance of reciprocal knowledge and understanding, as well as the centrality of human solidarity for long-term coexistence in a non-violent world.

Learning about the other, and learning to live together in the framework of human rights values and intercultural respect and communication are the basis of the principles shared by those individuals and communities who strive to achieve peaceful interculturalism and integration promoting interactions, exchange and dialogue (Melotti, 2018).

Today's human displacements, with some of the highest numbers of people on the move ever, seem however to be challenging our societies in the pursuit of these fundamental endeavors. In fact, as reported by specialized agencies and organizations such as IOM[31] and UNHCR[32], people are moving due to persecution, wars, diseases, climate change and poverty, in search of safety and of a better future despite the countless obstacles and difficulties they encounter during their journeys as well as at arrival destinations. In addition, once they have reached the new locations, many of these newcomers unlikely will leave and return to their homelands.

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[30] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Constitution, signed on 16 November 1945, came into force on 4 November 1946

[31] IOM-International Organization for Migration-World Migration Report 2020, ISSN 1561-5502, e-ISBN 978-92-9068-789-4

[32] UNHCR - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Global Report 2019

In such a scenario it seems therefore necessary to focus on the concept of humanity in the sense of innate solidarity feelings found in humankind and on an open communication which ensure that all actors have an equivalent position within a given society for everyone's wellbeing (Todorov, 2010).

The events of recent years – including how the current migration phenomenon is being looked at and addressed – still raise concern for the unwelcoming drift mankind is taking regarding in particular human mobility, a direction towards which people are projecting themselves and their societies, even though it has to be noted that emotions of cohesion and benevolence do prevail in certain contexts of suffering and distress, mostly in restricted circles and situations of personal interface and relation.

There truly are many encouraging and positive examples especially from the civil society. Worldwide groups of organized citizens or communities, lay associations or faith-based organizations provide meals, shelter, and convivial moments of hospitality and friendly atmosphere for the newcomers; many university professors and students have created programs and networks to support migrants' access to education and learning; volunteer doctors and nurses cure and help refugees and migrants; or pro bono lawyers and legal experts assist with immigration and asylum counseling.

A true symbol of humane mercy and reception is the small island of Lampedusa in Sicily as throughout its history it has been a landing place where travelers and desperate people have been welcomed. The members of the small native community in the most difficult moments have rescued and even fed and accommodated in their own homes the shipwrecked arriving on the island[33].

[33] Municipality of Lampedusa and Linosa, *https://www.comune.lampedusaelinosa.ag.it/*

Figure 40 – "Porta d'Europa", the door to Europe, symbolic door by Mimmo Paladino at Cavallo Bianco, Lampedusa - Sicily

Also the first refugee radio started in 2014 in Germany by Larry Moore Macaulay, a Nigerian migrant himself arrived in Europe in 2011, is a noteworthy solidarity initiative that gives voice to refugees and migrants in their new society. In addition, it provides them with information and news regarding the local community facilitating communication and integration. Today "Refugee Radio Network" is a valuable broadcast medium throughout the European continent[34].

Likewise, the City Plaza Hotel experience in Athens is another demonstration of harmony and collaboration in situations of direct and mutual interaction among newly arrived and locals. The former disused seven-story hotel hosted, from 2016 until the second half of 2019, about 400 migrants living together with local activists, fostering a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. Every resident had to agree to

[34] Refugee Radio Network, *https://www.refugeeradionetwork.net/*

cooperate to the community which was based on consideration for each person, regardless of race, gender or religion. All decisions were discussed in assemblies and taken collectively. Recently returned to its owners, the hotel hosted an initiative which remains a precious model of successful organization from below and of dignified living, and a strong counterexample to racism and exclusion[35].

Thus, as these exemplifying stories demonstrate, a direct and personal interaction acquiring knowledge of the other seems indeed central in facilitating a tendency towards an approach where there is – to a certain degree – multicultural integration that goes along with an equitable participation and involvement while diversity maintenance is retained (Duncan, 2005). Therefore, for "…integration we mean people's joint involvement in, and attachment to, both their heritage culture and the larger society of settlement … the fundamental goal of multiculturalism policy, which is to achieve mutual accommodation" (Berry & Sam, 2013, p. 156).

