Chapter 6

What lies behind school failure, youth gangs and disconnections with the host society for the second generation? The case of young people of Latin American origin in Spain

Maria Ron Balsera

INTRODUCTION

The integration of migrants is a common concern for most European countries. Immigration policies tend to portray migrants, especially those arriving from poor countries, as a problem. These policies aim to tackle migration by restricting the entry of newcomers, which reinforces geographical barriers and builds a European fortress. This limits the possibilities for family reunification and many family members are often left behind. But despite this, European stability and relative economic prosperity prove to have a stronger pulling effect than the dissuasive migration policies. In 2012 the foreign population in Europe reached 20.1 million, representing 4.1% of the total European population, and the figure for the foreign-born population was 33 million in the 27 countries forming the European Union (Eurostat). In 2011 Spain was the country with the highest number of immigrants – 507 742, ahead of the United Kingdom with 350 703, Germany with 249 045 and France with 213 367 (Eurostat).

The challenge of integrating the increasing number of newcomers is even more critical in the case of the children of migrants. This second generation faces different barriers from the ones experienced by their parents, since children of migrants are more familiar with the host country language and culture. Although born or at least socialised in the host country, their migrant background often leads to lower access to opportunities and resources than those offered to the native population. However, migrants are usually extremely diverse and factors such as their country of origin, religion, language ability, ethnic group and family economic status play a crucial role in determining the successful integration of migrants and their children (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997). Migrants and their descendants arriving from poorer countries encounter greater barriers than the native population in areas such as education, the labour market, politics and the justice system.

In many European countries the recent economic crisis has resulted in a soaring youth unemployment rate, higher levels of poverty, youth discontentment and disconnection with social and political institutions. Migrants, being a historically vulnerable group, have seen their situation worsen far more than natives. The growing social inequalities, the deterioration of working conditions, the weakening of social protection mechanisms and the increasing anti-immigration attitudes are shifting the political discussions of integration towards alienating young people with a migrant background.

This article focuses on the situation of migrants arriving from poorer countries, those outside the European Union, without considering rich countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia, etc. Delving into the literature on migration, it focuses on assimilation, and reflects on some of the findings from the author's PhD research. During this research, biographical interviews were conducted with 15 selected young boys and girls with a Latin American origin in Spain. A third of the participants were high school students, another third were completing a short vocational course after having dropped out of secondary education and the last third were serving sentences in young offenders' institutions. The preliminary findings are similar to the disconnections and integration failures that other researchers have found with children of migrants in most European countries and allow us to reflect on the barriers to a successful integration. It also sheds light on the reasons why a small number of children of migrants end up joining gangs and committing criminal activities.

INTEGRATION, ASSIMILATION AND MULTICULTURALISM

For many decades, academics and politicians, among others, have been discussing the best ways to incorporate migrants and their children into society. With conflicting arguments, assimilation and multiculturalism are the two main perspectives guiding migration and cultural policies in host countries.

Assimilation involves migrants changing as a result of the contact they have with the native population in order to fit into the host society. In the first half of the 20th century, classical assimilationism considered that immigrants should gradually lose their original culture. Following this argument, old cultural traits, native language and forming ethnic enclaves were considered sources of disadvantage. In many countries migrants' culture, language and customs were perceived as inferior and needed to

be forgotten or unlearned (Park 1928; Stonequist 1937; Warner and Srole 1945: 285; Gordon 1964); fortunately this xenophobic perspective is beginning to change.

More recently, some thinkers suggested a new concept of assimilation that describes the adaptations that migrants make when they interact with the native population in their host country. Unlike classical assimilationism, it focuses on what actually happens rather than trying to prescribe what ought to happen for migrants to fit in. In fact, these thinkers (Gans 1992) do not believe that the children of migrants and their descendants will steadily lose their culture, language and customs and eventually become indistinguishable from the native population. The second, third and fourth generations of migrants may well have lost their heritage and only speak the host country's language and even form part of the middle class, becoming almost indistinguishable from the native population. However, these descendants do not always experience upward mobility through education and social class improvement. In fact, many suffer a decline, or experience downward social mobility, becoming more excluded than their parents and grandparents were. This decline could be due to dropping out of school before completing compulsory education, getting unstable or low-skilled jobs or even becoming unemployed.

