The Invisibility of Family in Studies of Skilled Migration and Brain Drain

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Abstract

Despite being the dominant mode of legal entry for the past two decades in the European Union, few studies of skilled migration and brain drain have focused on the so-called 'family migration'. Yet, recent studies suggest that many skilled immigrants, particularly women, are part of this category. This lack of interest for the family migration (and its economic impact) has also overshadowed the high-skilled profile (and potential) of many women who enter destination countries as family migrants. This paper examines the characteristics of the labour market participation of 50 skilled immigrant women from countries outside the European Union, including Latin America, the Middle East and South-eastern Europe, who have migrated to Switzerland in the context of family reunification. The author argues that if skilled women are able to achieve a professional integration equivalent to their skills, and develop networks of cooperation with other professionals in their countries of origin, the problem of 'brain drain' may be avoided and channelled towards 'brain gain'. The empirical results of the qualitative study show that the majority of skilled women face the undervaluing of their credentials and work experience, which results in their underemployment. The question is thus raised if the debate around 'brain drain' should be in such cases reformulated in terms of 'brain waste', a phenomenon that not only affects the countries of origin but also the countries of destination. Finally, the paper examines the strategies that skilled migrant women develop to improve their integration into the Swizz labour market, which can ultimately lead to networks of cooperation with their countries of origin.

Introduction

In recent years immigration policies in Switzerland, and in Europe more generally, have emphasized the recruitment of skilled immigrants to bolster local human resources and thus the numbers of skilled professionals have significantly increased. Whereas in 1990 only 22.5% of economically active foreigners in Switzerland were highly skilled, this percentage had increased by the year 2000 to 62% for recently arrived migrants (Pecoraro, 2004). Nevertheless, despite the increasing quantitative and qualitative importance of skilled migration, our understanding of this phenomenon, and of the potential associated loses and gains, for both the countries of origin and destination, remains limited for the following reasons.

First, there has been a tendency in the literature on brain drain to imagine skilled migration as a predominantly male phenomenon (Chiswick and Miller, 2007) and to ignore skilled immigrant women (Kofman and Raghuram, 2006). This view is inadequate in view of two contemporary trends. On the one hand, international migration has become increasingly feminized in the past decade: more than half of the individuals who migrated to Europe in 2005 were women (Morrison et al 2008). In Switzerland, the increase in the numbers of female immigrants is particularly high for originating countries outside the European Union. For example, whereas in 1980 only 48% of all Latin American immigrants were women, by the year 2005 the percentage had increased to 65%. In the case of Asian immigrants,

the percentage of women increased from 46% in 1980 to 55% in 2005 (Swiss Federal Statistics 2008). On the other hand, in recent years, there has been an increase in the educational level of women migrating to Switzerland. Some 40% of non-EU working women have tertiary education whereas this rate is only 18% among their Swiss counterparts. Many of the skilled women currently living in Switzerland have migrated in the context of family migration either through marriage with a Swiss- or European national or in the context of family reunification with an individual of the same national origin (Swiss Federal Statistics 2008). Despite their growing quantitative and qualitative significance, skilled migrant women have not received enough attention by Swiss researchers (Riaño 2003, Riaño and Baghdadi 2007a). A similar situation was earlier observable in the international literature (Kofman 2000). In recent years skilled migrant women are increasingly becoming a focus of attention (Purkayastha 2005, Kofman and Raghuram 2006, Liversage 2009). It remains however largely unknown to what extent they are able to transfer their educational resources and achieve a professional integration equivalent to their skills, particularly in the case of those skilled women who have migrated as part of family migration flows.

Second, despite being the dominant mode of legal entry for the past two decades in the European Union states, few studies of skilled migration and brain drain have been concerned with the study of family migration. Indeed, a large part of the literature on skilled migration and brain drain has dealt only with labour migrants largely ignoring skilled migrants who are present in family and refugee streams. Recent studies in the UK and Canada suggest that many skilled immigrants, particularly women, do not cross international boundaries as labour migrants but in the context of family migration, marriage or seeking asylum (e.g., Kofman, 2000; Ruddick, 2004, Creese et al, 2010). In OECD countries the majority of migrants enter for family reasons, which include the categories of "accompanying family of workers", "family reunification" and "family formation" (OECD 2006a). Family-related migration plays an enormous role in Swiss immigration. Nearly 40% of Switzerland's immigrants migrate for reasons of marriage or family reunification, while only 25% of the immigrants enter for reasons of employment (Swiss Federal Statistics 2008). One of the reasons that the ratio of family-related immigration to economic immigration is so high is that the Swiss government strictly limits the number of employment immigrants, whereas family migration is not so tightly controlled. Feminist researchers have pointed out that many family reunification policies in destination countries are guided by traditional ideas about gender roles i.e. that the role of migrant women is to enable migrant men to settle down in stable communities. Neglect of the economic significance of family migration has concealed the skill-level that many women entering as family migrants bring with them and discounted their potential contribution to the labour market (Kofman, 2004; Kofman and Raghuram, 2006, Kraler et al, 2010, Riaño 2010). Researchers in Australia have shown that because immigration authorities view spouses as dependants, rather than as principal applicants, women's skills may not be counted and they may not gain access to settlement services (Iredale, 2004). Our understanding of how ideas about gender roles and family reunification policies impact on how skilled migrant women integrate in the labour market remains so far insufficient. We also have limited understanding of the strategies that women devise to improve their chances of getting access to the labour market.