Indeed, this study tried to fit into such line of analysis, looking at the common traits of newcomers and receiving community members, searching for, and comparing, their social representations linked precisely to the theme of their coming together and to the future social environment they are now sharing and contributing to develop and build. As posed by Gordon W. Allport, precisely the contact among groups can reduce prejudice and encourage agreeable acknowledgment as when members from a majority and minority group relate in positive experiences their approach changes, reducing stereotypes. Moreover, this positive exposure will be further extended and will take the place of previous negative assumptions with respect to the other (Allport, 1954/1979) contributing to the advent of civilization and humanity as conflictive emotions and tendencies are reduced (Todorov, 2010).

6.1. Research Final Account

The *objectives* of this study were to explore the migrants' and receiving community's interpretation of the migration phenomenon - each from its specific background - and to determine their positive and favorable attitudes vis-à-vis the

[35] Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space City Plaza, *https://www.facebook.com/sol2refugeesen/*

central theme of this analysis as well as their reciprocal interaction, necessary for a successful and peaceful coexistence and social development.

Moreover – through the examination of the mirror social representations produced by the two sample groups of this research following their coming together – this work aims at looking into the structure of such corresponding social representations, comparing them and noting in particular the shared features and parallels which are perceived as the relevant basis for a non-violent and harmonious coexistence and growth.

The methodology chosen for this research was the *modelling approach* (de Rosa, 2012/2014) that allows the combination of quantitative and qualitative exploration tools and procedures, but also enables an exhaustive architecture for the analysis and investigation as it draws from multi-theory paradigms and mixed techniques, interrelated and blended together.

Through the data resulted from the *associative network technique* it was possible to observe in depth the structures of the social representations developed by the migrants and the local community members and comprehend their nearness and correlation.

For the self-identity representations, the migrants and locals both revealed a positive polarity tendency while expressing a sociable and overt self-concept having as core of the representation the elements “open-minded” and “friendly”.

The social representations – emblems of the new social environment resulted from the arrival of the migrants and the encounter with the natives – certainly revealed a common propensity to amalgamate and connect. Both groups in their representations even showed the way to achieve such goal, that is, the important role played by education and learning, as well as the relevance of the sense of “future community” and of the enrichment there is in an “international and multicultural space”.

Despite there was also evidence of the complexity of building a cohesive and solidarity-based community, the Respondents provided representations that included the perspective of the other, understanding it, and remaining in any case available to relate and develop further their interactions.

Then, linked to identity positioning and to the interpretation of a global open society, the central element of the representations of the two sample groups showed a deep parallel between a high number of aspects simultaneously present in the social representations of both the migrants and locals. Indeed, there are expressions in the heart of the representations such as “peace”, “equality”, “respect”, “culture”, and “community” which reflect how all Respondents are firmly set on a positive position within the wider image of humanity and of a multifaceted society with, in both groups, a marked orientation towards a new, inclusive, multicultural and future environment.

Thanks to the *semi-structured contextual socio-demographic interview* and to the *figurative technique* it was possible to give a closer look at the social representations linked to the dynamic identity adjustment after the contact between the newcomers and the original residents.

Both the migrant and local community groups, following their encounter and interactions, expressed important progress and transformation towards the development of an open identity.

Memory, essential in the social representations theory, was also rich of significance for all Respondents: migrants’ past emotions and experiences – fortunate as well as painful – that had occurred in their home country or during their travels, together with recollections of feelings of safety and opportunity once in the new society on the one hand; and a number of good memories of the locals related to their direct relation with the migrants, on the other hand.

Furthermore, with reference to the new environment, the key aspects for the migrant group reported in their narratives were mostly the feelings of thankfulness, refuge

and new opportunities. The locals, with respect to their new community after the arrival of the newcomers, expressed overall principally quite positive representations, even if there are traits underlying the complexities involved in the adjustment and transformation process. There is comprehension of the life dramas of the other and an open attitude towards a sense of revitalization, enrichment and economic drive important for their society.

There certainly are references in both groups to the need of making efforts of adaptation especially on the side of the migrants who should comply with the local rules together with a common engagement towards mutual respect, fundamental along with the acquisition of language skills necessary for a smooth communication, dialogue and interaction.

Finally, also the results from the *World Euro Sky Compass technique* revealed that the two sample groups have much similar feelings and views regarding the different areas of the world. Such matching social representations could correspond to personal experience or could be the effect of the direct interaction between migrants and locals, which has determined the transmission and sharing of many incidents involving significant emotional implications.

