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Executive Summary

This deliverable discusses gender differences in the role of mobile media for migrants and diverging EU perceptions. In particular, the deliverable shows that female migrants and refugees cannot be reduced to being passive companions to men. Rather they take on an active role in staying informed, finding creative ways of coping with unforeseen difficulties, and forging a better life for their children, all in the face of being at higher risk than men. The analyses are built on the insights of 152 semi-structured interviews (64% men and 36% women coming from 17 different countries) as well as 42 experts, interviewed in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Libya, Jordan, and Turkey. The processual nature of mixed migration is acknowledged by speaking with interviewees who come from different contexts, located in different countries, and at different stages of their migration process. The analyses demonstrate that despite personal judgments of being well informed, many women come to realize their previous perceptions do not match up with reality. Their social network and social media are the most heavily relied on sources, and trust is put mostly into these sources. Official information campaigns and governments are rarely mentioned and used as sources of information. Mobile media are also an important tool for women to cope with the uncertainty of waiting. Women also mentioned having had misperceptions about the waiting periods connected to migration processes more than men. Overall, women's perceptions of the EU are manifold, subjective, and relate to all aspects of society. Our analysis showed that in particular women's rights are a key theme for female refugees, oftentimes being mentioned as a reason for migrating, while men gave less importance to the issue.

1. Introduction

I had heard about Europe that it has a good salary, men and women are equal. We can work. There is no problem. I had heard these things.
(IP79; a 32-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The concept of migration has been understood as a male phenomenon in the past. While female migrants and refugees were seen as passive companions (Boyd and Grieco 2003) or left behind in their countries of origin, men were perceived as the active protagonists in international migration. However, women have always constituted an essential part in migrant populations but only recently, women were brought to the forefront of migration research and an observation of a rising trend towards a feminization of migration was claimed (Vause & Toma 2015). However, this so-called feminization of migration is neither a new nor a global trend (see e.g. Donato 2012; Schrover 2013). Gender differences and a focus on female dimensions have long been absent in migration research and a gendered analysis of migration patterns, decision-making, experiences, and vulnerabilities only gradually gains importance (Choi et al. 2018). Still, the voices of refugee women, in particular, are not typically incorporated into research endeavors.

The deliverable at hand presents the third empirical analysis of EU (mis)perceptions and media impacts based on the field studies within Work Package 8 of MIRROR (WP8 – Analysis & Field Studies for EU Perceptions and Media Impact; see also Gruber et al., (2021b) and Eberl et al., (2021)). In this study, we focus on a combined and comparative assessment of the role of mobile media for women in migration and its impact on migration decisions as well as female perspectives on the European Union, individual member states, and their migration policies. We intend to give female migrants and refugees the floor to voice their concerns and individual perspectives in regard to their migration-related media practices and their (mis)perceptions of Europe and EU policies. Differences between men and women will be highlighted while focusing on the themes and topics women deem important. The deliverable is based on a total of 152 individual qualitative semi-structured interviews and group interviews which were conducted with 57 female and 101 male migrants and refugees. The interviews took place in contemporary migratory hubs in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Jordan, Libya, and Turkey. This study is based on the concept of mixed migration, and thus participating migrants or refugees[1] were interviewed due to their presence at crossroads for migration. Therefore, the sample is quite diverse including different women with their individual experiences and different perspectives.

The following section gives a theoretical introduction and review of scientific literature on women's information and communication technologies (ICTSs) use in migration. We provide a short general overview of the field of gender and migration and the female dimension in irregular migration. This will be followed by a discussion of our findings regarding gender differences as well as themes and topics relevant to women in mobile media use, especially in connection with access to information, as well as (mis)perceptions of Europe.

[1] By using the term "migrants and refugees", we refer to migrations, refugees, asylum seekers and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. All of these groups are included in the analysis.

1.1 *Women's Migration Aspirations*

The share of adult women arriving irregularly in the EU between 2018 and 2020 was approximately 14%, including girls, the total percentage was about 20% of total arrivals. Most women and girls (70%) registered at arrival and reached Europe in Greece through the Eastern Mediterranean route, the rest arrived in Spain (21%) and in Malta and Italy (9%) (IOM 2021).

Individuals (aspire to) migrate due to a combination of factors, which can influence women and men differently, very much depending on the situation in the country of departure. Therefore, the interests of women and men to migrate, the decision of where to go, and what route to take do not necessarily coincide (Jolly & Reeves 2005; Boyd and Grieco 2003). Previous research demonstrates that economic reasons act as greater motivation for male migrants (Timmermann & Wets 2011) whereas female migrants and refugees seem to have other priorities such as quality of life-oriented reasons or existing social support and childcare (Demarchi & Lenehan 2019; Timmermann, Martinello, Rea & Wets 2014). However, a study from the Mixed Migration Centre (2018) found that female migration drivers strongly vary between regions. The stagnation in the African economy and the perception of economic opportunities elsewhere predominantly drive West African migrants to leave their country of origin. For respondents from East Africa, the most important factor is to join a family in Europe. Other aspects such as structural inequalities, patriarchal societies, domestic violence, missing human rights, the lack of access to education or employment, religious norms, forced marriage, missing children's rights, or discrimination along ethnic lines influence women's migration decision – the latter concerns particularly Afghan women.

Still, migration decision-making is very often not a woman's choice. On the contrary, as McAuliffe and colleagues (2018) show, migration-related decision-making processes are very often gender-biased as patriarchy and family traditions play an important role in these decisions. Often the nuclear family decides for a woman or girl where and how to migrate, which is especially the case for women from Africa or South-East Asia (Mixed Migration Center 2018). But most importantly, in the case of family migration, the man decides for the whole family and is in charge of migratory choices. Additionally, family reunification is one aspect that influences female migration decisions more than male ones and is assumed to play an important role in women's migration. Furthermore, research has found that women, in general, have lower migration aspirations compared to men (Timmerman et al. 2018). However, this missing aspiration can also be explained by the lack of resources and/ or the assumption of danger and uncertainties along the route and in the country of destination. Studies and literature emphasize the danger of women in transit and the prevalence of gendered violence (Fleury 2016).

Displaced female migrants and refugees are considered to be highly vulnerable to all forms of sexual and physical violence and it is common to face different forms of abuse across regions (CARE 2017; Goodkind & Deacon 2004). Women are exposed to exploitation by security forces, fellow migrants, human traffickers but also civilians. Jolly and Reeves (2005) found that in Libya in particular, levels of women's rights abuse are severe. Additional threats such as poor hygiene standards or non-gender segregated washing facilities in reception centers make migration for women even more strenuous (CARE 2017). Of course, those factors may influence women's decisions on which routes to take and which borders, reception centers, or traffickers to avoid.

In addition to the dangers *en route*, there are numerous challenges female migrants and refugees face as a result of their migratory journey. Women who have reached Europe often face significant obstacles and intersectional marginalization due to their gender, race, and economic status (Goodkind & Deacon 2004).

Additionally, Fleury (2016) points out that shifting power and gender dynamics can lead to negative effects such as sexism within their communities and men being adamant about traditional gender norms that some women may have hoped to have left behind in their country of origin.

However, many of these beliefs, aspirations, perceptions, and assumptions, both positive as well as negative, are created by narratives of social networks such as friends or family abroad, returnees, or discourses in media and can potentially influence migration aspirations (see Eberl et al., 2021). In fact, these beliefs are becoming increasingly relevant, as migration-related images became easily accessible through mass media and social media (Van Mol et al. 2018). In this study, we will use the term perceptions to describe what we understand to be the intermediary factor connecting information with aspiration. We assume that it is not the information per se that leads to migration aspiration, but rather what migrants make of the received information and how they link it to their individual situation. Perceptions should not be misunderstood as mere knowledge of facts. Since they are highly individual and subjective, perceptions, in our understanding, cannot be "correct" or "wrong" per se. They are also constantly subject to change. While some prior perceptions may be reaffirmed by first-hand experience, for others, discrepancies may arise between what migrants and refugees had imagined and what they would eventually experience or perceive in transit or upon arrival. We will discuss the migrants' or refugees' subjective and post hoc acknowledgments of discrepancies in this analysis under the umbrella term of misperceptions. There is only little research on gender differences in migration aspiration, on women's EU perceptions, or the assessment of whether women's rights are a migration driver for women. Still, Timmerman and colleagues (Timmerman et al. 2014, p. 223) show that migrants' and refugees' perceptions of economic opportunities are as important as "*perceptions and imaginations regarding the democracy and human rights situation of possible asylum and migration destinations*" which include women's rights.

1.2 *Women on the Move & the Role of Mobile Media*

In this study, we focus on a comparative analysis of the role of mobile media in the migration process, gender differences in EU Perceptions, and a combined assessment of these aspects. Mobile media, ICTSs, and social networks have attained great significance in the context of contemporary migration movements in recent years. With the increasing importance of smartphones and social media in all aspects of life, they also found their way into modern migration practices and scientific analysis on migration.

As we have argued in D8.3 "On the Importance and Role of Mobile Media in the Migration Process" (see Gruber et al, 2021b), the smartphone has become a "*migration essential*" (Brunnwasser 2015) in migration movements of the digital age that fulfills the most diverse functions at different stages of the migration process. Mobile media are used in manifold contexts in the process of migration. For example, mobile media are used for the acquisition of relevant information from (virtual) networks. They are also used for staying in contact with family and friends in the country of destination, country of origin, and with those who are also in transit along the route. Finally, they are mentioned as being used as a means of distraction in times of waiting (see Gruber et al., 2021b).

Numerous empirical studies (see e.g. Dekker et al., 2018; Emmer et al., 2020; Merisalo & Jauhiainen, 2021) have been carried out on migrants' and refugees' media use and an increasing number of researchers have focused on female aspects of ICTs use in migration. However, most authors have narrowed their focus to one specific group of migrants, looking at either one particular nationality, a single location, or one country of destination: Greene (2019) for instance found that the smartphone was essential to women being stranded

in temporary reception centers in Greece in order to pursue three practices: following non-formal news from their social network to not feel distressed by news on media outlets, talking to their families and distracting themselves.

Almenara-Niebla and Ascanio-Sánchez (2019) touch upon the ambiguity of Sahrawi refugee women in Spain. On the one hand, these refugees want to stay in touch with contacts living in their original refugee camp in Algeria. On the other hand, however, they don't want to become subject to transnational gossip in community Facebook groups which seems to be a dominant theme. Many researchers put the spotlight on research on media use once migrants and refugees have already arrived in their countries of destination. Berg (2021) for example found that for refugee women in Germany smartphones act as a kind of lifeline that enables them to communicate with their families, help them to find their way in the new environment, and mostly provides them psychological support.