Third, debates "brain drain" and "brain gain" have given insufficient attention to how the skills of professional migrants are actually used in the countries of destination. Whereas "brain drain" has been conceptualised as the large-scale emigration of individuals with technical skills and knowledge (Straubhaar 2000, Pellegrino 2001), "brain gain" has been seen as a means for source countries to actually benefit from the emigration of skilled professionals via remittances and other components of knowledge transfer (Bach 2008). Recent research results set the assumptions under which the brain gain approach is based, however under question. Studies carried out in countries that have promoted skilled immigra-

tion for a long time (such as Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK), have shown that skilled immigrants belonging to visible minorities face the undervaluing of their credentials and work experience, resulting in underemployment and de-skilling (Henderson et al. 2001, Man 2004, Dumont and Liebig 2005, Grant and Nadin, 2007, Purkayastha 2005, Kofman and Raghuram 2006, Liversage 2009). Recent research in Switzerland also shows that many skilled immigrants encounter significant difficulties when they try to transfer their educational resources across international boundaries and achieve a professional, which is equivalent to their skills (Pecoraro 2005, Riaño and Baghdadi 2007a, Gerber 2008, Salomon 2010). The question thus needs to be raised to what extent it can be assumed that a brain gain via the transfer of knowledge to the countries of origin will take place, when skilled immigrants face precarious labour market situations and experience de-skilling.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to filling the above gaps by studying skilled migration and brain drain from a gender perspective that gives particular attention to family migration, family reunification policies and gender roles. The analysis focuses on a case study of 57 skilled immigrant women from countries outside the European Union, including Latin America, the Middle East and South East Europe, who have migrated to Switzerland in the context of family reunification and asylum seeking[1]. The following four issues are examined: (a) their situation of integration in the Swiss labour market (b) the factors that may shape their access to qualified positions (c) the strategies that women devise to counteract the hurdles they face. The underlying hypothesis of this paper is that if skilled migrant women are able to achieve a professional integration that is equivalent to their skills, and develop networks of cooperation and knowledge exchange with other professionals in their countries of origin, a transfer of knowledge might be possible, thus resulting in brain gain for both countries of origin and destination.

The paper is structured in five parts. The theoretical and methodological approaches are firstly introduced and the reasons that motivated the study participants to leave their countries of origin as well as their educational qualifications are subsequently examined. The third part presents the situation of women's participation in the Swiss labour market and discusses its implications for brain gain. The fourth section examines the role of social discourses on gender and ethnicity in shaping the labour market participation of migrant women and the final section describes the strategies that women use to improve their professional integration.

1. Approaching the Situation of Skilled Migrant Women in the Labour Market

What are useful conceptual approaches to examine the situation of skilled migrants in the labour market? The concept of human capital, according to which the social position of an individual in the labour market is directly related to his/her level of education, is often used for that purpose. This concept has been questioned in recent years for not taking issues of place, gender and ethnicity into account. Feminist authors argue that the value given to an individual's resources, such as for example professional skills, is not universal but depends on the specific socio-spatial context where the individuals are located and on their gender and ethnicity (Creese et al, 2010). Thus, "*what* is regarded as a marketable skill may be dependent on *who* possesses the skill" (Anthias 2001: 378). For example, ethnic origin may be an impediment for accessing the labour market, as some jobs and economic rewards are seen as more appropriate for some ethnic groups than for others. Or, women may be excluded from occupations defined as masculine, and certain jobs associated with or performed by women may be given a different (lesser) economic value. Conversely, ethnicity and gender are at times considered valuable (McDowell 2009). Gendered characteristics such as communicative abilities or physical traits may be estimated as valuable

[1] This paper draws on a larger study, the "Social Integration and Exclusion of Immigrant Women in Switzerland", carried out under the Swiss National Research Programme (NRP 51) on "Social Integration and Social Exclusion". For details see **www.immigrantwomen.ch**

resources that an individual brings to the market. Ethnicity-specific skills, such as familiarity with a certain culture, language ability, or other facilities to interact, may also facilitate entry into the labour market (Anthias 2001). Thus, in conclusion, gender and ethnicity intersect to determine the position of an individual in the labour market. The approach of "intersectionality" (e.g. Nash 2008), whereby the interplay of several categories of difference is examined to understand the social position of an individual, is indeed gaining increased attention in studies of social (in)equality. Thus, the following question will be addressed in this paper: *how do gender and ethnicity interact to shape the position of skilled migrant women in the Swiss labour market?*

The above question was investigated using the methodological framework of participatory research (Pain 2004). The specific approach combines the theoretical premises of *educación popular* (Freire 1970), post-colonial theory, and feminist theory. The general aim was to include the analytical voice of migrant women in the research process, and to establish more equal relationships between academics and those outside academia (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007a). For this purpose, a specific type of participatory workshop by the name of MINGA was designed. Through this vehicle, both academics and people outside academia jointly produce knowledge. It consists of an interactive process whereby a group of 5 to 6 migrant women meets with the researchers; each woman narrates her own migration history and afterwards the group analyses each individual's story. Thus, women expand their knowledge by participating in the analysis of both their own migration histories and those of others. A total of 12 MINGA workshops were carried out in the cities of Zurich, Bern and Aarau with the total of 57 migrant women. Problem-centred interviews were also conducted with each of the women in order to gain further insight into crucial topics that emerged from the workshops. The combined methods of participatory workshops and problem-centered interviews were very useful for gaining deep insight into the professional biographies of skilled migrant women.

2. Case Study: Migration Patterns and Educational Qualifications

The 57 skilled women participating in this study originate from 20 different countries in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela), the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey), and South East Europe (Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro), belong to the middle- or high class in their countries of origin, and have contrasting religious backgrounds (Christian/Muslim)[2]. The groups chosen for this study are very good examples of current migration trends in Switzerland. The numbers of Latin American women have more than tripled in the past decade, they are increasingly well qualified (55% have either completed high school, vocational training or university education) and 50% of those over 20 years old have migrated because of marriage to a Swiss national (SFS, 2000). The number of Muslim migrants, particularly from the Middle East and South East Europe, has doubled in the past decade and the percentage of women has increased from 36% in 1990 to 45% in 2000. Women with Muslim backgrounds are also increasingly well qualified.

The strategy for choosing the research partners followed the principle of 'theoretical sampling' (Glaser, 1992), whose aim is not accurate statistical representation but gaining a thorough understanding of the studied phenomenon by detailed analysis of relevant case studies. Choosing relevant case studies consisted of choosing those individuals who represented the range of situations among first-generation skilled migrant women, such as entry status (marriage, family reunion, study, work, asylum-seeking), age (28 to 60 years), time of residence (3 to 30 years), residence status (yearly permit, permanent residence, Swiss citizenship) and marital status and family situation (single, married, divorced, with and without children). The research partners were found through personal contacts, leaflet advertising, the 'snowball' principle and through

[2] The empirical study was carried out in 2004 and 2005 in the cities of Zurich, Bern and Aargau together with Nadia Baghdadi. See Riaño and Baghdadi (2007) for an initial discussion of empirical results.