It can therefore be concluded that the results obtained from all the research tools applied to this study have indeed largely confirmed the *hypotheses* which were the starting point of this work:

- on the one hand, that the life experiences of the migrants together with the indirect knowledge among the locals of specific stories and incidents of displaced persons are a key element and the basis for the new community resulting from the arrival of the displaced. Truly, “The structural process of migration brings individuals and cultures into contact, changing social landscapes.” (O’Sullivan-Lago, 2011, p.4).
In addition, it has been observed that reciprocal knowledge certainly facilitates a mutual understanding and the acceptance in the wider social environment of the concept of renewal determined by migration. “Invariably the guiding motivation is to ensure that the heterogeneous groups comprising society interact in mutually

beneficial ways. … Cultural encounters have emerged as a conspicuous characteristic of contemporary social relations." (Sammut & Gillespie, 2011, pp. 1 – 2).

In fact, notwithstanding the locals' resident and nonmigratory condition, locals and migrants undergo the same processes that engage them in the reassessment and re-evolution of their identities within the changed social environment determined after the strain and pressure between the unfamiliar and the well-known (O'Sullivan-Lago, 2011);

- and, on the other hand, that the social representations – constructed in the above mentioned conditions, involving solidarity actions and emotions in open, reciprocal and immediate personal relations and exchanges between the members of the two groups – have positive polarities and are quite similar.

Even when addressing the most solid section of these social representations of self-identity and surrounding social environment, i.e. their central component, there are important correspondences and resemblances highlighted by the outcomes resulting from the data collected with all the research instruments.

6.2. Limitations and Prospects

This study covered an ample spectrum from the international perspective with the migrant sample involving Respondents from over 30 different countries and from 4 continents. It indeed was an advantage to have a wider view on the investigation domain of this work. Nevertheless, this diversity was also a shortcoming as it involved a heterogeneous sample of persons with different backgrounds, socio-economic realities, educational levels, cultural upbringings to whom it was quite laborious submitting the research tools; besides, once the data was obtained, the consolidation of the results - having to consider a number of variable facets - was a more articulated process.

As to the local community sample, it included individuals of a restricted group, all involved to some extent in relations and contacts with foreigners. More specifically, this group was limited only to persons receptive and open to meeting newcomers or to some extent available to getting acquainted and interested in relating with them.

It indeed would be useful to integrate and further explore the same subject with a sample of an additional group including persons from the local community less interested or open to new arrivals in their territory and more rejective or disapproving of migrants, in order to have a different range of investigation and a further variable of comparison.

It would be equally valuable to expand this research outside the boundaries of the German context and perform parallel investigations in other host locations and countries. In particular, it would be interesting to carry out a further comparative research in a receiving country with a migrant receptive history different from that of the Federal Republic of Germany which has a long-term hospitality experience.

Another aspect which in this study it was not possible to take into account was the length of time the displaced persons had spent in the host country, nor was it possible to determine the local community members' precise timespans interacting with the migrants and the exact frequencies of such relations. It would probably be interesting to develop supplementary parts of the research analyzing also this parameter to investigate to what extent it affects the mutual understanding and common social representations development.

Coming now to the prospects of this research, its outcomes can constitute an empirical input to the ongoing more ample program on migration directed by Annamaria Silvana de Rosa which includes the analysis of multi-media and multi-agent discourses related to migratory experiences (de Rosa, 2018/2020).

Moreover, the research results can certainly be a useful source of inspiration, as well as a fruitful point of reference and backup especially for humanitarian initiatives where such investigation can bring directly to the field the effects deriving from the scientific evidence of the research.

In particular, this study, as similar ones, could be for the humanitarian aid world a useful sort of testimony or pattern, supporting inspiration for the development of innovative mediation plans and activities for the promotion of relief interventions

and of nonviolent coexistence of different peoples and communities, important for a peaceful integration of migrant groups with whom civil society, humanitarians, social operators, etc. work and are committed to.