However, this approach leaves out valuable aspects, such as differences among nationalities, at different stages in the migratory process but most important, differences between gender. As stated above, many female migrants and refugees are affected by inequality in terms of education, or economic status. This can result in knowledge gaps, media illiteracy, restriction to internet access or influences the ownership of smartphones. Downer (2019) found that refugee women are less likely than men to use a mobile phone or even to own it. Additionally, women are less likely to use the internet and often lack digital literacy skills.

Based on the existing literature, our aim is to acquire an in-depth understanding of women's media use and their perception of Europe and EU Migration policies. In order to gain insights into the comparative analysis of the role of mobile migration in the migration process, gender differences in EU Perceptions, and a combined assessment of these aspects we ask the following research questions:

RQ1: What role do mobile media play over the course of the migration process for female migrants and refugees?

- How do women obtain information over the course of the migration process?

- To what extent does this differ from male migrants' and refugees' usage?

RQ2: What are female migrants' and refugees' perceptions and misperceptions of the EU and EU's migration policies?

- Specifically, how are European women's rights perceived by migrants and refugees?

- To what extent does perceptions and misperceptions of the EU differ from male migrants' and refugees' perceptions and misperceptions?

2. Data and Methodology

To investigate gender differences in the role of mobile media and in EU Perceptions and the interplay of both, we draw on empirical studies conducted within the context of Work Package 8 "Analysis & Field Studies for EU Perception and Media Impact" of the MIRROR project. The analysis is based on and structured around qualitative data concerning migrants or refugees from Iraq and Syria (37%), Afghanistan and Iran (32%), different African countries, such as Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan and the Gambia (28%), as well as individual other countries, such as Pakistan, Palestine, and Turkmenistan (4%) (see Table A1 in the Appendix for a detailed overview). Women specifically come from

Iran, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Cameroon, Somalia, Sudan, The Gambia, and Turkmenistan. The women who participated in this study were between 18 and 65 years old. We furthermore conducted 42 interviews with experts (e.g., academics, social workers, and journalists) in the field of migration and/or the regions that serve as countries of destination, countries of transit, or countries of origin for the migrants or refugees interviewed (see Table A2 in the Appendix for a more detailed list of the experts interviewed). See D8.2 "Interview Guidelines for Migration Process Analysis" for more details on the research design (Gruber et al. 2020).

All of the migrants and refugees involved are, have recently been, or are considering to be in the process of migration. They may either have decided to start their migration journey, to continue it, to stop or pause it, or even to return to their country of origin. As this study is based on the concept of mixed migration, participating migrants or refugees were not interviewed because of their reason to migrate or their country of origin. Instead, people were interviewed due to their presence at crossroads for migration. To be more precise, this study is based on 152 semi-structured interviews[2] (64% men and 36% women) conducted between August 2020 and May 2021 in contemporary migratory hubs, such as in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Jordan, Libya, and Turkey. Four of them were group interviews, of which three were among family members, and one interview was conducted with two friends residing in the same reception center. In these countries, field access has been provided by local refugee centers and/or NGOs working with migrants and/or refugees and further supported by facilitators on the ground (e.g., local academics) who had previously worked with migrants and refugees in the region. Additionally, snowball sampling was employed. Following theoretical sampling and, therefore, guided by the aim of theoretical saturation (see Glaser and Strauss 2017), the number of interviews conducted at the different locations varies (see Table A1 in the Appendix for a detailed overview).

As interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers and participants had to adhere to health and safety guidelines and legal regulations in the different interview locations. After careful consideration, interviews were done in person, where possible, and remotely, using web-based teleconferencing tools, where necessary (see Gruber et al. 2021a). This allowed for a mixture of in-person, remote (aided), and remote (unaided) interviews. Where interviewees were hosted at refugee centers or NGOs, we coordinated the interviews with the local facilitators who helped us organize the in-person interviews but also assisted with setting up the remote interviews (i.e., "remote aided") on their end and afterward leave the room to give interviewees the necessary privacy. Where interviews were not hosted by refugee centers or NGOs but only coordinated by local facilitators, interviewees would themselves click on an activation link that would immediately transfer them to the used web-based teleconferencing tool with no software installation or advanced digital literacy skills necessary.

The difficult challenges and experiences migrants and refugees face during their migratory process can make them especially vulnerable to harm, economic precarity, instability, discrimination, or mental health issues. Therefore, all interviewers have been instructed to follow a "Do No Harm" approach (Krause 2017), by which we ensured that questions or question phrasing will not expose participants to any distress. Displaced female migrants and refugees are considered to be highly vulnerable to all forms of sexual and physical violence, shifting gender and power dynamics, sexism, and racism (Goodkind & Deacon 2004) This vulnerability is

[2] 158 Interviewees in total (101 men, 57 women).

exacerbated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic due to limited access to health care and information, restrictions, or curfews.

Due to the vulnerability exposed, female migrants and refugees seem to face more barriers in participating in research (Lusambili et al. 2021; Goodkind & Deacon 2004). Fear of authority and repression, endemic poverty, lack of language skills as well as childcare duties or family structures may influence their willingness to participate in interviews. Added to this, the vast majority of irregular migrants arriving in Europe are men. This imbalance is even stronger in some locations such as Libya since the Central and Western Mediterranean routes, as well as the Western African Atlantic route, are mainly used by adult men traveling alone (IOM 2021). Despite IOM statistics (2021), statements made by experts, and general assumptions, quite a large number of all women we spoke to mentioned having migrated alone or only accompanied by their children. 13 women (23%) explicitly mentioned having traveled without a partner, whereas 54 traveled with a partner or parents. We aimed to ensure gender balance among all interviews and encouraged women to take part in the study. This means that, when possible, parity of men and women was attempted to be ensured in the composition of the sample in such a way that female voices and experiences are equally taken into account. In total, the share of women was 36%[3].

The interview guide was evaluated and openly discussed prior to fieldwork with former irregular migrants, to whom the research team already had a relationship. It focuses on four key topics: 1. the role of smartphones in participants' daily lives and during the migration process, 2. their perceptions of Europe and where they come from, 3. individual's information-seeking behaviors, and 4. individual's information sharing behaviors. The present deliverable particularly focuses on responses to key topic 2 as well as connected follow-up questions. Interviews in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Italy have been conducted in the participants' native language or – if preferred by the interviewees – in English. This was not possible in Turkey, Jordan, and Libya, where, instead, for interviews that could not be conducted in English, an interpreter was present (i.e., virtually) during the interviews. Interviews with women participants were conducted by women interlocutors whenever possible. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, anonymized, and translated into English by native speakers for the analyses by the core research team.

A QDA-software was used for organizing the carefully transcribed data and for the data analyses concerning the interviews with migrants and refugees. Data analysis followed the suggestions by Rädiker and Kuckartz (2020). A core team, consisting of four researchers, first explored different sets of interviews applying open coding. Codes were afterward discussed in the team, evaluated, dropped, merged, and/or specified, resulting in a coding schema of general categories and subcategories that were applied for the coding of all interviews with migrants and refugees. However, in line with the grounded theory approach, the coding schema remained open and could still be amended after careful discussion (Strauss and Corbin 1990). We used these general categories as a starting point for actual data analysis. Codes were examined and related to each other, often in terms of context (i.e., the migration phase), which lead us to the reflections below. While our coding scheme allowed us, for example, to code perceptions and discrepancies separately for the EU as well as each individual member state that was mentioned, sources could not always be linked directly to a specific perception or discrepancy (neither by our coding nor by interviewees recollection).

[3] Austria 47% women, Bosnia and Herzegovina 48% women, Italy 50% women, Jordan 25% women, Libya 5% women, Turkey 33% women.

The general categories that were developed for the coding of the interviews with migrants and refugees were also used for the identification of relevant segments in the expert interviews. These interviews, which followed the aim of complementing the main findings from the interviews with migrants and refugees and adding an outside and nuanced perspective to the perceptions and recollections of migrants and refugees, however, were not coded in the same granular detail described above.

3. Gender Differences in the Role of Mobile Media

Mobile media are more than a luxury or accessory during the migration journey of most migrants or refugees, they are a necessity comparable to food and shelter (Brunnwasser 2015). This first part of the discussion of our findings will explain what role mobile media play for female refugees and how this differs from men. Specifically, change in media use, ways of accessing information and what role mobile media play in this regard, what other important functions mobile media have for women, whether information obtained though mobile media is trusted, and whether it is shared or evaluated will be discussed below.

When it comes to smartphone ownership, the majority of both men and women reported having and using a smartphone at all stages of their migration journey. However, there seemed to be a slight increase in smartphone ownership and use after interviewees left their country of origin. An increase in smartphone ownership and greater access to the internet after leaving their country of origin can also be found for forcibly displaced Syrians in Turkey (Jauhiainen et al. 2021). Talking to experts working with refugees, it was made clear that women are especially dependent on having access to a phone since they are at a much higher risk while on their migration journey. Overall, there was an equal distribution of smartphone ownership between the genders in all stages of migration. Merisalo and Jauhiainen (2019) studied smartphone ownership and internet use of asylum seekers at different stages of migration, namely, before, in transit, and in their countries of destination. The authors came to the same conclusion, that there were no notable gendered differences in smartphone ownership. A mobile gender gap, as described by Downer (2019), can therefore not be confirmed in this study.

3.1 *Change in Media Use*

The way smartphones were used varies both across time as well as the interviewees' genders. Exactly why and how these changes occurred, will be addressed in the following section. Concerning the use of apps, female and male respondents, who already owned a smartphone in their country of origin, continued using the apps already familiar to them and only sparingly mentioned installing new apps while in transit or in their country of destination. Women mentioned this only slightly more often, specifically using five different apps (BBC, IMO[4], Shein, Snapchat and Tiktok) only once they were in transit or in their country of destination. Men on the other hand only mentioned that they had started using three Apps (Snapchat, Tiktok and BBC) once they left their country of origin. Snapchat was used by both men and women only in their country of destination. Tiktok was used by men both in transit as well as in their country of destination, while women only started using it in their country of destination. Interestingly, BBC was only mentioned to be used in transit by both men and women, with one out of ten women mentioning using it and only 4% of men doing so. Viber on the other hand was only used in their countries of origin.

[4] IMO is a free-to-use App for video chatting.