To explain these different patterns of adaptation and social mobility for migrant descendants, Portes and Zhou (1993) propose the notion of "segmented assimilation". They describe how some groups with a migrant background succeed in becoming economically and culturally integrated into middle-class norms having lost their original customs. Some manage to retain their language and customs, but are still accepted and integrated into the host society's middle class. Some others keep their language and customs but are not accepted by the native population, eventually forming separate ethnic communities. And finally, others lose their parents' and grandparents' culture and are socially marginalised, becoming disconnected from both the native culture and the migrant culture. These individuals sometimes become homeless and many become involved in groups with criminal activities. The reasons behind these four patterns of adaptation and social mobility have to do with individual factors, such as education, aspirations, language abilities, place of birth, age upon arrival and length of residence, together with structural factors, such as racial status, family socio-economic status and place of residence (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997).

In this way, integration does not imply that people with a migrant background should lose their ancestors' culture, it considers that individuals always make some adaptations in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered in the host country. These changes are often unconscious and may happen by simply watching TV, following the new fashions, using the new language in school, work and other social interactions, etc. Nevertheless, the host society also needs to transform in order to incorporate the diversity that accompanies migration. In fact, integration refers to equality between migrants and nationals when it comes to access to opportunities and resources without the need for migrants to leave their culture behind (Alba 2005).

At the other end of the integration spectrum we find multiculturalism. Its proponents criticise policies that aim to fade minorities' ethnic and cultural traits in favour of the host's culture. Multiculturalism rejects the idea of culture being stable and

homogenous. It argues that culture reshapes all the time to dispose of what does not work and include new changes such as migration. Taylor (1994) argues for a type of multiculturalism that recognises diversity and group identities, protecting the rights and well-being of citizens that do not conform to the majority's culture. In the same sense Kymlicka (1995) argues for "group-differentiated rights", which implies that some group minorities are exempt from obeying laws that are contrary to their cultural or religious beliefs.

One way or another, multiculturalism defends the rights of minorities and migrants to practise their culture, such as religion, language, food and customs. The critics of multiculturalism often point out that respecting migrants' traditions could lead to a violation of individual rights, such as in the case of female genital mutilation for young girls, or arranged marriages without the consent of the couple getting married.

Different European countries have adopted different ways of integrating migrants. For instance, the French model is closer to assimilation, since it intends to unify the cultures of the natives with the ethnic minorities. However, the British and Dutch models follow a more multicultural approach to the integration of migrants. Although proposing different solutions, both assimilation and multiculturalism are concerned with the disadvantages migrants face in comparison to the native population. Failures of integration may lead to downward integration or social exclusion. The following sections refer to the situation of children of migrants in Europe, focusing particularly on Spain. They describe the individual and social barriers that children of migrants face in order to be successful in education and how education failure together with family problems and a racist response from the host society may lead them to join ethnically based, violent youth groups.

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN EUROPE

According to Eurostat statistics there were 25 million first generation migrants in the EU27 countries. This number represented 12.2% of the total population in these countries (Eurostat 2011: 122). Individuals belonging to the second, third and fourth generations of migrants are more difficult to identify since they tend not to be differentiated in the national statistics. However, the Eurostat 2011 study considers that there are around 6 million (2.9% of the total EU27 population) native-born persons aged 25-54 who have one parent born abroad, and more than 4 million (2.1% of the total EU27 population) native-born persons who have both parents born abroad. They are not spread uniformly across Europe. People with a migrant background are more numerous in countries with a historically high level of immigration such as the United Kingdom, France and Germany, whereas new migrant-receiving countries such as Spain and Italy have a much lower proportion of children of migrants.