Reasons for mobility / migration	Latin America	Middle East	South East Europe	Total
1. Advance her qualifications and/ or travel				
• Followed by marriage with a Swiss	17	5	-	22
• Still studying	-	2	-	2
2. Marriage with a Swiss	10 (With a Swiss man living in Switzerland)	2 (With a countryman living in Switzerland)	2 (With a countryman living in Switzerland)	14
3. Escape persecution	3	11	1	15
4. Work opportunities	1	1	1	3
5. Reunification with parents	-	-	1	1
Total	**31**	**21**	**5**	**57**

Table 1. Reasons for the Mobility / Migration of Skilled Migrant Women

collaboration with migrant women organisations that provided further contacts with skilled migrant women. At the time of the interviews, study participants were, on average, 40 years old, had lived in Switzerland for a total of 11 years, and were residents of Zurich, Bern and Aargau, the three most populated German-speaking cantons of Switzerland.

What are the reasons that motivated the study participants to leave their countries of origin? The answer is rather complex. Traditional migration models are insufficient to explain the variety of reasons and the multiplicity of steps that characterise their migration. As will be seen below, although all women come from low-income countries their main motive to migrate is not simply to improve their material lives. As presented in Table 1, the variety of their motives include: (a) the desire to advance their qualifications and/or "see the world"; (b) found a (transnational) family; (c) escape persecution; (d) look for new job opportunities; and (e) be reunified with their parents.

(a) Advance her qualifications and/or travel. The largest number (24) of women in this study initially leave their countries of residence to study or simply see the world. These are women whose stated main aim to carry out undergraduate or postgraduate studies in North America or Europe, to follow French or English courses in Canada or Australia, or to travel to visit their families, attend a conference or simply get to know other countries. A recurring theme in women's narratives is that many associate living abroad as an opportunity of to break with traditional gender roles and gain more independence as women. What happens after they live their countries? While studying and travelling abroad several women (22) meet their future Swiss partners whom are either studying at a foreign- or a Swiss institution or simply living there. The newly formed bi-national couples are confronted with the decision of where to live if they are to stay together. This new situation sets the original plan of a short-termed migration into question. Some women, however, do return to their countries, others move to a third country and others yet stay in Switzerland. After a long period of decision-making, typically taking between one and six years, all of the 22 women decide to permanently migrate to Switzerland to join their Swiss partners, thus officially entering the country as "marriage migrants". According to women's narratives, their final decision to move to Switzerland is also motivated by their imagina-

tions of the country as a place of more equality between men and women and by the idea that Swiss (European) men may be more respectful of women than their countrymen (for further details see Riaño and Baghdadi, 2007b).

(b) Marriage with a Swiss. These are women who typically meet their future Swiss partners while living and working in their countries of origin. There are two typical situations. The first is the case of Swiss men who are visiting some (or several) Latin American country for purposes of travel, work or cultural exchange programmes. The second is the case of Swiss men who have double nationality and are visiting their families in their countries of origin in the Middle East or South East Europe. Similarly to the situation described above, the newly formed couples are confronted with the decision of where to live if they are to stay together. Following the same pattern as described above, it is in all cases the women who decide to leave their country of residence to join their Swiss partners. What motivates such decision? A combination of factors appears as common to women from Latin America and the Middle East: on the one hand the idea that they need to give importance to their partners careers, which is best fulfilled in Switzerland, and on the other, the idea that Switzerland is a country where more gender equality can be achieved than in their own countries. The wish of living in a more secure country is an additional motivating factor in the case of the woman from Kosovo.

(c) *Escape persecution*. Persecution is another major factor pushing the study participants to leave. Women from Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Kosovo and Colombia testify that they were pushed to leave their places of residence following threats to their lives and/or to the lives of their partners. The 8 women from Turkey were persecuted after the military putsch in Turkey in the 1980s for being members of political opposition parties and/or for being supporters of Kurdish autonomist efforts. Similarly, the two Iraqi women and their husbands were persecuted by the Saddam Hussein regime for being political opponents. The woman from Kosovo and her partner were persecuted for being members of an Albanian organization fighting against the Serbs. The three women from Colombia were persecuted for carrying out professional activities as community workers or judges that were contrary to the interests of paramilitary groups, several of which were linked to the Colombian army.

(d) New job opportunities. Although the desire to have better access to work opportunities may be a second thought for some women when leaving their countries, it is interesting to note that only in two of this study's cases women did leave with the specific purpose of increasing their earnings. In a first case, an Argentinean teacher who had Swiss nationality (her Swiss father had immigrated to Argentina) decided to move to Switzerland when she and her husband lost their savings to build a house following the country's economic crisis of the 1990s. In another case, a Bosnian woman came to Switzerland in the 1990s to improve her income by working as a guest worker in the tourist sector. She stayed on and later completed professional studies as a laboratory assistant.

(e) *Reunification with her parents*. This is the case of a Bosnian woman who came to Switzerland with her mother and siblings as an eighteen year old to be reunified with her father who had previously immigrated to Switzerland as a guest worker. The guest worker system no longer exists in Switzerland.

To conclude, we have seen that the majority of the study participants entered Switzerland as (bi-national) marriage migrants (36) and refugees (17). This reflects two larger trends. First, marriage with a Swiss has become a main factor in women's migration to Switzerland, particularly those from non-EU countries. In 2007, 37% of all marriages in Switzerland were between a Swiss citizen and a foreigner. Over two thirds of these marriages were between a Swiss man and a foreign woman (SFS, 2006, 2008). Secondly, the fact that the number of non-EU women entering

Areas of geographical origin / Level of skills and study fields at time of migration			Latin America	Middle East	South East Europe	Total
Highly skilled	Fields of study	Commercial & business admin.	7	3	3	12
		Social and behavioural sciences	8	1	-	9
		Mass communication	4	-	-	4
		Law	3	1	-	4
		Fine arts and architecture	3	1	-	4
		Education science and teacher training	2	2	-	4
		Humanities	1	1	-	2
		Medical science & health related	1	1	-	2
		Computer science	1	1	-	2
		Engineering		-	1	1
		Agriculture	1	-	-	1
Skilled	High-school (later further education in Switzerland)		-	10	1	11
Total			**31**	**21**	**5**	**57**

Table 2. Education Characteristics of Skilled Immigrant Women at Time of Migration to Switzerland
Source of all tables: MINGA workshops and biographical interviews (Riaño and Baghdadi 2007a)

the country to work is insignificant, which may reflect the fact earlier mentioned that the Swiss government strictly limits the number of labour migrants from non-EU countries, whereas family migration is not so tightly controlled.