Another factor, which influenced the way respondents used their smartphone were restrictions in their country of origin. Apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, or Facebook were mentioned as restricted and or filtered in their countries of origin (particularly in Iran) and were only used once in transit or in their country of destination. A woman from Iran interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina mentioned:

> *I use most of these apps here. Because in Iran, we had a filter for social networks and we had to log in with a proxy and it is not easy to access them. But it is easier here, especially for using WhatsApp in Iran, I was afraid that our messages or phone calls might be checked and this fear does not exist here*. (IP29; a 40-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Additionally, one of our experts working at an NGO in Austria explained that some afghan families prevented women and girls from accessing the internet in fear of them wanting to leave their country of origin. Although there was no explicit mention of this, it could explain another aspect of how mobile media use changed for women over the course of their migration journey.

Furthermore, the necessity arose to find a source of information relevant to their migration journey or their country of destination, which they could not find in the apps they were using while in their country of destination. This was relevant both to men and women, equally.

> *Yes, yes .... much has changed. I visit Facebook, Telegram, and Instagram more. There are several groups on Facebook and Telegram where you can get information and consult about the asylum process. Asking questions from other refugees, who have traveled this route, to find a new location… When I was in Iran, I used to refer to social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, but not for receiving news, only for entertainment.* (IP25; a 19-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

One aspect that was emphasized exclusively by women is that they used their smartphones less in their country of origin because they were able to see their family in person. Being separated from their families due to migration, their smartphones became essential for staying in touch through Facebook or Instagram. Maintaining these important relationships was made possible through the use of smartphones and social media (Jauhiainen et al. 2021; Merisalo & Jauhiainen 2021). Such as these two women from Iraq and Iran, interviewed in Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina:

> *In Iraq, I didn't need to call a lot because all my family was living near me but here I use the smartphone more to contact my family and follow their news.* (IP1; a 43-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

> *I did not use it much in Iran. All the families were together; I did not use the phone at all. I use it more since I came here.* (IP78; a 35-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

3.2 *Gender Differences in Accessing Information*

Access to information is crucial for migrants and refugees in all stages of their migration journey (Berg 2021). As a woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina describes:

> *I read more news to find out what is happening. Because in the situation we are in, the news is the most important thing.* (IP80; a 34-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Generally, women place great importance on being informed as this woman from Gambia shares:

> *Because I want to know many things about the world. I want to get a lot of information.* (IP46; a 30-year-old woman from Gambia, interviewed in Italy)

In order to understand how men and women access information differently, through which channels and if there are differences in what information men and women are looking into, the following section will be dedicated to answering these questions. In doing so, differences between men and women will be highlighted, while focusing on the themes and topics women place importance on.

Overall, there are only slight differences regarding how many men and women stayed informed in general, about their country of origin, their country of destination, or migration. However, when looking into different stages of the migration process, there are some differences that can be observed. This applies to interviewees, who speak about staying informed in their host countries: while around a third of the women, who are in their country of destination, talked about keeping up with the news about their host country, less than one out of ten men mentioned this.

Women talk about gathering information about their country of destination, while already being there, in terms of what the country is like, but also about regretting finding the information they would have found useful during earlier stages of the migration process. Such as these two women from Iran and Iraq, interviewed in Italy and Austria:

> *I just looked on YouTube and saw that there is so much information there about the asylum process. I wish I had known this earlier. It is not useful for us now, because all the problems have happened to us, but if I had visited YouTube before, maybe we would not have endured today's difficulties.* (IP28; a 45-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Italy)

> *If, for example, I want to know the weather in Vienna or life in Vienna or information about Vienna, I open up YouTube and get information. All you need can be found on YouTube. For example, I have never been to the countryside before but I am searching for the countryside in Austria and wow, it shows many nice videos. I mean, there are many places that I have not seen, but on YouTube, you will find them like Heaven.* (IP32; a 53-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

Another important topic for women in their country of destination is staying up to date with their acquaintances, who have settled in their country of destination. In contrast to this, the majority of men mentioned staying informed in general, while in their country of destination, whereas only about half of the women in their country of destination talked about keeping up with general news.

With regard to doing research about Europe or their migration journey, both the majority of men and women mentioned actively looking to gain insight about these topics. In spite of this similarity, more women tended to ask people about their experiences in Europe, while men prefer other sources of information, such as movies, online research through social media and or search engines. An expert working in Greece shared his insight on the situation, explaining that information sessions held in a refugee camp in Greece are mostly visited by male refugees and that women are much harder to reach. His organization is trying to change this by organizing female-only workshops. Insofar, it is likely that women tend to seek out information more through informal and personal channels, by reaching out to friends, family, and acquaintances. Another possible explanation could be that women don't have the same resources to attend informational events, as they are occupied with care work. As an expert working at an NGO in Austria confirms, that women tend to take on the role of the caretaker, while men are more responsible for organizing and planning.

Interestingly, women who mentioned asking people for information about Europe or their migration journey were almost all situated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These women, who were in transit in Bosnia and Herzegovina, talked about the uncertainty of their situation and how vital access to WIFI and smartphone ownership was. A large part of what constitutes uncertainty in this situation is limited access to information. Wall et al. (2017) define this as information precarity, which is "*the condition of instability that refugees experience in accessing news and personal information, potentially leaving them vulnerable to misinformation, stereotyping, and rumors that can affect their economic and social capital*".

Berg (2021) highlights how women's perception of the uncertainty of their situation was actually worsened with unpredictable internet access. These findings can also be found in our analysis, as a woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina describes:

> *Yes, it's really hard to wait, and here our entertainment is Instagram, and when the internet is weak and access is hard, I'm depressed. Not because of Instagram, because of the uncertainty of our situation. It's like you are in a room where all the doors are closed.* (IP29; a 40-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Being in transit, these women described a precarious situation with many unknown factors on how to proceed on their journey towards Europe. Thus, quick and up-to-date information from other, more experienced people *en route* or from those, who had already crossed the border, was required. This is where social media platforms come in. They enable quick on-the-go information of what is happening now, which border is open, what the most current information is. As other colleagues have pointed out, social media enable (potential) migrants to contact previously unknown people in likely destination countries (Hiller & Franz 2004; Dekker & Engbersen 2014; Thulin & Vilhelmson 2014; Lim et al. 2016). In this sense, a social media platform offers a means of connecting to other people and functions as a transmitter of information, not a source. As Merisalo and Jauhiainen (2021. p. 196) argue, based on the works of Düvell (2018) and Migali and colleagues (2018), social media "*is a supportive tool that enables bridging social capital in migration networks and influences the mobility decisions of asylum-related migrants*".

Social media channels enable the fast-paced updating of information and information flows for a broad spectrum of people. However, they are not the creators of information, merely the vessel. As Borkert and colleagues (2018) have argued, the intrinsic value of other people and (non-)mediated interpersonal connections are often stressed to remain equally relevant to interactions via social media. A woman from Iran puts it this way:

> *Telegram does not help ... People, who are active in Telegram, do help. They advise us on which routes to go, where the police are ... Even families and young people, when they get to the game, talk regularly and advise others on what time the trains arrive, what the routes look like.* (IP25; a 19-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This points to a large amount of individual responsibility, burden, and risk, which leads to a requirement to be flexible. Furthermore, an ambivalence of high dependency on other people for information and the necessity to maintain a competitive nature to make it across the border is a result of this precarious situation.

With access to information being so vital during the migration journey, the question arises where women get their information from and how this differs from men. Generally, three different types of information sources were identified: (1) traditional news sources such as TV, radio, and newspapers, (2) the social network, and (3) social media. Sources like newspapers, TV, or radio mainly served the function of staying up to date with

international and national news as well as other topics of interest like sports or culture. Social media, on the other hand, were used by interviewees to gather information relevant to their own journey and lives as well as worldly events. Social media also often served as a gateway function, as interviewees accessed information through social media accounts of newspapers or large news corporations. An Iranian woman points this out:

> *[I use] Instagram to receive news from Persian networks and Persian news agencies such as BBC in Persian.* (IP25; a 19-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Interviewees often mentioned talking to people as a means for gathering information in connection with social media apps, leading to a large overlap of these two types of sources. The use of social media included having direct conversations as well as getting broadcast information. Conversations with people were both held in person as well as through social media channels. Therefore, the separation of these two categories still holds its value in understanding the process of gathering information. Both of these categories have also been described as highly relevant during the migration process by other authors. On the one hand, for example, Collyer (2005) and Schapendonk (2015) illustrate the importance of social networks in gathering information during the migration process. On the other hand, another focus in the literature is being put on broadcast communication on social media, namely, information collected via social media that wasn't addressed to the migrant or refugee directly or even indirectly, which also plays an increasingly important role (Hiller & Franz 2004; Dekker & Engbersen 2014; Thulin & Vilhelmson 2014; Lim et al. 2016).

In this study, the most widely mentioned source by both men and women was social media, while different apps were used differently by men and women. Facebook was used most often by both men and women to gather information (Graf 2018; Kaufmann 2018). This was also corroborated by experts working in Italy and Austria, who pointed out the importance of Facebook for refugees to stay informed as well as to keep in touch with friends and family. However, women reported using Facebook more widely than men. Specifically, women used Facebook in all stages of migration to gather general information, to gain insights about their country of destination, and to stay up to date with events in their country of origin. The only instance where women didn't use Facebook was to gather information on their country of destination, while in their country of origin. Men, on the other hand, only mentioned using Facebook while in transit and to get general information while in their country of destination. These two women from Syria and Iran describe the role of Facebook:

> *We could see the latest political, economic, social, and local news through Facebook*. (IP143; a 38-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

> *I follow Farsi Dari on Facebook because it gives information about asylum seekers.* (IP78; a 35-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Instagram was the second most used social media platform for women to gain information. Similarly to Facebook, most women reported using it in all stages of migration. Women only mentioned not using Instagram to get informed about their country of destination, while in their country of destination and origin. In contrast to this, Instagram was used less frequently and less widely by male interviewees to gather information. Namely, to stay informed in general in their country of destination and in transit as well as to get updates on their country of destination, while in their country of origin. A woman from Afghanistan shared how she used Instagram to get news updates:

> *To get information, I mostly use Instagram*. (IP85; a woman from Afghanistan, age unknown, interviewed in Turkey)

The social media platforms that were used by the least women were Telegram and WhatsApp. Not only were they used the least by women, but they were also solely mentioned to get current information on their migration journey and their country of destination while in transit. In comparison, the use of these two social media apps was higher among men. While they weren't mentioned by most men, they were used more widely by men than by women. Finally, an app that wasn't mentioned to be used by women to stay informed at all, while men did report using it sparsely, was Twitter.