In the humanitarian diplomacy sector, the outcomes of researches involving social representations addressing the migration phenomenon could add up to other relevant instruments and references such as (i) the HCI-Human Capital Index launched a few years ago by the World Bank which is "a global effort to accelerate more and better investments in people for greater equity and economic growth[36]"; or (ii) the Human Rights Indictors of the OHCHR – United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, i.e. quantitative as well as qualitative measures "with an emphasis on disaggregation by type of prohibited discrimination and by vulnerable and marginalized population group. Human rights indicators allow States to assess their own progress in implementing human rights and compliance with the international treaties, and also provide tools for civil society to monitor progress and ensure accountability[37]"; as well as (iii) the Migrant Acceptance Index established using Gallup World Poll survey data which explores the relation between personal contacts and attitudes towards migrants estimating people's acceptance of migrants based on increasing degrees of personal proximity as "the strong relationship between interpersonal contact and attitudes toward migrants is near-universal." (Fleming J. H., Esipova N., Pugliese A., Ray J. & Srinivasan R., 2018, p. 103).

The social representations studied and investigated here could also validly contribute to providing a scientific character to solidarity actions and to bringing into light the new social spaces developed after the encounter of migrants and receiving community members, but more importantly they can be a helpful background for the framework context in which relief policies and strategies are developed with the objective to prevent, or at least mitigate, potential intolerance and prejudice, overcoming cultural and language boundaries. These social

[36] World Bank Human Capital Project – HCP website, *https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital*

[37] OHCHR – United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, https://www.ohchr.org

representations can thus offer reference standards for a "humanitarian integration primer".

6.3. Final Remarks

The urgency of multiculturalism policies and actions to address constructively today's migration emergency looks at mutual understanding and cooperation as a way to deal with a phenomenon that is inevitable and, when viewed from another perspective, desirable and enriching.

It is therefore crucial to move away from the concept of cultural diversity and move towards the multicultural dimension which works to promote the positive aspects of the encounter of populations and at the same time commits to reduce the criticalities related to such interaction. It is time for "the *communicative approach* …. which considers that there are no superior or inferior cultures, but different cultures …. 'equality of differences', betting on promoting equality, but in no case homogeneity. This approach is based on the thesis that accepting difference as a principle of equality will cause the maintenance and development of cultural identities." (Carter-Thuillier, López-Pastor, Gallardo-Fuentes & Carter-Beltran, 2018, p. 59).

Moreover, a multifaceted and multidisciplinary approach involving together scientific, academic and humanitarian knowledge, practices and experiences seems to be the most beneficial path to tread for the survival and advent of civilization and society (Todorov, 2010).

Therefore, collaborating at all levels, as well as favoring direct contacts, mutual comprehension and exchanges develops common positive social representations of migrants and receiving community members, also showing in the near future the way towards a peaceful coexistence and nonviolent human interaction, determining those that will hopefully be the citizens of tomorrow in their new shared social environment: *From Many, One*[38].

[38] The traditional motto of the United States of America appearing on the Great Seal. It was never codified by law but was considered a de *facto* motto of the United States until 1956. The meaning of the motto was that from thirteen colonies emerges just one nation.

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EPIM-European Program for Integration website, *http://www.epim.info*

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UNICEF-United Nations Children's Fund website, *https://www.unicef.org*

UN WOMEN*, https://www.unwomen.org*

URI-United Religious Initiative, *www.uri.org*

Viersen Municipality, *www.viersen.de*

WHO-World Health Organization website, *http://www.who.org/*

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A - ***associative network technique***

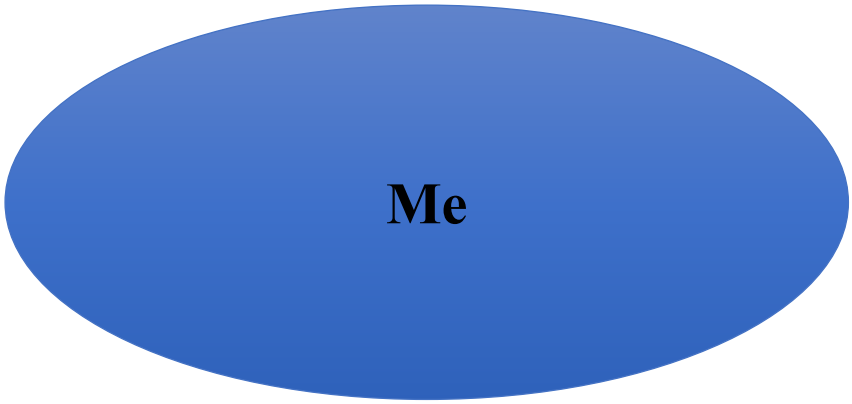
INSTRUCTIONS

PHASE 1. *Build* an "associative network" with the stimuli word that is found in the center of each sheet of paper: Write all the words that come to your mind while reading the stimuli word.
Work as fast as possible without thinking too much.
Use the whole sheet of paper. For all words written, indicate with numbers the order in which you thought them (the first word = 1, the second = 2, after…= 3, etc..).