The statistics show a grim picture for migrants from outside Europe entering one of the EU27 countries. The unemployment rate for nationals aged 15-39 within the EU27 countries was 13.1% in 2012, which rose to 14.8% for migrants from other EU27 countries and jumped considerably to 17.8% for migrants from outside the EU27. Spain has one of the highest unemployment rates of the EU27 countries and the figures tell a similarly bleak story for migrants. The unemployment rates are

28.4%, 32.0% and 36.6% for nationals, migrants from within EU27 and migrants from outside EU27 respectively (Eurostat). And even when employed, migrants tend to receive lower salaries than nationals (IOE 2012). There are also some jobs traditionally assigned to migrants such as food and accommodation services; manufacturing and construction in the case of male migrants and household chores in the case of female migrants (IOE 2007, 2012). These types of job generally require a lower level of education and qualification than the migrants have achieved in their native country. They also involve worse working conditions than other jobs typically given to nationals, showing clear labour market disadvantages.

Although the Europe 2020 strategy emphasises social inclusion, poverty and social exclusion are increasing with the economic crisis. In 2008 31% of migrants aged 25-54 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This figure was even higher, 35%, for migrants arriving from outside the EU27 countries. Likewise, although having dependent children in the household does not translate into a higher risk of poverty among nationals, it does in the case of migrants (Eurostat 2011:63).

The family situation of migrants has a bigger impact on their children's well-being than it does on those of nationals. If we consider educational achievements, persons with a migrant background are more likely to leave education and training before getting an upper secondary qualification. Although the early school-leaving rates decrease from first to second generation, they are still relatively high.[28] Perhaps counter-intuitively, persons with a mixed background (one native parent and one foreign) and persons with an entirely foreign background outperform their native classmates in terms of educational attainment.[29] However, this could be because the very lowest achievers from a foreign or mixed background have already dropped out of the education system. So although migrants and their descendants have a higher risk of leaving school early (before getting an upper secondary qualification), those who stay are more likely to study a further education degree than the nationals. These statistics demonstrate the positive effect of schooling on inclusion of young people with a migrant background, especially for the second and third generations.

Spain stands out from other European countries for its soaring early school-leaving rates:[30] 40% for first generation migrants, 45% for persons with a foreign background, 29% for persons with a mixed background and 28% for natives (Eurostat 2011:127). These figures point at concerning disconnections between young people and education institutions, especially in the case of young people with a migrant background.

28. In 2008 these were 26% in the case of the first generation, 17% for persons with foreign heritage and 14% for nationals and mixed background together (Eurostat 2011: 125).
29. In 2008 the percentage of people with low educational attainment was 35% for first generation migrants, 23% for persons with a foreign background, 20% for persons with a mixed background and 24% for natives (Eurostat 2011: 125).
30. The rate of early school leavers is defined as the proportion of the population aged 18-24 with only lower secondary education or less and no longer in education or training (European Commission IP-13-324, 2013)

CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN SPAIN

Unlike host countries such as the United Kingdom, France or Germany, which have experienced immigration for a relatively long time, Spain started to receive high numbers of immigrants in the 1990s. At that point, Spain began to change from a country which loses natives through emigration to becoming a net recipient of migrants. However, the recent economic crisis seems to be changing this again and more and more young people, either with a migrant background or native, are migrating to richer countries to find better employment opportunities.

The restrictive 1985 Migration Law responded to the pressures from other European countries that feared Spain would become the main entry point to Europe from Africa and Latin America after the relaxation of national borders enabled by the Schengen agreements in 1985 (Tornos and Aparicio 2002). Although at that time the number of immigrants in Spain was very low, the negative image of migrants as a burden on social services and as the cause of higher unemployment were common in the political world as well as in the media. The Organic Law 7/1985 made it necessary to have some sort of employment for migrants to pass through the Spanish borders. These restrictions resulted in some immigrants becoming "illegal", which then contributed to further migrant discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation (Tornos and Aparicio 2002; Calavita 1998).