When it comes to getting information about Europe specifically, the same sources were mentioned as described above for gathering information in general, on their country of origin and destination as well as migration. However, to learn more about Europe, the migrants' social network was mentioned most often by both the majority of men and women. The migrants' social network consists of friends and family as well as acquaintances or even strangers. Contact to them is established both on- and offline. The most important sources in this social network are friends and family in their prospective country of destination. Traditional news sources and social media were mentioned less frequently, both about half as often as the social network. Other sources, such as organizations or official governmental sources were only rarely mentioned. Men and women describe the relevance of their sources in a very similar way, bearing no gender-specific differences. Albeit being mentioned only rarely, men do talk about referring to official government sources of their prospective countries of destination more often than women.

In regard to social media use, Facebook was the most used social media platform for both men and women as a source of information about Europe, with a stark difference to the use of other social media platforms, which were mentioned less frequently. Around a third of female and male respondents mentioned Facebook as a means to gather information on Europe. Looking at women's social media use, in particular, there are a few differences in how social media platforms are used to gather information about Europe in comparison to general information, information on their country of origin and destination as well as migration. As mentioned above, Facebook remains the most frequently used social media platform for all purposes of gathering information, including Europe. What is more, Facebook groups were described as an important source of information on Europe. Around two-thirds of the women, who mentioned Facebook as a source, talked about getting their information from groups on the social media platform. In comparison, only one out of ten men, who used Facebook to gather information about Europe, referred to groups on Facebook as a source of information. Google, on the other hand, was more important for women to get information about Europe, specifically, rather than for more general information-seeking purposes. While Instagram was described by women as the second most used social media platform overall, it was less relevant for learning about Europe.

Twitter was also not mentioned as a source by female respondents for gathering information on Europe, while some men did use it as a source for Europe. WhatsApp was not mentioned in connection to getting informed about Europe. Telegram was only mentioned very rarely. Telegram groups were not used by women to gather information on Europe at all, while half of the men, who used Telegram, mentioned groups on Telegram as a source of information.

As our findings above have outlined, mobile media devices play a crucial role in facilitating access to information. Particularly in the case of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, quick access to current information is crucial and only possible through the use of mobile media. This is especially true in the light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, as important information and services can increasingly be only accessed online. A Syrian woman, who has been living in Jordan for the past 20 years shared her observations with us:

> *For example, if they want to renew their UNHCR papers they need to have an appointment, so booking the appointment or the interview is happening through the smartphone and the interview also through the smartphone, also for the government services you need apps through the smartphones, also there are some organizations like Caritas which launched their services through the smartphones.* (IP133; a 34-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

In addition to being vital for accessing information, mobile phones have two more important roles during the migration journey: serving as a coping mechanism for uncertainty through distraction and entertainment as well as for navigation. Using their phones for distraction and entertainment is mentioned equally often in transit as in their country of destination by women. Men, on the other hand, mentioned using their phones for distraction nearly twice as often while being in transit than when they are in their country of destination. However, when looking at how men and women view this in Bosnia and Herzegovina the number of women that mention the need for distraction is almost twice as high as the number of men, namely eight women and five men. While the number of men who talked about using their phones for entertainment is higher in Jordan, many described having lived in Jordan for an extended period of time with no intention of leaving the country in the near future. As already described on page 14, women are faced with a great deal of uncertainty in times of waiting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, an greater need for finding ways to cope with this situation is likely. Since phones are easily accessible many women use them to distract themselves from their uncertainty, as this woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina shares:

> *I'm very tired and at least having fun on social media can help us to forget the grief.* (IP29; a 40-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The women in our sample shared coping with their times of waiting by mostly seeking entertainment on their phones, either through games, movies, social media, or chatting with friends and family. Alexandra Greene (2019, p. 745) explored how women waiting in Greece coped with their situation. She identified three different strategies women applied: “non-mainstream news consumption as a tactic of self-care; mediated family practices as a tactic of hope; and nature photography as a tactic of creativity”. As found in our sample, Greene makes the important reminder that these strategies simply help women to cope with their situation, but by no means solve the underlying issues. Information shared by several experts also confirmed this. They describe having witnessed refugees in camps dealing with boredom and frustration leading them to contact their families more often. One expert described how women in French-speaking African communities utilize their smartphones to boost their self-confidence by posting photos, sharing content, and women from Arabic communities enjoy being involved in artistic projects.

The third important function mobile media serve on the course of the migration journey is navigation. This feature is most important while in transit: almost twice as many women mentioned using their phone to navigate while in transit as in their countries of destination. For men the difference is even greater: four times the amount of men mention navigation as an important feature of their phones in transit, compared to men in their host countries. Seeing as our sample includes almost twice the number of men, a comparison between the genders shows no great difference in the importance put on navigation in transit with a total of 14 women and 24 men speaking about this. A Syrian woman, who had been living in Jordan for the past 20 years at the time of her interview spoke about her observations:

> *Without the smartphone, they wouldn't make it at all, by using the GPS and collecting information about the areas which they have to go through.* (IP133; a 34-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

One woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina speaks about how access to a navigation system is so vital, that even though their phones were taken away and they were in a tough financial situation, they had to repurchase phones:

> *In the games we went to, yes, of course, most of the time the Croatian police took our phones. Although it costs a lot, we have to buy a phone again to use its GPS on the way.* (IP80; a 34-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

3.3 *Gender Differences in Perceived Trustworthiness and Credibility of Information Sources*

With different ways of accessing information comes the burden of having to determine which sources are trustworthy and which ones are not. Especially when it comes to migration decision-making, the trustworthiness of sources is crucial (Dekker et al. 2018). When asked about which sources men and women trust when looking at Europe, their migration journeys, and their countries of destination in particular, all interviewees mentioned their social network and social media as the most trustful ones. Given that social networks are the most important source of information regarding Europe and the heavy social media use of respondents of both genders, it is unsurprising that this would be the case. Trust may at the same time facilitate usage, yet usage may also contribute to higher trust. As an expert working with female refugees in Austria points out, having contacts in Europe that refugees deem trustworthy is essential. In addition, the need to rely on these sources as well as the unreliability of information gathered described by interviewees offers a further explanation for the controversialism of these sources.

While men equally often described trusting social media as well as doubting this source, women leaned more towards distrust of social media. Specifically, almost twice as many women mentioned not perceiving information found on social media as trustworthy than women, who deemed this a credible source. When it comes to misinformation on social media, Jauhiainen and Tedeschi (2021), who looked into the everyday lives of undocumented migrants in Finland, found that 37% of their respondents mentioned having received misinformation about Finland. This aligns with our findings of distrust in social media.

What both genders agreed on, however, was trusting rather than mistrusting information coming from their social network. Out of all the trusted sources mentioned by women, their social network was mentioned most often, while men mentioned trusting social media most often. In regard to specific social media platforms, Facebook, Google, Telegram, and Twitter were mentioned both as credible and incredible sources in particular.

Facebook and Facebook groups were another controversial topic regarding their credibility as a source. It was the most mentioned social media platform by both men and women, which aligns with its described frequent use. Similarly to trust in social media in general, women tended to distrust information found on Facebook and Facebook groups, while men found information originating from this social media platform to be credible more often than not. However, these were only slight differences, making it a highly controversial topic for both men and women. One of the reasons why credibility on Facebook and Facebook groups is often unclear, is due to the content creator, their intentions, and professional experience, as two women from Iraq, interviewed in Austria and from Syria, interviewed in Jordan share:

> *Facebook groups that have less than 2000 subscribers usually spread false rumors with the aim of getting more people to subscribe, and their news and information are not correct.* (IP40; a 35-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

> *It depends actually on who is posting what, if this person is part of an institution and if he is authorized to post something formally (on Facebook) then this will be easy to capture, but if you find for example the admin has a fake name and they are posting news or work announcement then I will be doubtful. So most of the posts are not that accurate.* (IP142; a 29-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

Another platform, which was mentioned in connection with its group feature was Telegram. Both men and women mentioned this social media platform rarely in connection with its credibility as a source. Female, as well as male respondents, reported not trusting this source. Specifically, a small fraction of men mentioned Telegram as a credible source, whereas women only mentioned Telegram in connection with distrust. This could be a reason why women refrain from using Telegram to gain more information. Google was found by both men and women to be a credible source more often than an incredible one. Seeing as women didn't mention using Twitter to gather information, it was not up for debate whether they would trust this source or not. Male interviewees mentioned Twitter only in regard to seeing it as a credible source, albeit speaking about it only rarely.

Part of the controversialism of being able to trust information found on social media or provided by the social network is brought on by having to decide which of the two sources is regarded as more credible. The stance that men take on this issue is clearly trusting their social network over the information found on social media.

This is made clear by actively checking information with friends and family, while information given by friends and family is not reevaluated online, as a man from Sudan, interviewed in Libya shares:

> *There are sites that give correct information and there are sites that don't and the only way I can trust the information on these sites is by asking friends.* (IP105; an 18-year-old man from Sudan, interviewed in Libya)

For women, the matter was less clear-cut. While there was a slight preference towards trusting other people over social media, some women do talk about checking information from the internet with people, whereas others check online what people have told them. The deciding factor for trusting other people over social media seemed to be the relationship to the person. Graf (2018) analyzed how online and offline practices relate to each other in forced migration and how trust, as well as distrust, are developed in social relationships. The author argues that trust is an undeniable necessity in order to find one's way in unfamiliar environments and that trust results out of both on- and offline interactions. In addition, Graf points out that trust also depends on continuously receiving credible information. In this study, the main reasons shared for trusting people are having a close relationship or that they have valuable experience. This applies to other people having crossed the border or having spent some time in their prospective country of destination. The closeness of the relationship can be based on speaking the same language, sharing a country of origin, having known them for an extended period of time, or having family ties. A woman from Iraq, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina shares her experience:

> *Yes, people, who can speak from experience, can be more helpful than the internet. [...] I only ask people that I know and trust.* (IP38; a 24-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Distrust was described as being due to having a loose connection to the person, suspecting or knowing of bad intentions of the other person, which are often in connection to keeping them from progressing in their journey. Due to the ambiguity of this situation, not only can shared experiences of interviewees contradict each other, even the experiences of one single person can be conflicting, as a woman from Iran illustrates:

> *There are so many people who deliberately give false info. If they have gone through the way in which the police arrested them, maybe they tell others that the way is safe. It is difficult to get to any game and it takes hours walking a long way through the forest and people get tired and may say anything on purpose, but there are people who always tell the truth and help others.* (IP25; a 19-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Despite this uncertainty of the credibility of the information given by other people, the need to rely on these sources remains crucial, oftentimes including respondents not having the luxury of fact-checking information, as a woman from Iran, interviewed in Turkey describes:

> *Being a refugee is not actually a choice. Being a refugee means taking refuge. And you have no way. You are leaving somewhere because you were in danger and most of the time it doesn't make a difference for you, where you are going to or what would happen next.* (IP84; a woman from Iran, age unknown, interviewed in Turkey)

This points to another facet of the already described issue of information precarity (Wall et al.2017; Berg 2021) interviewees faced. Furthermore, this contradicts Graf's (2018) findings, stating that lower risk could result in a higher tendency to trust information found online. Furthermore, our findings are confirmed by an expert working with female refugees in Austria, who explains that the urgency to leave often outweighs the risks involved and hinders people from reevaluating the information they have been given.