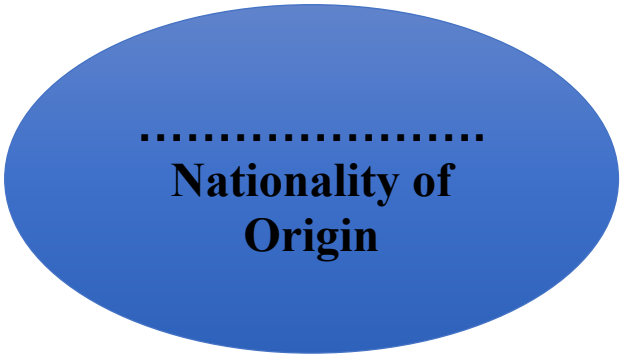
PHASE 2 *Look* at the "associative network" that you built, and, if you find an appropriate (suitable) similarity, link the words you thought with a line as in the example ( )

PHASE 3 *Look at the words* you wrote and mark each word with a positive symbol (+), negative (-) or neutral (0) following the meaning that the word has for you in this context.

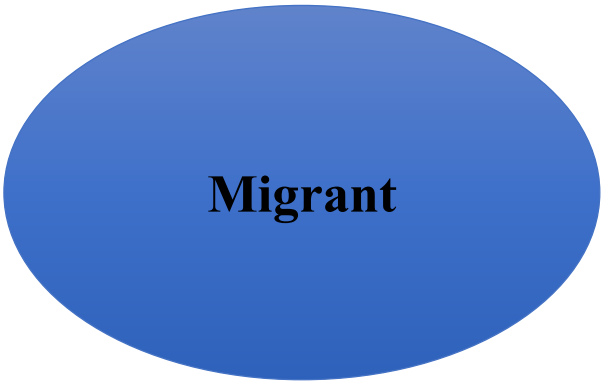
PHASE 4 *Finally put the words in order of importance:*
Write A for the most important word in this context, B for the second, etc..., for all the words that you have written.


Me

For the Migrant Group



For the Local Community Group



World Citizen

Appendix B - *semi-structured contextual socio-demographic interview*

MIGRANT GROUP INTERVIEW REFERENCE GUIDELINES

***Ref. n.*_____**

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age: _____

2. Country of origin: _____

3. Did you choose Germany as destination Country? Why Germany/Europe? _____

4. In Germany since: _____

5. Present legal status in Germany: _____

BACKGROUND HOME COUNTRY PERCEPTIONS

6. Could you tell me about your family? Did you have your own family? A partner? Children?

7. What is an important thing you have learned from your family/community?

8. What they taught you is it still part of your heritage now?

9. Did you attend school (which grade)? Did you work/have an activity in your community?

10. What is your best/worst memory of school/activity in your community?

11. What was the context of your family/community when you decided/had to leave?

RECEIVING COUNTRY PERCEPTIONS

12. Before departure had you heard about Germany and Germans?

13. Before departure how did you imagine Germany and Germans?

14. Did you find in Germany what you expected? If not, why?

15. What for you is the most positive thing/aspect of Germany and of Germans?

16. Who was the most positive person that you have related to in Germany or in Europe?

17. Which was for you the most negative situation experienced in Germany?

18. How do you think others (German community) can help/support you?

19. How do you think you can help others in the German community?

20. Do you feel different now that you live in a new Country?

SETTELMENT IN RECEIVING COUNTRY

21. For you what was the most useful activity you learned upon arrival in Europe?

22. What was the most pleasant/unpleasant activity you carried-out/had to carry-out in Germany/Europe?

23. How did your experience of the initial time in Germany help you learn about the German community and life?

PRESENT STATUS

24. Can you describe a routine day of yours in Germany now?
25 Do you have family or friends from your Country and community of origin with you here? If yes, who?
26. Do you have contacts with family and friends in your Country and community of origin? How do you keep such contacts? (telephone, skype, social media, etc.…)
27. How often are you in contact with family and friends in your Country and community?
28. Do you have new friends in Germany? What is their nationality?
29. Do you have German friends?
30. What are the activities you do with your friends (Germans and non-Germans)?