The above description has also shown that gender ideals and the desire to break with traditional gender norms play a main factor in the migration of the study participants. Further, it has also shown that although the initial migration of nearly 40% of the study participants (22) is for reasons of study or travel, their final migration is for reasons of (bi-national) marriage. From that moment onwards, they are no longer considered by the authorities, by statisticians and by social scientists as *skilled migrants,* but as *marriage migrants*. Not only do they disappear from the statistics on skilled migrants but also they are also treated by the authorities as dependants and no longer as migrants with an economic potential. Factors of gender clearly need to be given more attention in studies of skilled migration.

What are the educational characteristics of the study participants? Using OECD (2002) definitions, the study includes both skilled (having completed at least secondary education) and highly skilled (university degree or equivalent) migrant women. Regional differences can be observed regarding the educational qualifications of study participants, at the time of their migration to Switzerland: whereas Latin American women arrive after the completion of their tertiary education (which they obtained in their countries of origin or abroad[3]), only about two-thirds of the women from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe had completed a similar level of education. Women from the latter region tend to arrive at a younger age and thus 40% of them carry out their tertiary studies in Switzerland. As seen in Table 2, the two most prevalent fields of study among the highly skilled study participants are commercial and business administration and the social sciences, which together make up nearly 50% of the total. Professions such as law, fine arts and architecture, education sci-

[3] Twenty-six of Latin American women studied in their countries of origin and a further five obtained their degrees at university institutions in the UK, Russia, USA, Argentina and Germany.

ence and teacher training are second in numerical frequency, followed by humanities, medical science and computer science. Engineering professions are a rare occurrence. Besides being highly skilled at the time of arrival to Switzerland, 88% of Latin American women had worked as skilled professionals either in their countries of origin or elsewhere. This percentage is much lower (30%) for women from the Middle East and South East Europe because many more arrive at a younger age. All the women considered in this study speak German (the official language of the Cantons where they live) fluently and, besides their mother tongues, they are able to speak an additional two to three languages.

3. Characteristics of the Labour Market Participation of Skilled Migrant Women

In this section, the characteristics of the labour market participation of the skilled immigrant women are assessed, at the time of their biographical interviews. Three most typical types of participation could be observed: (a) not in the labour market (30%), (b) employed below skill-level (25%), and (c) employed according to skill-level (45%). As women's employment is in many cases discontinuous and characterized by lack of long-term prospects, we introduced a further differentiation of short-term and long-term employment for types (b) and (c). From the results presented in Table 2, we can conclude that over half of the interviewees do not use their skills in the Swiss labour market because they are either not integrated in the labour market at all or because they work below their skill-level. Even amongst women who work in positions suited to their skills, half of them face precarious situations because their employment is characterized by discontinuity and instability (short-term employment). These are the cases of women who prefer to create their own, potentially unstable, employment, such as by working from home as occasional translators, report writers or video producers, rather than be unemployed. Thus, only a minority (12%) of skilled migrant women is able to occupy positions in the upper segments of the labour market, at a level that corresponds to their skills, in employment with long-term prospects. The results of this case study are comparable to those of the 2004 European labour survey: 20% of non-EU immigrant women working in Switzerland are in jobs for which they are overqualified (in contrast to 13.8% for EU-women and 7.6% for Swiss women) (Dumont and Liebig 2005).

Tables 3 and 4 examine the differences between the labour market participation of skilled women from Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeastern Europe. A very interesting difference emerges. The percentage of Latin American women who are employed in positions that correspond to their skills and have long-term prospects is three times lower than that of women from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe. Why this difference? In principle, and as explained before, at the time of their arrival to Switzerland, Latin American women have a higher level of education and professional experience than their counterparts from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe. However, as tables 3 and 4 show, the majority of Latin Americans have gained their degrees *outside* of Switzerland, whereas a large number of women from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe do their tertiary education *in* Switzerland. Thus, in the end, what counts most for successful labour market participation is not the amount of knowledge that an individual has but the *place* where that person earned her degree or professional experience. Having studied in Switzerland counts more than any amount of degrees or experience gained elsewhere. This result supports the findings obtained by other researchers elsewhere (Bauder 2003, Man 2004, Dumont and Liebig 2005, Pecoraro 2005, Liversage 2009, Creese et al 2010) showing that having institutionalized cultural capital is no guarantee of access to upper segments of the labour market for immigrants. It is difficult for immigrants to transfer their institutionalised cultural capital because the standards for valuing institutionalized cultural capital change across boundaries. This points out at the limitations of human capital theory and at the need to include a geographical perspective in

Area of geographical origin / Type of labour market participation		Latin America	Middle East / South East Europe	Total
(a) Not in the labour market	Not economically active (housewives / students)	5	5	10
	Unemployed	4	3	7
(b) Employment below skills	Short-term employment	3	1	4
	Long-term employment	7	3	10
(c) Employment according to skills	Short-term employment	9	7	16
	Long-term employment	3	7	10
Total		**31**	**26**	**57**

Table 3. Characteristics of Labour Market Participation of Skilled Migrant Women

Characteristics of labour market participation		Number	Place where last degree was obtained		
			Country of origin	Switzer-land	Other
(a) Not in the labour market	Not economically active (housewives)	5	3	1	1
	Unemployed	4	3	1	.
(b) Employment below skills	Short-term employment	3	3	-	-
	Long-term employment	7	7	-	-
(c) Employment according to skills	Short-term employment	9	6	-	3
	Long-term employment	3	1	2	-
Total		**31**	**23**	**4**	**4**

Table 4. Characteristics of Labour Market Participation of Skilled Latin American Women

Characteristics of labour market participation		Number	Place where last degree was obtained	
			Country of origin	Switzer-land
(a) Not in the labour market	Not economically active (housewives, students)	5	3	2 (students)
	Unemployed	3	3	-
(b) Employment below skills	Short-term employment	1	1	-
	Long-term employment	3	3	-
(c) Employment according to skills	Short-term employment	7	4	3
	Long-term employment	7	1	6
Total		**26**	**15**	**11**

Table 5. Characteristics of Labour Market Participation of Skilled Women from the Middle East and South East Europe

Participation in the labour market		Professional training	Actual occupation
(a) Not in the labour market	Not economically active	Medical doctor (Peru) Lawyer (Libya)	Housewife
	Unemployed	Electrical engineer (Kosovo) Systems engineer (Mexico)	Unemployed
(b) Employment below skills	Short-term employment	Primary school teacher (Lebanon) Agronomist (Colombia)	Supermarket cashier Fruit stand seller
	Long-term employment	Lawyer (Venezuela) Economist (Kosovo)	Factory worker Cleaning lady
(c) Employment according to skills	Short-term employment	Architect (Turkey) Political scientist (Peru / USA)	Freelance artist Freelance consultant
	Long-term employment	Business administrator (Mexico) Social Anthropologist (Turkey)	Bank manager University lecturer

Table 6. Examples of Economic Occupations of Skilled Migrant Women

studies of skilled migration that takes account of the role of place.