Looking into how interviewees view the credibility of other sources besides their social network and social media, women do not speak to their trust or distrust of TV, while it is a controversial topic for men, with no clear preference of trustworthiness or untrustworthiness. News and news channels are more often linked to credibility for men, with less than half of the men saying they do not trust information from news and news channels. On the contrary, women don't take a definitive stance on this issue. When it comes to the perceived credibility of information provided by official government websites or the UN, both, men and women, only mention this very rarely. Additionally, the majority of interviewees did not know about information campaigns such as infomigrants.net. Out of 39 interviewees asked about this site, only 3 men reported having heard about it, while no women mentioned having any knowledge of it. While neither men nor women mention distrusting this type of source of information, it is the least mentioned trusted source. For the majority of interviewees, regardless of gender, information received through friends, family, and acquaintances is often deemed more trustworthy than these official sources. Emmer and colleagues (2020) also come to this conclusion in their study on information seeking and communication during forced migration. Lack of trust in official sources is largely due to having had negative experiences with institutions (Felton 2015). Several experts also pointed out that refugees had had bad experiences with governments and other official sources and that they have a hard time building trust between refugees and their organizations. An expert working at an NGO in Italy even sees gaining the trust of refugees as one of her most important tasks. A successful strategy to achieve this is direct community engagement. This means seeking out community leaders and sharing crucial information with them, so they can spread it in their communities. This is due to the fact that information coming from the outside will not receive the same attention and trust, as the Italian expert explains.

3.4 *Gender Differences in Source Evaluation and Information Sharing*

After shedding light on the perceived credibility and trustworthiness of information and specific sources, this section is dedicated to discussing whether interviewees took action to revaluate the information they had been given and how they did so.

Both the majority of women and men reported checking the information they have been given. Men tend to speak about reevaluating information slightly more frequently than women. Specifically, around a quarter of women mentioned not checking information, while around one out of ten men do not reevaluate. Information is either checked through online research using Google or Facebook, cross-checking different news sources, and comparing between different languages. Very frequently, information is reevaluated by asking family members, friends, or people they met on the road or in camps. Fiedler (2019) points out how this is the only way to verify information in some cases.

The reasons interviewees give for not doing this is either not seeing a need to evaluate or because they don't have the time or the resources to do so. An expert in Turkey working for an NGO supporting migrants and refugees explains how refugees, who have experienced being given fake information then start to reevaluate from that point on and are more likely to reach out to government authorities or NGOs. However, if they have had no such experience, the probability of fact-checking is lower.

Around 45% of men and women spoke about sharing information, with a slight preference of sharing positive news or information with no difference between female and male respondents. However, a larger proportion of men mentioned not sharing information or only doing so very rarely. Specifically, around 17% of men talked about not sharing information, compared to only around 6% of women doing so. Insofar, it is clear that there were only slight differences in regard to whether women and men share information or not, as well as if there is a gendered difference in preference for sharing positive or negative information. When it comes to how women share, they do so in private conversation for the most part. These conversations are equally held in person and online. Very few women mentioned making social media posts, specifically four out of the 33 women, who spoke about sharing information on- and offline. These posts are usually created with the intention of motivating or uplifting others or to self-promote, as this woman from Syria explains:

> *On Facebook, I shared just the positive things, I try just to motivate people through them*. (IP143; a 38-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

Another small group of women, namely three out of 33 women, specified that they refrain from sharing personal information online and making social media posts, with one woman from Iraq pointing out that she only participated in female-only Facebook groups:

> *I share my experiences in Facebook groups that are restricted to women only. I can also, if necessary, share my experiences through private chats with these women.* (IP40; a 35-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

The number of women who do share publicly and make social media posts is quite small. Insofar, it can be concluded that women tend to take on more of a passive role in public or semi-public online spaces. This is mostly due to a fear of (sexual) harassment or hate speech. These findings were also corroborated by an expert of a local civil society organization in Austria, who pointed out experiences of violence women make online, leading them to refrain from posting online or only doing so after very close consideration as well as seeking out safe spaces, which are restricted to women.

Concerning shared migration advice, there was no difference between whether male and female interviewees advised migrating, not migrating, only migrating legally or under specific circumstances. Both genders seemed undecided whether they would advise others to take on a migration journey.

Around a quarter of men and women each advise others not to migrate and another 25% point out that every case is different. When it comes to advising others to migrate, both one out of ten men and women take this stance. Legal migration in particular is advised by 15% of women and 13% of men.

This first part of the discussion of results covered how women access information, whether they trust this information, if and how they (re)evaluate and share content online as well as the role of mobile media in the migration journey for women and how all of these aspects differ from men. While this section was dedicated to understanding how women access information, the following section will discuss how this information is interpreted in regard to the perceptions and misperceptions they form of Europe and how this differs from men. Topics such as the improvements refugees might hope for by coming to Europe; how human, women's, and children's rights are perceived by women and men; (mis)perceptions of migration and asylum policies, integration processes as well as country preferences will be examined.

4. Gender Differences in EU Perceptions

Individuals aspire to migrate due to a combination of factors, which influence women and men differently. Therefore, the intentions of women and men to migrate and the choices of route and destination do not necessarily coincide (Jolly & Reeves 2005; Boyd and Grieco 2003). In order to understand why women tend to migrate in particular, we have to ask what outcomes they expect and what improvements they long for. In this section of the deliverable, we try to answer these questions and examine the range of beliefs and notions female interviewees associated with migrating to Europe. Additionally, major gender differences in the perceptions of Europe will be assessed along with a discussion of perceptions of Europe specifically relevant to women.

4.1 *Improvements in Living Conditions, Job Opportunities, and Education*

As highlighted in previous studies (see e.g. McMahon & Sigona 2018; De Haas 2021) migrants and refugees hope for an overall improvement in their standard of living in Europe. This is largely in line with our findings and statements made by both women and men, as the most prominent perception referred to living conditions in Europe. In total, 55% of all female interviewees and 51% of all men alluded to that. For some, the concepts of Europe seemed to be distant objects, mentioning an improvement of living conditions, the comfort of life, and referring to simplicity and tranquility in Europe. However, most women linked these advancements to concrete ideas, beliefs, and aspirations relating to various aspects of life and society. Previous research demonstrates that the perception of job opportunities plays an important role in migration decisions and that in general, economic reasons act as greater motivation for male migrants (Timmermann & Wets 2011; Hatton & Williamson 1998; Demarchi & Lenehan 2019). Female migrants and refugees seem to have other priorities such as health care, human rights-related issues, gender inequality as well as education and childcare (Demarchi & Lenehan 2019; Timmermann, Martinello, Rea & Wets 2014). While many women indicated longing for an improvement of the latter, securing work opportunities was a widely spread ambition shared by women as well. 42% of all women and 57% of all men explicitly referred to labor and the job market and perceived work to be an integral part of the European lifestyle. They expect that they

would have to work and actively want to work. Additionally, many emphasized the job opportunities for refugees and their influence on societal inclusion. Such as these two women from Syria and Iran, interviewed in Jordan and Turkey:

> *At the same time, Europe is giving a chance to the refugees, through the aid which they provide at the beginning, to learn the language of the host country and integrate into the community and to work to improve himself to integrate into the labor market to be a productive community member.* (IP145; a 29-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

> *But if someone works hard and has the potential, after a few years he can have a normal life there.* (IP96; a woman from Iran, age unknown, interviewed in Turkey)

What is more, migration can lead to an increase in income for migrant women, especially if they come from oppressive countries with strict gender norms (Jolly & Reeves 2005). Female interviewees perceived entry in the labor market mostly in a positive way, highlighting the simple possibility to work resulting in greater autonomy and social status.

These findings were also corroborated by an expert of a civil society organization in Austria working with female refugees only who stated that she had the feeling that "*the two biggest issues are that they are financially secure and do not have to live in poverty [and] there are a lot of women who simply have the feeling that they can work now*". The freedom to choose a profession and to decide for one's own was mentioned throughout the interviews. One young woman from Syria directly linked women's rights to job opportunities, stating that when "*girls grow up they would choose the work they want without any prevention or restrictions*." (IP5; a 20-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Austria)

One woman from Afghanistan who migrated with her two daughters and her blind husband shared the following:

> *I heard that life in European countries is comfortable, there's freedom and they care for women; girls are comfortable. […] We were not allowed to work, we had to live with the money that men brought home.* (IP71; a woman from Afghanistan, age unknown, interviewed in Austria)

Many women interviewed anticipated an improvement related to economic possibilities and hoped for job opportunities in Europe. Thus, not surprisingly, many were confronted with another reality that was often widely different from what they had expected. Precisely, interviewees stated that they were frustrated with how hard it was to find a job, how laws and regulations imposed insurmountable obstacles, and how difficult it was to work in their area of expertise. What is interesting, a third of all female interviewees mentioned the job market came with pressure to perform and perceived the focus on performance and professional life in Europe as mainly negative. These concerns were shared substantially more often by women than by men.