Since then, the Spanish immigration laws O.L. 4/2000 and O.L. 2/2009 have emphasised immigrant integration as being a transversal issue in all the immigration policies, through education, employment, social inclusion and active citizenship (Oberaxe 2011: 117-119). In theory this integration should be a dynamic multicultural two-way process, where the host society needs to adapt to include new cultures and identities. In reality, however, the burden of integration falls on the immigrants who are expected to assimilate into the mainstream Spanish culture (Solanes 2009: 315).

Educational barriers

Students of a migrant background tend to complete fewer years of secondary education than their native peers (Eurostat 2011, Szalai 2010, 2011). The already mentioned 45% early school-leaving rate for persons with a foreign background (Eurostat 2011:127) in Spain is, among other factors, related to cultural shock. Similar to what happens to children of migrants in other European countries, the Spanish reality hardly ever lives up to the expectations they had before they started the migration journey. For example, the houses are smaller than they are used to, the culture feels strange, the schools are different and they have difficulties expressing themselves in the language of the host country.

Lack of language abilities along with religious differences, especially for Muslim migrants, have been linked to social isolation and a lack of integration in other European countries, not just in Spain. Latin America is the main source of migration to Spain; even when Spanish is the main official language and Catholicism the most popular religion in both countries, some young people from a Latin American background struggle to succeed in education and the labour market. The percentage

of young people from Latin America between 18 and 24 who are not in education, employment or training has increased from 19.6% in 2007 to 30.0% in 2011 (IOE 2011: 78).[31] So if it is not language or religion that hinders their integration, then what does? There are many idiomatic and cultural differences that are often ignored by education policies and schools who focus their support on migrant students whose first language is not Spanish.

Other factors that contribute to low school attainment for some students from Latin America seem to relate to educational differences in the country of origin and Spain. The incorporation into the Spanish education system, sometimes after completing primary school in their host country, and the everyday cultural differences make progression to post-compulsory education such as university more difficult. However, these barriers should not overcast European society's perception of migrant learners and, particularly, teachers' expectations of their migrant students. It is important to emphasise that the high percentages of early school leaving among students with a migrant background should not lead to blaming the country of origin or the students' attitude. They should instead move institutions to pay extra attention to the causes of this problem and try to remove, or at least overcome, the barriers attached to migrants attempting late incorporation into the European education system.

Migration also changes family relations. Children of migrants often stay in their country of birth until their parents save enough money to bring them to the host country. This separation tends to produce negative consequences in their school performance, at first in their native country but also when they arrive in their new host country. And the developments that took place during this absence from their parents change the parental relationship and often alter the patterns of authority resulting in a more difficult home life (Buelga 2010).

Another factor affecting migrants is the difficult working conditions they experience in Spain, with a 36.53% unemployment rate at the end of 2012[32] (INE 2013:5) forcing them to accept low salaries and long working hours. These long working hours often shorten the time that parents can spend with their children. According to the 2007 survey more than one third of young migrants in Spain spend more than 6 hours alone per day (INE 2007).

The economic value of education is also worse for migrants. Adult migrants seem to arrive with higher levels of education than the average native Spaniard (IOE 2007). However, their human capital is not absorbed into the Spanish labour market, where many migrants are placed in unskilled and unstable positions, such as construction for male migrants and domestic service for female migrants. This mismatch between their parents' qualifications and their employment often lowers the second generation's aspirations.

---

31. The number of young people between 18 and 24 not in education, employment or training (NEET) – known as "Ninis" in Spain – increased from 12.1% to 25% for native Spaniards and from 24.9% to 36.2% for migrants. Among the migrant youth the most worrying figures are those for African NEET migrants: 40.6% in 2007 and 52.4% in 2011 (IOE 2012:78).
32. The unemployment rate for nationals was 24.23% (INE 2013: 5).