Skilled immigrant women are not only faced with the problem of not being able to transfer their institutional cultural capital, but are confronted with the problem of loss of confidence and loss of autonomy. Having to work in low-skill and low-paying jobs, or not been able to participate in the labour market at all, means for several women becoming economically dependent of their partners or on social welfare. This problem is accentuated by the fact that many of the interviewed women see professional integration as one of the few existing possibilities to gain social recognition in the context of a society that see them as the less valuable "other". A further more significant problem that many of the interviewed women face is professional de-skilling. As shown in Table 5, several of the skilled women in this study carry out occupations well below their skills and original socio-professional status. After years of working in such professions it becomes very difficult for them to go back to their professions of original training: not only because they lose their original skills but also because they do not develop contacts with the professional networks leading to such positions in the labour market. This implies that migration does not necessarily result for many of the skilled migrant women in this study in an improvement in socio-professional status; but it rather leads to a loss of socio-professional status.

The results of this case study are comparable to those of the 2004 European labour survey: 19.8% of non-EU migrant women working in Switzerland are in jobs for which they are overqualified (in contrast to 13.8% for EU-women and 7.6% for Swiss women) (Dumont and Liebig, 2005, p. 7). Statistical analyses on the overall situation of skilled migrants in Switzerland also show the relatively disadvantaged situation of migrant women with young children in finding a job commensurate with their education (Pecoraro 2010). The overall situation of migrant women in OECD countries is similar. If we look at the percentage of women in jobs for which they are overqualified we observe the following situation: whereas only 11.26% of native-born face such situations the percentage of foreign-born that are in the same situation amounts to 30.56% (OECD 2006b). The overall situation of skilled migrants in OECD countries is characterised by the fact that they are more likely to be working below their qualifications than a person born in those countries (OECD 2008, Huber et al 2010).

At this point the question needs to be raised of how the former results are to be interpreted in terms of the relationship between the women's

situation in the labour market and its potential implication for brain drain or brain gain. This question is undoubtedly a complex one, which requires further detailed empirical research to be satisfactorily answered. However, some first thoughts are presented here. The brain gain approach assumes that skilled migrants gain new qualifications, which they can transfer to the countries of origin. Such an assumption implies that skilled migrants gain stable professional positions, which give them an adequate basis to establish networks of cooperation and knowledge transfer across borders. However, taking the results of this study into account, which show that most study participants experience de-skilling and/or are in instable positions in the Swiss labour market, it seems questionable to associate skilled migration with brain gain, since individuals have not only lost their original skills but are also far too preoccupied with insuring their own survival to embark on activities of knowledge transfer. None of the women interviewed in this study reported having established networks of cooperation and knowledge transfer with their countries of origin. Although it can be argued that there is no guarantee that skilled migrants will carry out activities leading to brain gain once they have obtained adequate and stable jobs it is also true that there is even less guarantee that this will be the case when they face precarious situations in the labour market.

According to the literature, the most commonly known cases of knowledge transfer are in the cases of skilled migrants who work in scientific institutions and transnational corporations in the fields of science (e.g. natural sciences) and technology (e.g. IT sector), many of which are in a favourable position to further develop their professional skills and establish networks of cooperation and knowledge transfer. Getting access to such positions however does not seem to be an attainable possibility for many skilled individuals from countries outside the EU. For example, none of this study's participants who had professions in the fields of computing, engineering or architecture, was able to obtain a job at all: at the time of the interviews they were all unemployed. Further, only two of the study participants were able to get a job in an academic institution. As it was shown above, there seems to be a consensus among researchers that the majority of skilled countries from countries outside EU face a devaluation of their qualifications and progressive de-skilling.

Observing the difficulties that many skilled migrants from countries outside the EU face in the labour markets of North American and European countries several authors have started to use the term "brain waste", where the skilled and the educated leave their home country, but then make little use of their skills and education in the host country (Mattoo et al 2005, Englmann & Müller 2007, Riaño & Baghdadi 2007a). It seems rather paradoxical to observe that brain waste not only affects the migrants themselves but also points out to the inability of host countries to provide skilled migrants with jobs that are adequate to their skills, make proper utilisation of the available resources in institutionalised cultural capital and thus make full use of skilled immigrant's potential for the country's socio-economic development. Some authors go further to speak about "brain abuse", where the labour of skilled immigrants is devalued in the host countries (Bauder 2003).

It has been argued that the remittances that the migrants send to their countries of origin can also be seen as a form of brain gain. This might be true but it needs to be examined in great empirical detail to assess how families in the countries of origin actually make use of economic remittances. We would like in this paper to shift the perspective of analysis by considering the perspective of the women themselves, i.e. the impact that remittances may have on their own professional advancement. Several study participants acknowledge that they regularly send remittances to their families to help them out with every day needs. Although they are very happy to be able to help their families out some of them also report that sending such remittances represents a burden for their professional advancement. Because they feel the pressure to regularly send money abroad some of them have been constrained to take positions in the labour market, which are below their quali-

fications and professional expectations. Having to send money abroad also limits the amount of available resources to invest on gaining new qualifications (i.e. training programmes, language courses, etc.). From this follows that we need a more differentiated perspective of analysis to brain gain that not only takes account of the actual use that families make of economic remittances but also examine the implications of having to send money across borders for the professional advancement of skilled migrant women.

Understanding the Problems Facing Skilled Migrant Women in Switzerland

How can the precarious situation of the majority of skilled migrant women be explained? What are the main problems that they face when trying to gain access to skilled positions in the labour market? This study shows that socially prevailing ideas about gender and ethnicity, and the official policies, social practices and resulting arrangements, are factors of major importance in hindering the professional integration of skilled migrant women.