> *They say, you just have to work. You are like a robot in Europe. You just have to work and pay taxes. You have no right to have fun. You do not have a day of solitude. You have to be at work 24 hours a day and think about working. Because if you do not work, life will not continue.* (IP69; a 24-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

> *[My sister] says there is enough work. But it's so exhausting that you are starting to forget yourself. She says that in Europe you work all the time, you forget about yourself. There is no time to take a deep breath.* (IP38; a 24-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Additionally, previous research (Demarchi & Lenehan 2019; Nshimbi 2017; Timmerman et al. 2014) pointed at the substantial impact of perceptions of educational opportunities in both their home country and Europe on individuals' migration aspirations. This is largely in line with our findings as educational opportunities were commonly mentioned as a reason for migrating to Europe. In total, a third of all interviewees mentioned perceptions related to education during the interviews and shared faith in the availability of education in Europe. Surprisingly, male migrants and refugees (39% of all men) raised the topic of education more commonly than women (25% of all women). This might be explained by the sample of the interviewees: The topic of education appeared to be of particular saliency for migrants and refugees from Sudan. Eleven out of 18 Sudanese interview partners referred to bad educational standards in their home country and believed in educational improvements in Europe. 17 of them were male. This pattern was only found in the case of Sudan and not in any other countries of origin.

Coming to the female perceptions of education in Europe, women interviewed made references to different aspects: As for instance, the vast majority mentioned better educational standards in Europe and a functioning system such as a young woman from Turkmenistan who stated that "the education is better, professors there are also really knowledgeable people." (IP86; a 20-25-year-old woman from Turkmenistan, interviewed in Turkey). Another aspect mentioned by female interviewees was access to education. They perceived the system as open, available for everyone, no matter the immigration status, economic background, or gender. A young girl from Iraq interviewed in Austria highlighted the following:

> *What I like is that no one interferes with other people's opportunities. I can go to school as I like. Nobody says anything.* (IP35; an 18-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

As highlighted above and also in previous research (e.g. Fiedler 2016), a large part of migrants felt well informed before their move and educational benefits were assumed to be present and promptly accessible. However, once in transit or when they had arrived in Europe, they had to cope with misperceptions and revise or downsize some of their initial perceptions and high expectations. With regard to educational opportunities, few women stated that they were frustrated with how hard it was to continue their studies or school, that the respective language was more difficult than expected and that you have to start from zero. These findings were also confirmed by several experts who work with migrants and refugees in Europe. They shared that many of their clients, both men and women, feel discouraged by the efforts one has to put into learning the new language properly. Another expert of a civil society organization in Austria working with female refugees only stated that she had the feeling that some of the women's initial perceptions were a bit unrealistic and that they would realize discrepancies as soon as they arrived in Austria. She mentioned for example "learning languages, that it takes longer to learn a language or that you have to make an effort", which is shocking for many of her clients.

Migrants and refugees are often perceived by the European host society as being a burden to the social welfare system and this topic seems to dominate the public discourse (e.g. Ossipow et al. 2019; Pavlovic 2018). Although state support and a functioning social system were mentioned by a bit more than 25 % of all interviewees, the aspect shouldn't be considered as a dominant migration driver as it was often linked to other societal aspects. Support was mentioned equally by both, men and women, and many, relating to support during the integration process, medical care and insurance, free access to education as well as ensured wage and an existing pension system. Monetary support such as guaranteed minimum income or financial aid was rarely mentioned and the ideas didn't seem to be very concrete. Most discrepancies and misperceptions relating to governmental support and welfare were connected to the integration processes and living conditions of asylum seekers.

4.2 *(Mis)perception of Human, Women's Rights, and Childrens' Rights*

As many interviewees fled unstable environments, women's and human rights-violating countries, and/or authoritarian regimes, many interviewees indicated that they imagined Europe to be democratic and peaceful. This section aims to understand migrants and refugees perceptions of human rights in general and women's rights in particular. We aim at getting an understanding of how European women's rights are understood and valued by both female and male migrants and refugees. Additionally, we examine perceptions and misperceptions on various aspects related to human rights and conclude with an overview of perceptions related to children in the EU.

In general, human rights including freedom of religion, freedom of speech, protection, and civic rights were perceived to be less present in the countries of origin than in Europe, which was largely associated with the commitment to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Overall, there are only slight differences regarding how women and men perceive human rights and democratic aspects. However, major differences can be identified concerning the perception of women's rights, in particular.

While around a quarter of all women explicitly referred to gender equality and cited it as an incentive for migrating to Europe, only two men shared this perception. This is contrary to what Timmermann and colleagues (2018) found. Their analysis shows that male migrants and refugees seemed to largely share the beliefs of women's rights being more evolved than in their countries of origin. Female interviewees especially highlighted the rights women would have in Europe, referring to the free access to the labor market, the right of self-determination as well as opportunities and freedom women and girls could have. Experts interviewed confirmed that many women anticipate and appreciate the freedom for women in Europe. A social worker from Austria stated that women know they "don't have to give in to the patriarchal system anymore, as it often prevails in their home countries, that they don't have to be subordinated anymore, or that they don't have to be afraid in situations of violence". A woman from Iran referred to strong women and their impact on gender equality and a woman from Iraq highlighted women's autonomy in Europe:

> *Especially with the rise of women like Merkel and other active women, they proved that we [women] are human and deserve the will of the planet before you are a woman. Europe has made this possible. I am old now but I have two daughters. I decided to take them to Europe. They can be raised by European standards.* (IP76; a 55-year-old-woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

> *When I see a woman who has children and no husband, I'll say to her 'come here. You're in good hands. Here you will be more independent. Here you can work and be independent even without a husband.'* (IP36; a 20-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

Furthermore, many female respondents linked women's rights to freedom and perceived Europe to be a place that ensures freedom of speech and freedom of the individual. Specifically, women emphasized the freedom to unwind and to be yourself, as indicated by a young woman from Nigeria who stated that "*when you get there [Europe], you can be whatever you want to be*" (IP113; a 25-30-year-old woman from Nigeria, interviewed in Libya). The concept of freedom touched various aspects of life. Namely, the possibility to move freely, to be free to make one's own decision, or even such mundane opportunities as driving a car. What is more, women from Afghanistan mainly focused on better educational standards and safety for their daughters which wasn't assured back home. As put by the Senior Operations Officer of an international humanitarian response agency, *"[migrants] think about the equality they can get in Europe. There is no*

difference, you are considered as a human at the beginning. This is the first thing they think about. Another thing is freedom. In Europe, you have all the rights".

In contrast to this, some male respondents seemed to fear women's rights and freedom more than they valued it. While the vast majority didn't mention gender equality or women's rights at all, some male migrants and refugees shared their belief that European societies would intervene in their private and marital life. A man from Syria share the following:

> *I wouldn't go there because I have young daughters and I was scared that the atmosphere will be different for them, and I will not be able to keep control over them which is connected to the Islamic religion.* (IP129; a 45-year-old man from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

Fleury (2016) stated that women who enter societies with liberal gender norms are usually well-placed to reap these benefits. An expert working with returnees in Afghanistan referred to tensions many Afghan women in Europe have as there might be pressure or desire from male family members to protect but also control them. After their arrival, the women "*are surrounded by other women who are not under this form of control. They can observe other migrants from other countries where that is not the case. [...] That tension of what is protection versus what is control, it's probably a unique experience for women and girls when they are in a European setting*".

However, migration can also have the opposite effect of men being adamant about traditional gender norms and newly achieved freedom. Contrary to the Syrian man cited above, a man from Sudan perceived women's rights and gender equality to be important European values and linked these aspects to respect and tolerance:

> *The culture is very respectful, they give equal rights to everyone, women, children, and refugees. From my understanding, there are equal rights for everyone. When everyone is treated with respect and equality, you can live in peace.* (IP119; a 35-year-old man from Sudan, interviewed in Libya)

Another aspect that was positively highlighted by some women was the notion of choice. Precisely the freedom to choose one's own clothes and the possibility to take off their hijab out of their own will. An Iraqi woman shared for example:

> *I was veiled when I was in Iraq. When I came here, I took off my hijab. I love freedom. I don't like controlling myself.* (IP33; a 36-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

However, many respondents alluded to the hijab in a different context. They raised that they would fear discrimination due to being veiled and that islamophobia was widespread among Europeans. Our data shows clearly that discrimination is often gendered as it is experienced and perceived differently by men and women, as women are excluded on several counts, including sexism and racism. While some women shared having witnessed racist behavior, some others stated that some conditions turned out to be better than expected. They admitted to having misperceived Europe to be a less pluralistic society in terms of religion. The idea of Europe being a racist place was equally shared by men and women and was as widespread as the belief of Europe and its member states being tolerant. And again, while for some migrants and refugees negative perceptions such as racism and discrimination have proven to be wrong, for others the belief of Europe as a place of tolerance turned out to be false. Two young women from Nigeria, both interviews in Italy shared two differing experiences about being a woman of color in Europe:

> *In Europe, I heard that they are racists, they are bad to blacks. But I haven't seen it, but I have heard about it.* (IP49; a 23-year-old-woman from Nigeria, interviewed in Italy)

> *Like when I was in Nigeria. I heard that they [Europeans] love blacks. They always want to go with blacks, they want to see blacks and all that. But when I came it was not like that.* (IP47; a 28-year-old woman from Nigeria, interviewed in Italy)

One perception related to freedom that was equally shared by women and men was the freedom of speech and the freedom to express themselves. As pointed out by de Haas (2021), the very awareness of having the freedom of speech can add to people's life satisfaction. Many interviewees shared their belief that Europe would guarantee and ensure the protection of human rights and the idea that they can freely choose their opinion on whatever topic.

However, one aspect which seemed to be even more important than their own growth or own freedom was the improvement of (educational) conditions for their children. Interviewees mentioned often having thought carefully about the long-term future of their children, including educational opportunities. These findings tie in neatly with what experts stated and what Vaughan and Segrott (2002) found about migrants and refugees in the UK who focused upon the needs and future of their children.

> *The information about education was very important to me. I care a lot about the possibility that my children can pursue their studies in Europe. All of my children will be able to pursue their studies in Europe.* (IP41; a 35-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Austria)

> *The main reason for leaving Afghanistan for me was the safety of my children and the education of my children. […]. She could not study and go to school easily. For me, the importance of Europe is in the education of children, security, good government, and women's rights. Here we can find a job, although money is not important, the development of my children and their education is important.* (IP74; a 35-year-old woman from Afghanistan, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Male and female interviewees indicated to aspire educational enhancements for their children equally. In spite of this similarity, the future of their children and their safety was mainly highlighted by women while men confined themselves mostly to educational development. Contrary to other findings (e.g. Demarchi & Lenehan 2019), no explicit gender norms were revealed when considering opportunities for their sons and daughters in Europe. Interviewees had often thought carefully about the impact of migration on the long-term future and the life-chances of their children. Around a third of all women interviewed emphasized that Europe would await their children with better living conditions, a stable environment, and opportunities for both their sons and daughters. A woman from Afghanistan who was interviewed in Turkey spoke about her son and the safe environment Europe would offer for him:

> *I prefer to stay in Europe for sure. My son has one mother, and as a single mother, if anything happens to me, the government will take my son. That's very important to understand. I have nothing to lose, except my son. All I want is to have a real and stable life for my son.* (IP85; a woman from Afghanistan, age unknown, interviewed in Turkey)

The protection of children's rights and the gain of freedom were pointed out by many interviewees and were considered to be largely positive. In contrast to this, more than a third of all men relating to children and their future in Europe shared some fears and concerns. Some male interviewees shared their belief that Europe would intervene in their parenting and that they have heard that the police would take their children in case of bad education. Moreover, they feared the freedom related to drug abuse of children and sex

education for adolescence. Only one woman revealed some concerns related to the youth welfare office and that they would simply take the children from the parents without even trying to educate the parents.