The economic crisis has led to the deterioration of living and working conditions for migrants. In Spain in 2010 more than half of the working migrants did not earn the equivalent minimum salary in a year. The poverty rate for migrants is much higher than that of Spanish nationals; it has reached 31% with, disturbingly, 10.8% experiencing extreme poverty (IOE 2012).[33] The crisis has resulted in a worsening of their image and provoked anti-immigration attitudes – suspicion, fear and rejection. From 2007 to 2010 the percentage of people who thought that illegal immigrants should be deported increased from 12% to 20%, those who would like to deport immigrants who have committed any type of crime also increased from 68% to 73%, and the support for deporting unemployed immigrants increased from 39% to 43% (IOE 2012).

Young people with a migrant background often report that anti-immigration attitudes leave them feeling inferior, regarded with suspicion, or treated as though they were second-class citizens. Some complain they are victimised by the police because of their ethnicity. This ethnic profiling has been denounced by several civil society associations. These types of clashes with the police are extremely negative for social integration, since they diminish the trust in public institutions and lower migrants' confidence and social capital (Putnam 2007). For social integration to be successful, it is necessary that public institutions act in an equal and fair manner regardless of the ethnic or migrant background (Kumlin and Rothstein 2010).

The stereotypes and prejudices against foreigners are reinforced by a sensationalistic media and are exploited by politicians for their own gains. These xenophobic attitudes from the native population pose a serious barrier to social integration. As a reaction to this rejection, some young people of migrant background feel more comfortable not only with other young peers from the same country of origin, but also with people from the same continent or any non-native as a whole. Migration seems to entail dynamic identity shifting, where social distance is narrowed among children of migrants from not only the same country, region or continent but from any other migrant background simply because they are all made to feel like outsiders (Putnam 2007; Alba and Nee 2003). As a result, strong connections are made among young people with a migrant background, often at the expense of integration, with natives and children of migrants becoming disconnected.

The presence of other persons with a migrant background in the classroom, school or neighbourhood facilitates socialisation and helps restore the pride of coming from a migrant background. However, this pride and the barriers to integration are exploited by subversive and often criminal groups. Youth gangs usually have an ethnic component such as Black Caribbean in Britain and North African in France (Szalai 2011:18). What has been called "Latin gangs" in Spain plays a crucial role in the lives of some young people of Latin American background, particularly those from Ecuador, Colombia and the Dominican Republic. However, it is necessary to emphasise that a very small percentage of young people with a Latin American background actually belongs to these gangs or commit crimes. The following section should not be used to criminalise a population who are already victims of anti-immigration attitudes.

33. The poverty rate for nationals in 2010 was 19% and extreme poverty was 6.7% (IOE 2012).

It intends to describe the risks that disconnections with the host society may result in for children of migrants.

"Latin gangs"

Different youth gangs fight over urban territory; they use clothes, graffiti, hand gestures and other symbols as signs of identity which can lead to violence if used in the wrong area. Violence between and within gangs is common and is often used in initiation rites, to gain respect, as control mechanisms, as punishment both inside the gang and among gangs and in order to establish the hierarchy (Buelga 2010).

Disconnections with the host society are behind the entry into these gangs. The need to belong, together with a perceived need for protection, is used by these groups to attract young people with a migrant background who feel vulnerable. They present an alternative to school that usually involves gatherings in the street and home parties during the day. And with poorer living conditions than natives, the street often becomes a social space where immigrants hang out with their friends.

Alcohol, drugs, the opportunity to meet people of the opposite sex and have fun with friends all seem to be commonly appealing for both native and migrant youth in general. But the addition of the restoration of ethnic pride and the imposed respect through fear and violence is more common in these gangs. For those members of gangs who are serving sentences in young offenders' institutions there seems to be a predominance of dysfunctional families. Domestic abuse, alcoholism and broken families are unfortunately all too common experiences for these young offenders and they often fulfil the prophecy of victims who become victimisers.

Entry into these gangs is also linked to school absenteeism and dropout. They offer an alternative to the school routine, providing leisure and entertainment such as house parties, street gatherings, etc. They provide support for those who feel disconnected from school, making them feel part of a group. School failure, family problems and youth gangs form a vicious cycle for children of migrants. Therefore, policies aiming to tackle and prevent youth criminality need to pay attention to the educational barriers and family situation such as parents' working conditions together with xenophobic attitudes from public institutions and private individuals.