The Role of Social Discourses on Ethnicity in Professional Integration

Our study shows that ideas about ethnicity, as imbedded in migration policies and in the minds of institutional representatives and employers, play a main role in shaping skilled migrants' access to the labour market. Migration and settlement policies are a prime example. Immigration policies in Switzerland have traditionally been conceptualized according to the ethnic discourses of *Überfremdung* and "cultural distance" (Riaño and Wastl-Walter 2006). This conceptualization has produced a stratified system of civil rights that, up until some years ago, discriminated between Swiss and non-Swiss populations; more recently, in agreement with European policies, it has changed so that it now discriminates between EU- and non-EU nationals. Thus, ethnic origin determines the right to immigrate: whereas immigration to Switzerland is possible for all EU nationals, independently of their skill level, only highly skilled non-EU nationals are allowed to immigrate to Switzerland. Also, EU nationals are able to change their one-year residence status (B-permit) to a permanent residence status (C-permit) after only five years of residence in Switzerland, whereas non-EU nationals must wait a total of ten years. Because most employers require a C-permit for skilled positions, this policy acts as a significant barrier to accessing the skilled labour market. Besides, non-EU nationals must prove, before they can obtain a visa for the job that they have been offered, that there is no other EU- or Swiss national who can occupy that job. Thus, in practice, it is extremely difficult for immigrants originating from countries outside the EU to obtain a skilled job, or a well paid skilled job, because immigration regulations impose a set of rules that reserve employment in skilled occupations for workers from Switzerland and the EU. The following example illustrates the difficulties that non-EU skilled migrant women face when trying to obtain a work permit, even when they are married to a Swiss:

> **"**As I came here to live with my Swiss fiancé I didn't realise how difficult it would be to get a job. First of all I didn't know anyone and I also needed a work permit. That's why we decided to marry a bit earlier than planned. But I still didn't get a work permit. It turned out that in order to get a work permit I needed to first get a job offer. But I didn't know anyone… After several months I finally got an offer from an international environment organisation to do some consultancy work. But they were not prepared to take the responsibility of applying for a work permit for me**"**… (Political scientist from Columbia University (USA), born in Peru)

The realization of the institutional cultural capital of immigrants from countries outside the EU is further hindered by the lack of recognition of their educational qualifications. Whereas in recent years, academic institutions and employers have increasingly recognized the foreign credentials of EU citizens, there is much reluctance towards accepting the credentials of immigrants from countries outside the EU. This situation is further complicated by the fact that Switzerland, as a federal nation, has no uniform credentialing system. Each canton making up the Confederation has a different educational and accreditation system.

Many Swiss employers undervalue the professional qualities, educational resources, and professional experience of immigrants from Latin America, the Middle East and Southeastern Europe. They imagine that immigrants from countries outside the EU are less professionally capable than Swiss or EU nationals, and thus have lower class status. The migrant women of Islamic background in our study report that, despite the fact that they do not wear headscarves it seems very difficult for them to advance professionally. The following example illustrated the case of an anthropologist from Turkey with an Islamic background, shows that her origin, her gender and her religion seem to have played a negative role when she applied for a leading position at the NGO where she was working:

> "I cannot say that being a foreigner played the only role; I would say as a woman you have difficulties, one way or another. There were two applicants at the end. He was a man and I was a woman. He was a Swiss and I was a foreigner. And I think religion also played a role, although that was obviously never mentioned". (Anthropologist from a Swiss University, born in Turkey).

Further, many employers exclude immigrants from skilled positions by demanding a language level that is equivalent to that of native speakers. Thus, ethnicity, or being perceived as an "other," is a significant disadvantage for immigrants from countries outside the EU, when it comes to accessing the upper segments of the labour market.

The Role of Social Discourses on Gender in Professional Integration

Ideas about gender roles, as embedded in family reunification policies and the minds of employers, play a major role in shaping skilled migrant women's access to the labour market. For example, skilled migrants from countries outside Europe who enter Switzerland with a marriage visa (most commonly women) are subject to regulations that are not designed to stimulate their economic integration, but rather to allow them "to remain with their husbands". Foreign spouses initially receive a yearly permit ("B-permit"), which until recently with no explicit permission to work. As explained, Swiss employers tend to solicit job applications from C-permit holders, who are permanent residents, rather than from B-permit holders, who are only annual residents. Furthermore, foreign spouses with a B-permit do not have a status independent of their spouse, as they are only allowed to stay in Switzerland as long as they remain with their spouses (though after 5 years of successful marriage they get independent status). The great majority of marriage-migrants are women, and thus the visa restrictions on foreign spouses mostly affect them. This example shows how immigration policies are conceived according to traditional ideas on femininity that construct foreign wives as homemakers, rather than "economically productive".

Traditional ideas about gender roles and institutional arrangements for child-care (or the lack thereof) are a further impediment to this population's labour market participation. Insufficient childcare facilities, and the discontinuous school schedules for children in Switzerland, forces one of the parents—usually the mother—to remain at home. The following quote illustrates how the traditional idea that "good mothers stay at home" still underlies the thoughts and actions of some Swiss institutions and Swiss families thus creating and maintaining boundaries that limit the access of married migrant women to the labour market:

> "To study and to work are both very important for me. But the external pressure! The [Swiss husband's] family! The institutions! They all want me to stay at home because I have a child. Everyone used to ask me: Why do you want to work? Brazilians are good mothers. They stay at home. You are behaving like a Swiss" (Lawyer from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, born in Brazil).