5. Women's (Mis)Perceptions on Migration Policies and Integration Processes

After the 2015 refugee movements, the open borders to Germany but also the resulting image of the "Fortress Europe" with border regimes has made its way to potential migrants and refugees (e.g.: Burell and Horschelmann 2019; Cantat 2016). Migrants and refugees entering or trying to enter the European Union have first-hand experience of EU migration policies, border regulations, and member states' integration procedures. But how are these migration policies actually perceived and do migrants and refugees actually put great emphasis on them when deciding when and where to migrate? This next section aims at understanding how female migrants and refugees perceive migration policies and integration rules of the European Union or individual member states and how these perceptions differ from male ones. Moreover, it is our goal to get insights into discrepancies that arose in regard to integration processes after experiencing them first-hand, be it already in Europe or during the waiting time for resettlement outside of Europe.

5.1 *Perception of Migration Policies and Asylum Processes*

We find that perceptions related to European migration policies, settlement processes, member states' integration measures, and border management and politics are widespread among the migrants and refugees we talked to. Overall, there are slight differences regarding how many men and women referred to ideas and beliefs regarding EU or individual member states' migration and asylum policies. 49% of all women and more than 55% of all men we spoke to indicated to have some beliefs with regard to migration policies. In most cases, the perception of migration policies remained vague and was often linked to integration measurements and the well-perceived treatment of migrants and refugees. In line with previous findings (e.g. Mandic 2017; McMahon & Sigona 2018; Crawley and Hagen-Zanker 2019), migrants and refugees interviewed rarely differentiated between individual member states and EU migration policies and had little actual knowledge of these policies. This impression was also corroborated by a social worker working with female refugees in Vienna who noted that she has "often heard that all of Europe is more or less the same, whether with the procedure or also with all the advantages and disadvantages, that it is very similar". What seems to be widespread among both men and women is the fact that asylum procedures get more and more difficult. Amongst others, this was reported by a woman from Syria and another one from Iran:

> *Right now, even the tourist visa to Europe is restricted, Europe today is more careful via Syrians. Because now there's no way to reach Europe [...] Europe welcomed so many people but for other people, it is still impossible for them to get to Europe.* (IP137; a 30-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

> *They say it is difficult to get asylum now. Those with fingerprints are deported. I have heard these, yes. They say they do not even have mercy on a woman who is alone. They say they will deport you wherever you are if you have a fingerprint.* (IP69; a 24-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In general, only very few respondents (eight men and six women), referred to actual EU policies such as the Dublin regulation or the fingerprinting system. This is largely in line with findings from Crawley and Hagen-Zanker (2019) who found that migrants and refugees have very little knowledge on actual migration policies. Additionally, when referring to actual asylum procedures, few migrants' and refugees' stated to have a clear or even very informed perception of European policies, as shared by a woman from Cameroon:

> *Interviewee: Yes, I already knew that when you reach Europe you must ask for asylum.*
> *Interviewer: Ok.*
> *Interviewee: Yes. If you want to live in Europe you must seek asylum.*
> *Interviewer: Ok, but no one told you how you would do that? How long it would take?*
> *Interviewee: No.*
> (IP45; a 30-year-old woman from Cameroon, interviewed in Italy)

However, when asked what processes they expect, some interviewees mentioned that they actually felt well informed about the asylum application and referred to individual countries' policies. The majority of men and women who mentioned a specific country referred to Germany. Unlike Arvantis and Yelland (2019), who find that Syrian refugees perceive integration in Germany to be easier due to the high presence of co-ethnics, our data revealed no indications that asylum applications were perceived to be less severe or easier to pass in some countries than in others. While one young woman from Iraq perceived the migration measures to be easier in Germany, an Irani woman seemed to be convinced of the opposite. These statements can be transferred to any other country interviewees spoke about and also to statements made by men.

> *People go to Germany, we know Germany accepts [more refugees], it is more like Scandinavia, like England, they give us asylum a little bit easier than the other country.* (IP42; a 26-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

> *Germany and the Netherlands are generally good countries to live in and they have difficult conditions for refugees.[...] I know people who have been in Germany for many years and have not yet received an answer.* (IP25; a 19-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In spite of negative beliefs being present in migrants' and refugees' perception of EU policies, we find in line with Mallett and Hagen-Zanker (2018), that migration decisions and aspirations are influenced more by the positive perception of "welcomingness" and "careness" for refugees and less by restrictive migration measurements. As mentioned above, the safeguard of freedom, safety, and the protection of human rights is vital for migrants and thus intricacies of the asylum application process and its repercussions are accepted due to the lack of appropriate alternatives.

> *I don't hear bad things about Europe. I hear good things about it because they're very good to us, especially us as refugees and immigrants. [...] I have good thoughts about Italy because in Italy nobody will travel [migrate from], nobody will run, because this country is very safe. Is safe for many things, safe for your property, safe for your life, many things.* (IP44; a 32-year-old woman from Nigeria, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

5.2 *Disillusion in Times of Waiting*

At the same time, however, some interviewees mentioned that they knew that there would be sort of a process awaiting them and a difficult way to enter the European Union, but they actually felt appalled by the intricacies of the European migration regime and situation in the Unions' outskirts such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jordan and Turkey. For the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, both men and women we talked to felt disillusioned and deceived after their arrival. Yet, the discrepancies and experiences related to migration policies made in Bosnia and Herzegovina were raised way more often by women than by men. While some seemed to be surprised that there were refugee camps and staff present, many reported having misperceived the situation. A woman from Iran shared the following:

> *I have heard that if you are a single woman and no man is with you, Europe will care more about you. But this is not the case, I have been in Bosnia for a year and I have not received any assistance, my asylum application has been rejected. The staff here is abusive.* (IP79; a 32-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

What seems to be frustrating the most is they have yearned to reach Europe for so long and, on the one hand, how different Bosnia and Herzegovina is from how they have imagined a life in Europe. A young woman from Iran was asked whether the situation in the camps was different from what her friends told her about Europe and she mentioned:

> *There is a big difference. This is not Europe; they do whatever they want.* (IP77; a 30-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

On the other hand, many reported feeling appalled by the behavior of the European Union within Bosnia and Herzegovina as the police are mistreating migrants and refugees and committing push-backs. Two Irani women asked *"What kind of human rights are these in Europe?"* (IP80; a 34-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina), and *"I do not know why no decision was made for the immigrants in Bosnia, no one cares about the lives of the immigrants here."* (IP74; a 35-year-old woman from Afghanistan, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The situation in Turkey is different, as not all interviewees we talked to plan to leave Turkey any time soon. Men and women feel equally frustrated about the situation of refugees in Turkey as they are not allowed to work and don't feel that their human rights are safeguarded. One difference related to gender is the religious aspect. While some interviewees stated to be happy to be settled in a Muslim country, some women complained that they wanted to leave the religious structure in their countries of destinations. Both Muslim and Christian women reported to be perturbed about the religious presence in Turkey: Muslim women still feel forced to wear a Hijab while Christian converts weren't aware of the religious presence. This aspect was raised by more women than men. Some interviewed men and women who mentioned leaving Turkey mentioned official resettlement options but mostly spoke about migrating irregularly.

When it comes to Jordan, the situation for most refugees is quite different from the one in other transit countries as it serves as a safe space since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011. Most interviewees we talked to have been living inside Jordan for quite a while, some of which are hoping to return to Syria, some of which have learned to come to terms with the situation in Jordan, and some of which are planning to follow the migratory journey to a third country. Unlike in Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina, official resettlement plays a more important role in Jordan – albeit resettlement opportunities are extremely limited as well. Less than 1% of refugees in Jordan are ever considered for resettlement (UNHCR).

However, all Syrian women interviewed in Jordan who shared with us that they are planning to move on, explicitly mentioned that they try to resettle via official channels such as UNHCR. In contrast to that, half of the male refugees who aspire to leave mentioned the potential of going via illegal routes. The aspect of safety on the route was particularly emphasized by women:

> *I will say it's safer or more reliable to go through the UNHCR, not to take the adventure and go by yourself because it's dangerous. There are lots of people who lost their lives while trying to go to Europe. It's not smart to go by yourself […], because there are a lot of traffickers who took advantage of these people by giving them the dream of going to Europe but this is not true and definitely not safe.* (IP133; a 34-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

Displaced female migrants and refugees are considered to be highly vulnerable to all forms of sexual and physical violence, especially while being in transit (Goodkind & Deacon 2004). They are exposed to exploitation by security forces, fellow migrants, human traffickers but also civilians. One woman mentioned an attempted rape by a smuggler and another woman shared her experiences with the abusive staff of an NGO in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many experts interviewed confirmed the permanent threat to women on the move of sexual abuse and violence. One researcher, working in an international organization in the field of law enforcement, crime, and governance in Libya pointed out that "*a lot of rapes happens by police and militia*" and that "*a lot of smugglers are very vicious and they think Syrian women are very beautiful. They would keep them longer stating there is no space on the boat until they make her understand that until they provide this guy with what he wants, they are not getting in the boat*."

Nevertheless, the save option resettlement is not only received positively amongst the interviewees. Many stated feelings discouraged as the processes take quite long, some complained that specific countries declined their request and others thought that they could choose a country preference. Research has shown that there are a lot of knowledge gaps and confusion regarding resettlement processes. Van Liempt and colleagues (2017) show that many Syrians in Turkey didn't know how the process officially works or didn't know that they were excluded for some reason. We can't confirm this with our data but the data clearly shows that resettlement and the knowledge about it were much more widespread in Jordan than in Turkey.