A TRIPLE JOURNEY

Children of migrants experience a triple journey (Feixa 2005). First, a geographical voyage: moving to the host country is a journey that many of them only complete after a separation from their parents who have worked hard to afford their plane tickets. Second, a cultural journey: the shock of encountering a reality that often differs drastically from their expectations, where not only the climate, houses, language, school and culture are different but where even their parents have changed, often for the worse (Buelga 2010). Third, the natural journey: from childhood to adulthood, with the typical changes, transgressions and search for identity associated with adolescence.

The life trajectories of young people with a migrant background reflect unequal opportunities and different degrees of successful integration. Although many children

of migrants do succeed in achieving a good educational degree and a respectable position in the labour market, the statistics show that they face more barriers than their native peers. A high proportion of these young people report the disconnection with the host country in terms of the small number of native friends they have made, the unequal treatment by public institutions such as the police force and the unfair access to the job market, among other reasons.

When language and religion are shared with the majority of the host society – such as most Latin American migrants in Spain – ethnicity still seems to be a distinctive marker that attracts xenophobic attitudes. Although often used in the migration literature (Portes and Zhou 1993), on their own ethnicity, language, nationality and age of arrival do not determine the second generation's upward or downward integration. Socio-economic factors, including family structure, working hours of parents and individual aspirations seem to be necessary explanatory factors. The most common characteristics of members of youth gangs include a lack of economic resources, belonging to mother-headed families compounded with long working hours, domestic violence, issues of masculinity and experience of anti-immigration attitudes (Ron Balsera, forthcoming; IOE 2007 and 2012; Buelga 2010).

The school is the main institution for facilitating successful integration of young people with a migrant background. However, these students often feel like outsiders, they struggle to make friends with natives and many of them drop out altogether. In the case of Spain, the major concentration of dropouts seems to take place in lower secondary school, particularly third and fourth years. Compensatory programmes such as adult education and short vocational training courses seem to be successful in rescuing some of those students who previously abandoned mainstream education. Nonetheless, the number of students with a migrant background in institutions offering these remedial courses is disproportionately high, which sometimes results in a stigma being attached to these courses.

The family is the first place for socialisation. Many children of migrants resent the scarcity of time they spend with their parents. This situation is characteristic of migrants who have moved for economic reasons and work in low-skilled jobs where workers' rights are often violated. Some researchers estimate that migrant mothers work as much as 10 to 16 hours per day in order to support their families (Arellano 2004; UGT 2001). Many migrant women are employed as domestic workers. Using the concept of "global care chains" (Hochschild, Hutton and Giddens 2000), one could conclude that these children who are left alone at home while their mothers work are the end of the chain. In contrast, some native Spanish families enjoy a surplus of care, having a mother, a nanny and a cleaner working for them at home. To fill this void of company and attention, many of these young people turn to gangs, which offer themselves as a second family. But as we have seen, they often lead to violence and criminality (Delpino Goicochea 2007; Feixa et al. 2006; Suárez-Orozco 2000).

European society's xenophobic attitudes make upward integration more difficult, pushing young people with migrant backgrounds to lower their career expectations and drop out of school. Some children of migrants find support in similar ethnic groups against both the subtle and explicit psychological and, in some cases, physical aggressions that they face in their daily lives. However, like every group of friends,

these street gangs improve the well-being and social cohesion of their members (Nolan 2009). In particular, most ethnic groups convert the migration stigma into pride. However, some of these groups carry out criminal activities and become criminal gangs. Brainwashing and violence are characteristic of these criminal groups' modus vivendi (Ron Balsera, forthcoming; Buelga 2010*)*. The distance between these Latin gangs' values and their parents' or the Spanish middle class values, further deprive these adolescents from acquiring social capital. The result is what Portes defines as downward assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993).