Skilled migrant women are faced with the reality that they must rebuild their social and cultural capital because they have lost their social and professional networks, and their institutional cultural capital is not valued. However, the conditions for migrant women who want to acquire new skills are very difficult. Insufficient child-care facilities in many areas of Switzerland make it difficult for all mothers of young children to com-

bine a career and family life. Migrant women, however, are faced with the further difficulty that their families live abroad and thus they cannot count on a social network of support for looking after their children. Language requirements in the labour market add a further difficulty as illustrated by the following quote:

> "The language is a very big obstacle for finding a job. When you look at job advertisements they either demand German as a mother tongue or an impeccable spoken style. Besides, flexibility is also required and that is very difficult for me because I have a family. As we all know, child-care services are very poorly developed here and school children come home for lunch and are back again by three o'clock. That is why it is very difficult for women in Switzerland to combine profession and family. That's why I am looking for a 50% job" (International business manager from Lima University, born in Peru)

In some bi-national families, the educational advancement of the migrant woman is given a lower priority than that of the Swiss husband. Since his educational qualifications have a higher value in the labour market than those of his foreign wife, he is the one who has the potential to earn a good salary to support the bi-national family. Furthermore, migration policies in Switzerland do not support the transfer and re-creation of social and cultural capital because they assume skilled migrants do not have any problems integrating. Gender-biased immigration policies, patriarchal ideas about gender roles, the lack of child-care facilities, and insufficient policies supporting skilled migrant women produce unequal opportunities for women to access the labour market.

Along the lines of the former results, several studies in North America and Europe, demonstrate that migrant women are doing worse than migrant men in the labour market, and are particularly affected by de-skilling processes, that increase the replaceability of labour (McCay 2003, Man 2004, Boyd and Pikkov 2005, Pukayastha 2005). Gendered structural barriers seem to play a central role in women's ability to obtain a job. For example, women's childrearing responsibilities, and gender discrimination by employers, constrain their access to full time skilled positions (Salaff and Greve 2003, Liversage 2009). Immigration regulations also play a role, as many migrant women enter countries of destination with a family class visa under which they are not expected to find work and contribute to the economy of the new country (Iredale 2004, Riaño and Baghdadi 2007b). Unfortunately, the extent to which gender dynamics play a role in the marginal position that skilled migrant women occupy in the labour market remains insufficiently understood (Raghuram 2008).

At this point a further reflection needs to be made. We pointed at the beginning of this paper that the study participants are characterised by two main differences regarding their status entry to Switzerland: marriage migrants and refugees. Does their differentiated entry status actually play a role in their possibilities of participation in the labour market? This study shows that although gender factors, such as being a woman, a wife and a mother of young children, are a central factor commonly affecting the access of all study participants to the Swiss market, having entered the country as a marriage migrant or a refugee also plays a role. This is illustrated by the cases of Juana (Dominican Republic), who entered Switzerland as a (bi-national) marriage migrant, and Zehra (Turkey), who entered the country as a refugee. Initially, Juana's chances to access the labour market seemed better than Zehra's: she had a University training as a psychologist and was also married to a Swiss. Zehra in contrast had no tertiary education, no Swiss husband and became a single mother shortly after coming to Switzerland. As Juana's foreign credentials were not recognised in Switzerland she was put in the same situation as Zehra's -- that of having to start from scratch to carry out her tertiary education[4]. The financing of university studies and external child-care posed a main obstacle for both Zehra and Juana. Zehra, however, was able to obtain fellowships from the Cantonal government owing to her refugee status and low-income situation. Juana, in con-

[4] Unlike countries like Canada, Switzerland does not yet have bridging programmes allowing the recognition of the foreign qualifications of skilled migrants from countries outside the European Union.

trast, had no access to government fellowships because of her marriage-migrant status and husband's good salary. Further, the policy of many daycares to give priority to women "who need to work" excludes married women with well-salaried husbands. Thus, being a single parent and having a low socio-economic status worked to Zehra's advantage in solving the problem of external child-care support. Zehra was eventually able to conclude her Anthropology studies at a Swiss University whereas Juana did not succeed in obtaining any Swiss qualifications. Currently, Zehra is in a stable labour market position that corresponds to her qualifications whereas Juana lives from periodic jobs and cannot longer count on her husband's financial support since they are now divorced. Although personal drive may have played a role in explaining the two different outcomes, the former two examples illustrate how policies towards refugees and marriage migrants make a significant difference in facilitating (or not) the access of skilled migrant women to the labour market.

Strategies of Migrant Women for Improving their Labour Market Participation

What are the responses of migrant women to the challenge of labour market participation? What strategies do they adopt to realize their goals of reaching the upper segments of the labour market? For some women, the use of one strategy or another is not always a conscious choice. For others, there is a clear assessment of their situation, which leads to a systematic plan for rebuilding their social and cultural capital. Women's strategies also need to be viewed dynamically, as they often change over time, depending on lessons learned from past experiences. The strategies of our research partners can be grouped into five types, as set out in Table 6.

After intense study of the German language, the first step skilled migrant women usually take is to try to find paid employment. As most women at this stage cannot get a position according to their qualifications (and/or in their original fields of study), one of the most common strategies is to take any job available. These are usually jobs below their qualifications that lead nowhere. Other skilled migrant women become frustrated by the lack of value given to their foreign work experience and the difficulties of combining a career and a family, and thus prefer to withdraw from the labour market and concentrate on their domestic roles.

Although women become economically dependent on their husbands, the personal and

Strategies and responses	
1. Trying to access the labour market	Taking any job, often below qualifications
	Creating own employment
2. Doing unpaid work	Doing voluntary activities
	Assuming domestic role
3. (Re-)skilling	Improving German proficiency
	Redoing tertiary education
	Carrying out postgraduate studies
4. Building new networks	Building social networks
	Building professional networks
5. Finding a way out of the situation	Adopting a victim attitude
	Returning to the country of origin

Table 7. Migrant Women's Strategies and Responses to the Challenge of Labour Market Participation

social reward of motherhood becomes a substitute. After some years, however, some of the women interviewed become weary of both their domestic role and/or their failed access to the labour market. Some migrant women react by creating their own employment. An example of this strategy is a Turkish computer specialist who opened up a travel agency specializing in travel to Turkey. It is interesting to note that many of these women use their ethnic backgrounds as marketable attributes that allow them entry into the labour market, even though the economic rewards are not always very high.

Carrying out voluntary activities in migrant organizations, or doing other socially oriented activities, is an option chosen by several migrant women. In fact, 80% of our research partners from Latin America and 76% of those from the Middle East and Southeastern Europe are involved in voluntary social and political activities in migrant associations, parents' groups, home-country associations, intercultural schools, organizations for the rights of migrant women, music groups, and organizations for intercultural dialogue. Interestingly, the experiences they gain in these activities allow them to rebuild their social and cultural capital (networks and professional experience) and in some cases results in paid job opportunities. Other women actively work on re-building their professional networks by personally introducing themselves to potential employers.