PERSONAL EMOTIONAL PERCEPTIONS

31. Do you have a belief in God or higher power?
32. What is the greatest joy you have experienced?
33. What is a positive thing/event/person in Germany important for you and that you hope to never forget?
34. Do you think you will return to your homeland in the future? Just to visit? To settle?
35. How and where do you see yourself in 5 years? Is it the same image as the one you had when you lived in your Country of origin? Can you please draw or describe that picture?

LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUP INTERVIEW REFERENCE GUIDELINES

***Ref. n.*_____**

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age: _____
2. Occupation: _____
3: Education level: _____

PERCEPTIONS OF MIGRANTS

4. What did you know of the migrant populations and their Countries before they settled in your community?
5. What were your information sources (newspapers, TV and radio, social media, books, etc.…)
6. Before their arrival in your community how did you imagine the migrant population?
7. What do you think of the migrants today?
8. What for you is the most positive thing/aspect of the migrants in your community?
9. What for you is the most negative thing/aspect of the migrants in your community?
10. Who was the most positive person that you have related to among the migrants?
11. How do you think the migrants can help others in the German community?

12. How do you think the German community can help the migrants?
13. With whom from the migrant group do you relate with?
14. How do you relate with the migrants?
15. Do you have friends among the migrants?
16. Do you engage in activities with the migrants? If yes, which activities?

PERSONAL EMOTIONAL PERCEPTIONS
17. Do you have a belief in God or higher power?
18. What is your opinion of the welcome and hosting of migrants?
19. Do you agree that migrants arrive in Europe and settle in your country?
20. What is your opinion of integration?
21. Have your ever volunteered in migration contexts?
22. If yes, can you describe your feelings of the experience? If not, can you describe how you would imagine the experience?
23. Have the migrants introduced something new in your life? (food, activity, information, etc.….)
24. How do you feel now after the arrival and settlement of the migrants in your community?
25. What is a thing/event/person you related to from the migrant group and hope to never forget? Positive or negative.
26. How and where do you see yourself and your community in 5 years? Can you draw or describe that image?

Appendix C - ***World Euro Sky Compass technique***

Ref. N.: .....

The WorldEuroSkyCompass *(de Rosa, 2017)*

- **Look at the map including all continents then indicate your 3 most preferred countries and your 3 least favoured, putting a number from 1 to 3 followed by the sign + or – in order of importance for you (1+ for the most preferred / 1- for the least favoured country; 2+ and 2- for the second, 3+ and 3- for the third according to your personal ranking criteria**

Appendix D - *figurative technique integrated with storytelling*

Ref. N.: .....

Tasks:

- Look at the page where you find Germany and Europe at the top left side, and your country of origin at the bottom right side.
- Close your eyes for the time you wish (*the interviewer should take note of the time employed to start*) and think at your journey and your "imagined" return from the host country to your country of origin.
- Draw on the page all the elements that are significant for you to describe Germany and Europe as well as your own country of origin expressing any symbols, feelings, meanings, emotions, expectations that are relevant for your personal experience, numbering them in order of evocation (1,2,3,4...) and also in order of importance for you (A, B, C, D,....)
- Do the same also to narrate your "imagined" experience of the journey back.
- While you draw, you may also write words next to your pictures.
- Once you have completed your drawing (*the interviewer should in the meantime take note of the time employed to complete the drawing and to write words*) tell us your travel story and the narrative of the imagined travel back concerning:
  - your host county at the time you left your country of origin;
  - your journey and your "imagined" travels between the two countries;
  - your country of origin as destination of the "imagined" journey back (including your expectations before you will reach it, the foreseen impact upon your arrival, your feelings at the moment of arrival after (.....) months/years of absence and your imagined situation of your future stay there, including expectations of how long you hope to remain, if alone, with your family, etc.)

My Country of Origin
.....

Can you describe or draw the image of your community in 5 years?

Can you place in the line below the three most important events of your life? (Please write or draw).

0----------> today