CONCLUSION

Migrants usually face greater risks than nationals. They are at higher risk of poverty and they typically experience lower pay, insecure jobs and discrimination (IOE 2007). Immigrants suffer from a segmented labour market unequally structured on the basis of gender, ethnicity, nationality and social class. The intersections of these axes of oppression become key explanatory elements for the trajectories of individual mobility. These trajectories affect their children's development and opportunities, often condemning them to lower levels of well-being. The scarce care and attention that parents' long working hours result in may translate into the children developing low self-esteem, dropping out of school and, in some cases, into criminal activities and eventually social exclusion.

The integration and well-being of children of migrants cannot be separated from that of their parents. Despite completing an important part of their socialisation process in Spain, young people of migrant background are often discriminated against and excluded from mainstream culture. As a result, they are caught between keeping their parents' migrant culture, assimilating to the host society's middle-class norms or developing a new hybrid identity (Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993). Certain resistance mechanisms developed to create a sense of belonging may lead to connections with youth gangs and criminal activities.

Social policies need to focus on endowing individuals with adequate resources and real opportunities both inside and outside the education system. This would include the creation and maintenance of a suitable environment that promotes multicultural and intercultural understanding, where bonding and trust within groups and bridging these groups is encouraged along with a full participation of minorities in European society.

Although the current immigration laws and policies emphasise integration as being a dynamic two-way process, in reality, the burden of integration falls on immigrants who are expected to assimilate. Media and politics portray immigrants as a burden to social services and, sometimes, as criminals. They foster xenophobic images that leave children of migrants little room for successful integration. Likewise, the spread of practices such as police ethnic profiling lowers young people's trust in public institutions and hinders the sense of belonging to a diverse European society. These barriers to integration often lead to resistance mechanisms, such as in-group solidarity, but also to disconnection with the host society, segregation, and downward assimilation into youth gangs with criminal links.

Therefore, European social policies need to take into account migrant families' vulnerable positions, paying particular attention to inequalities related to ethnicity, social class, gender and age which may result in lower levels of well-being and, consequently, social exclusion. To promote the integration of children of migrants, the education system should be a safe and encouraging place where gender, ethnic and social class differences do not translate into unequal opportunities. Education institutions should ensure that natives and students with a migrant background socialise, connect, learn about one another and adapt to the wealth of diversity on offer in their society.

REFERENCES

Alba R. (2005), "Bright vs. blurred boundaries: Second generation assimilation and exclusion in France, Germany, and the United States", in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28 No. 1, January 2005, pp. 20-49.

Alba R. and Nee V. (2003), "*Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*", Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Aparicio Gómez R. and Tornos Cubillo A. (2010), *(Associations of immigrants in Spain. An overview)* "*Las asociaciones de inmigrantes en España. Una visión de conjunto*", Documentos del Observatorio Permanente de Inmigracion, No. 26. NIPO: 790-10-149-9.

Barry B. (2001), *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism,* Harvard, Cambridge, MA.

BOE (2009), Organic Law 2/2009 of 11 December amending the Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January on the rights and freedoms of foreigners in Spain and their social integration. Head of State. Num. 299. Sec. I. Page. 104986-105031 www.boe.es/boe/dias/2009/12/12/pdfs/BOE-A-2009-19949.pdf (accessed 9 July 2014).

Buelga S. (2010), "Psychosocial approach to the phenomenon of Latino gangs in Spain", Chapter 5 in VV.AA *Graffiti and Latin gangs*. "Aproximación psicosocial al fenómeno de las bandas latinas en España", Chapter 5 in VV.AA *Grafitis y bandas latinas*. Ed. MAD. ISBN 9788467630749.

Calavita K. (1998), "Immigration, law, and marginalisation in a global economy: notes from Spain", *Law and Society Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3.

Delpino Goicochea M. A. (2007), *(The insertion of Latin American Adolescents in Spain: some clues*. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs General and Administrative Information Branch Publications). *La inserción de los Adolescentes Latinoamericanos en España: algunas claves.* Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales Subdirección General de Información Administrativa y Publicaciones. ISBN: 978-84-8417-257-4.