Re-skilling is a strategy chosen by many women, especially after several years of home-making activities or of working in low-pay and/or unstable employment. As explained earlier, a very high level of German proficiency is required for skilled jobs in Switzerland. Thus, many women take advanced German classes, and others learn the Swiss German dialect to enhance their employment chances. Other women, approximately half of our interview partners, realize that they are never going to get a skilled job unless they study in Switzerland and thus decide to carry out tertiary studies, repeat their entire University studies, or carry out postgraduate work. These strategies are very successful and often lead to the desired professional integration.

Having a clear assessment of their professional opportunities in Switzerland, which often leads to a clear career plan, is a particularly important strategy that explains the success of some of the women who were able to reach the upper segments of the labour market. However, a decisive factor in these successful cases are three further strategies by migrant women: (a) postponing having children, limiting the number of children to one, or having no children at all; (b) sharing child-care responsibilities with their partners; and (c) divorcing from their husbands, giving them the freedom to follow professional paths as they had planned. The opposite to these success stories are the cases of women who escape the difficult situation of participating in the labour market by adopting a victim attitude or returning to their countries of origin.

Conclusions

This paper examined the labour market participation of 57 skilled migrant women from Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeastern Europe living in German-speaking Cantons of Switzerland. The results of this study show that most of the interviewed migrant women have a precarious situation in the labour market: half of all the interviewees do not use their skills in the Swiss labour market and half of those who work in positions suited to their skills face precarious situations because their employment is characterized by discontinuity and instability. The majority of skilled migrant women face problems of de-skilling, loss of confidence, and loss of autonomy. Thus, for most of them, the outcome of migration is not an improvement but rather a loss of their original social status. The presupposition by the human capital theory that educational attainment is rewarded with professional status does not apply to the case of migrant skilled women, especially when they originate from countries outside the EU. Our research supports the conclusions of other researchers in North America, Europe and Oceania, that skilled migrants encounter significant difficulties when they try to transfer their educational resources across international boundaries and often experience de-skilling. Under those circumstances

it seems an illusion to expect that a transfer of knowledge to the countries of origin might take place, a supposition that is confirmed by the interviewed women.

What is to be concluded from such results? First of all, it seems that some of the assumptions under which the brain gain approach has been based need to be questioned. The idea of brain gain emerged in the context of skilled migrants working in scientific institutions and transnational corporations in the fields of science (e.g. natural sciences) and technology (e.g. IT sector), several of which are in a favourable position to further develop their professional skills and establish networks of cooperation and knowledge transfer. But how many skilled migrants have access to such positions? The results here presented, as well as current research on the labour market integration of skilled migrants, suggest that large numbers of skilled personnel do not have access to such positions but is rather affected by the underutilisation of their qualifications and de-skilling (OECD 2006, OECD 2008, Huber et al 2010). Family migrants have particular difficulties accessing positions that are commensurate wit their qualifications and immigrant women with young children are particularly disadvantaged. Further, the fact that skilled migrants are not able to realise their professional skills in the countries of destination suggests a situation of brain waste rather than brain gain. A brain waste for both: for the migrants themselves, who see their qualifications devalued once they cross borders, and for the countries of destination, who do not make adequate use of the resources that they gain via the immigration of skilled personnel. Research on brain gain thus needs to look beyond the confined group of skilled migrants, give attention to skilled migrants who migrate in the context of family reunification, consider the impact of having to raise a family, and address the issue of brain waste.

An examination of the reasons for the precarious situation of skilled migrant women has shown that social discourses on gender and ethnicity interact to shape the position of migrant women in the Swiss labour market. Ideas about ethnicity and gender, as imbedded in migration policies and in the minds of institutional representatives and employers, are significant in shaping the access of migrant women to the labour market. For example, in the past decade, as a result of the need to develop closer links with the European Union, foreigners have been portrayed by immigration policies as having different qualities, and citizens of the European Union have been represented as "more likely to integrate." The set of rules produced by such policies have acted to reserve skilled employment for Swiss and EU nationals, thus protecting their class interests while hindering the realization of institutional cultural capital by non-EU migrants. Switzerland is not alone in this practice, as most European states have adopted the policy of giving a better status to immigrants from the EU (Kofman 2002).

The realization of the institutional cultural capital of migrant women from countries outside the EU is further hindered by the lack of recognition of their educational qualifications. In fact, our case study has shown that having studied *in* Switzerland or *outside* Switzerland is decisive in the outcome of the labour market participation of skilled migrants. What counts most for successful labour market participation is not the amount of knowledge that an individual has, but the *place* where that individual earned her degree or professional experience. Indeed, it is the symbolic value attributed to a specific resource that makes it a socially valued resource.

In conclusion, due to their origin and gender, skilled migrant women from Latin America, the Middle East and Southeastern Europe face disadvantages and discrimination when searching for work, and trying to acquire new skills. Different obstacles restrict migrant women's agency, combining to create a very unfavourable framework for the professional integration of skilled migrant women from countries outside the EU: policies that discriminate against immigrants from countries outside of the EU; prejudices about ethnic origin and religious membership; language discrimination; difficulty in reacquiring institutional cultural capital because of the high cost of educational training; lack of programs that support the transfer and recreation of skilled immigrants'

cultural capital; patriarchal ideas about gender roles; lack of child care facilities and masculine biased gender arrangements. Skilled migrant women are, however, not passive in relation to such unfavourable conditions. Women mobilize many personal resources, and their agency is essential in them getting access to the labour market. Researchers thus need to give more attention to the interplay of gender and ethnicity in shaping the access of skilled migrants to the labour market, and also examine the agency of migrant women to counteract the structural barriers imposed upon them by society.

Finally, the above results have important consequences in terms of policy-making. Whereas debates on brain drain usually discuss policies of return, and the need for the countries of origin to improve the pay and working conditions of their skilled personnel, there is hardly any discussion on how the countries of destination can actually improve the working conditions of their skilled migrants. The latter is urgently necessary in order to curb brain waste and also to promote situations of brain gain, which are ultimately beneficial not only for the countries of destination but also for the countries of origin. Such measures need to be supported by further empirical research that examines in detail the relationship between the situation of skilled migrants in the labour markets of North American and European countries, and the potential benefits or loses that may derive thereof for all the parties involved. Special attention needs to be given to the situation of skilled migrant women and the role of family in the processes of migration and labour market integration.

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