European Commission (2013), IP/13/324 press release: "Progress in tackling early school leaving and raising higher education attainment – but males are increasingly left behind". http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-324_en.htm (accessed 9 October 2014).

Eurostat (2011), *Migrants in Europe. A statistical portrait of the first and second generation*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. ISBN 978-92-79-16231-2.

Feixa C. (2008), ("Generation One Point Five" in *Youth Journal*) "Generación Uno Punto Cinco" in *Revista Juventud*, March 2008, No. 80, pp. 115-127.

Feixa C. (2005), (Dir.) (*Latino youth and urban culture* , Barcelona City Council) *Jóvenes latinos y cultural urbana*, Ajuntament de Barcelona, CIIMU, Barcelona (informe).

Fraser N. and Honneth A. (2003), *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-philosophical Exchange,* Verso, London.

Gordon M. (1964), *Assimilation in American life: The role of race, religion, and national origins,* Oxford University Press.

Hochschild A. R., Hutton W. and Giddens A. (eds) (2000), "Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value", in *On the Edge Living with Global Capitalism,* Jonathan Cape, London, pp. 130-146.

INE (2008), National Immigrant Survey 2007, Results Preview, 22 May 2008. www.ine.es/en/prensa/np499_en.pdf (accessed 23 April 2013).

IOE (2012), (*Impacts of the crisis on immigrants*, promoted by the International Organization for Migration Study). *Impactos de la crisis sobre la población inmigrante*, Estudio promovido por la Organización Internacional para las Migraciones.

IOE (2007), (The Ecuadorian immigration in Spain : a view through statistical sources, Ecuadorians in Spain , A sociological approach, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs). La inmigración ecuatoriana en España: una visión a través de las fuentes estadísticas, Ecuatorianos en España, Una aproximación sociológica, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales. No. 15. 2007. www.colectivoioe.org/index.php/publicaciones_colaboraciones/show/id/40 (accessed 9 July 2014).

Kumlin S. and Rothstein B. (2010), "Questioning the New Liberal Dilemma: Immigrants, Social Networks, and Institutional Fairness", *Comparative Politics*, October 2010, pp. 63-80.

Kymlicka W. (1995), *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights,* Oxford, University Press, Oxford.

Nolan B. (2009), "Promoting the Well-Being of Immigrant Youth", paper for Jacobs Foundation Conference on The Potential of Immigrant Youth, Marbach, April 2009. University College Belfield Dublin. www.ucd.ie/t4cms/wp10%2009%20nolan.pdf (accessed 11 November 2011).

Portes A. and Zhou M. (1993), "The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), pp. 74-96.

Putnam R. D. (2007), "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century", The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2.

Ron Balsera, M. (forthcoming), What is the relation between school failure, youth gangs and capability deprivation for children of migrants? *Social Work and Society*.

Ron Balsera, M. (2014). *Young Migrants' Aspirations, Expectations and Perspectives of Well-Being investigated using Biographical Narratives, the Capability Approach*

and Intersectionality. Bielefeld: Bielefeld University. http://pub.uni-bielefeld.de/publication/2685956

Solanes Corella A. (2009), ("The international response to the challenge of migration: the case of the European Union", in A. M. Marcos del Cano, *Immigration, multiculturalism and human rights*). "La respuesta internacional al desafío de las migraciones: el caso de la Unión Europea", in A. M. Marcos del Cano, *Inmigración, multiculturalidad y derechos humanos*. Tirant lo Blanch, Valencia, pp. 291-324.

Szalai J. (2011), "Ethnic differences in education and diverging prospects for urban youth in an enlarged Europe", Edumigrom summary findings, Central European University, Budapest.

Taylor C. (1992), *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Warner W. L. and Srole L. (1945), *The social systems of American ethnic groups*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, xii, p. 318.

Zhou M. (1997), "Segmented assimilation: Issues, controversies, and recent research on the new second generation", *International Migration Review*, pp. 975-1008.