5.3 *Misperceptions and Disillusionment on EU Migration Policies*

Overall, there are no gender differences regarding how men and women had misperceived European migration and asylum policies or integration before they have started to migrate to Europe. They spoke equally about the long waiting time within the asylum application and about how frustrating that was. Even though they mentioned that they knew that there would be sort of a process awaiting them, they actually felt appalled by the intricacies and the length of the asylum application process as stated by a woman from Iraq:

> *Interviewee: I thought that I would wait for one year after which I would obtain my residency permit.*
> *Interviewer: How long have you been waiting for your residency permit?*
> *Interviewee: Five years. And since 5 years I am always moving from one center to another.*
> (IP40; a 35-year-old woman from Iraq, interviewed in Austria)

The head of an Italian migrant-support NGO involved in maritime rescue noted that prospective migrants aren't very well informed when it comes to migration regulations. He explained that "*they do not have a clear*

idea about the policies, the border policies, the border decisions, or the attitude of the European member states. In fact, they are surprised when they discover what we tell them" and a social worker working with female migrants and refugees in Austria shared that she believed that the women she works with "*imagined it to be easier. All this paperwork, office procedures, that was simply not clear to them and is also a point that we deal with a lot because many women simply don't know their way around and find it very difficult*".

5.4 *Country Preferences and the Influence of Migration Policies*

As found by Crawley and Hagen-Zanker (2018), destination preferences are rarely identified solely on the basis of (migration) policies. Rather they reflect the interplay of a wide range of factors, such as access to information, the perception of the economic environment, prospects for children, and most importantly social networks and/or information given by those. This ties in neatly with what we found among migrants and refugees still being in transition. Looking at interviewees residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey only[5], we find that a combination of factors define country preferences but also that preferences and destinations can change over time. While not being explicitly asked about the preferred destination, some interviewees addressed the topic nevertheless. Interestingly, more than twice as many women than men shared their destination preferences in the interviews resulting in 15 women and 7 men (out of 52 interviews) who spoke about specific countries they had in mind. These numbers show that female migrants and refugees seem to put more emphasis on specific countries and/ or that the matter is more on the women's minds. However, this does not necessarily show that women deal with destination preferences more than men or are more likely to make the decision of a destination preference. On the contrary, as McAuliffe and colleagues (2018) show, migration-related decision-making processes are very often gender-biased as patriarchy and family traditions play an important role in these decisions. Experts working in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Greece explained that "*decisions are taken, most of the time, by men. However, at the same time, there is a strong willingness to leave their country of origin and to take risks to reach Europe, that in a way females also agree in trusting men. They feel, finally, it could be a positive process for them as well*" and that "*it's usually the husband that has all the information and it's usually the husband that drives the migration travel onwards*".

The vast majority of interviewees who mentioned a country preference referred to Germany, either because they had family and a social network there because they had heard that Germany would accept new refugees or because they simply perceived Germany as an ideal country with a functioning economy and a peaceful environment. This was confirmed by experts in Italy and Austria who stated that people want to leave Italy for Germany or that they initially wanted to reach Germany but were stranded in Austria. Overall, there was an almost equal distribution of countries mentioned between the genders. Besides mentioning specific countries of destination, Europe as a whole was a concept many interviewees referred to also, such as an Irani woman:

[5] Libya and Jordan as countries of transit were excluded from the analysis for a number of reasons: first, the sample in Libay is strongly gender biased with only one female interviewee. Secondly, Jordan acts as a hybrid country with many interviewees who have adapted to the situation and consider Jordan as their destination for the time being. What is more, a vast majority of respondents in Jordan who have stated that they want to leave Jordan mentioned they would prefer to resettle via official UNHCR resettlement programmes. This is partially the case in Turkey but not to the same degree as in Jordan.

> *No, I really do not have a specific destination. [...] I think of a place where I am valued as a human being, I have the right to live, that is my destination.* (IP31; a 40-year-old woman from Iran, interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Additionally, some women also mentioned countries that they specifically avoid as they had heard about hostile policies:

> *Interviewee: But I used to read European news about migration because like Hungary, Finland, there are four countries, which do not like to take migrants.*
> *Interviewer: Which countries?*
> *Interviewee: Like Hungary, Finland…. I forgot the other countries which do not want to take migrants.*
> (IP112; a 20-25-year-old man from Nigeria, interviewed in Libya)
> *Interviewee: For example, there are certain countries where migrants cannot go to easily and without them being tortured.*
> *Interviewer: Tortured?*
> *Interviewee: Yes. Without them being tortured or abused.*
> (IP45; a 30-year-old woman from Cameroon, interviewed in Italy)

As Havinga and Boecker (1999) show, the ability to deal with migration, in general, and destination preferences, specifically, depends also on whether the decision to leave has to be made quickly. Some respondents shared that they had never anticipated migrating in the long-term and those who left under acute conditions were often unprepared - financially but also information-wise. This is also reflected in our data, as, for example, a vast majority of all respondents residing in Jordan shared that they have thought of leaving Syria just for a short period of time. No interviewee we talked to stated to have planned to migrate to Europe in the long term. They had only started to deal with European migration policies, migration routes, and resettlement programs as a potential destination after a few years in transit. In regard to that matter, no gender differences can be found in our data.

When asked whether she has been searching for information about specific European countries to eventually migrate to, a woman from Syria shared the following:

> *When I was in Syria we came to Jordan, my dad was here, I searched for how to apply at a university, but Europe wasn't in my system back then.* (IP142; a 29-year-old woman from Syria, interviewed in Jordan)

But more importantly, some respondents stated to be heavily constrained in their preferences. They saw no reason to focus on certain regulations as destinations and routes were heavily determined by traffickers. This is especially the case for both men and women from Iran and female migrants travelling alone. A small number of women we spoke to, all coming from African countries and migrating on their own, were not only unable to choose potential countries but they did not even know where they were being trafficked to - in some cases even Europe as a destination was unclear. Crawley and Hagen-Zanker (2018) found some similar results with regards to young women from Nigeria fleeing their homes. These experiences made by women from African countries were also confirmed by experts working with women from Nigeria and they shared that human traffickers and trafficking networks are especially important to women from southern African countries. A researcher focusing on migration and politics in West Africa and the Sahel explained that this had also effects on information acquisition and information exchange as "*Nigerian women who took this road to Libya and Italy are subject to a much stronger control, compared to men, compared to families. So, this for*

sure means that they can rely less on having the smartphone, this applies for Nigerian women who are entering this very well structured smuggling network". Two young women from Cameroon and Nigeria shared that the human traffickers left them clueless:

> *I was coming to Europe. [....] to which Europe, I didn't know. I was coming to Europe.* (IP45; a 30-year-old woman from Cameroon, interviewed in Italy)

> *I didn't get any information, they did not tell me where I was going. Do you understand? Like, I was a young girl. Like, they told me "you're going to someplace". They did not tell me where I was going. They did not tell me that I was coming to Europe or something like this. They did not tell me that.* (IP9; a 21-year-old woman from Nigeria, interviewed in Austria)

6. Summary and Conclusion

While often reduced to being passive companions to male migrants and refugees, we found that women in migration act as active protagonists which take informed decisions - at least in their understanding. Unlike previous studies (e.g. McAuliffe et al 2018) have found or experts have indicated, there is no clear indication that only men take migration-related decisions and that women were, therefore, less informed about the process.

As highlighted in this deliverable and in previous research (e.g. Fiedler 2016), a large part of migrants felt well informed prior to migration and had concrete perceptions in their minds. This feeling of being well informed and having knowledge of Europe and the EU is highly subjective and doesn't imply that they are actually well informed. Many experts interviewed for this study had the impression that especially female migrants and refugees are not very knowledgeable about migration-related topics. This matches our findings, as previous perceptions are reflected only after witnessing difficulties and many women already in Europe indicated that they had to downsize some of these perceptions and high expectations. As Graf (2022, p. 60) points out: "*to manage an abundance of possibilities, you need experiences transformed into knowledge, or in other words, digital literacy*". These initial perceptions differ depending on the country of origin, the migratory journey, and the individual woman's background and can be subject to change over the course of the migration journey (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker 2019). Women, mainly from African countries, who were trafficked to Europe had less access to information and therefore not as many perceptions prior to the move. Additionally, interviewees mentioned being aware and informed about the risks they had to take when traveling to Europe, but saw no other choice than to leave their countries of origin. Therefore, a lack of information is not to blame for refugees taking on high-risk journeys. The most important source of information but also the most relied on sources are the social network and social media. These can include friends and family but also mere acquaintances met in a refugee camp, a stranger online, Facebook groups, or Instagram pages. It seems that the actual source and trustworthiness are of more importance to women in migration than the factual information they receive out of it. Graf (2018) argues how trust in sources takes longer to build or is only barely established in case they were not recommended by people known to refugees or coming directly from friends, family, or acquaintances . It is thus not surprising that national campaigns and official information play only a subordinate role, for both men and women.

In addition to being vital for accessing information, mobile media can serve as a coping mechanism for uncertainty through distraction and entertainment. This is especially vital in times of waiting such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina where both the number of women that mentioned the need for distraction as well as the

number of women that shared the feeling of frustration due to the European border regime was way higher than the number of men.

Sources cannot always be linked directly to a specific perception or discrepancy just as migratory decisions such as whether to migrate, where to go, and what route to take are not only based on information retrieved from social networks. Therefore, it is required to scrutinize female migrants' and refugees' embeddedness in migration networks (Collyer 2005; Schapendonk 2015) as well as their media literacy and source critique skills.

Concerning our first research question (**What role do mobile media play over the course of the migration process for female migrants and refugees?**), we conclude that the most important source of information is the social network, which can include friends and family but also mere acquaintances met in a refugee camp or a stranger online. The second most important source is social media, which overlaps heavily with that of the social network. In fact, we argue that social media provides an overarching vessel of information and therefore rather can be understood as a way of accessing information than a source in itself. In some cases, the source of information is provided by newspapers' or friends' accounts on social media. In other cases, social media platforms provide a space for people to have conversations one on one or in a smaller group. This versatility of social media platforms explains its frequent usage among both men and women to gather information. In addition to serving as an important tool for accessing information, mobile media have two more very important functions for women during their migration journey. Seeing as women are burdened with boredom, frustration, and uncertainty in precarious times of waiting, they have found ways of coping with this situation by also utilizing their phones. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, this is even more important for women than it is for men. Entertainment through games, movies, and social media as well as chatting with friends and family help them distract themselves. Another crucial function mobile phones provide is navigation, which is also especially important during transit. Especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, having access to a smartphone and WIFI is essential.

When looking into women's usage of social media to gather information differs from men's, it is clear that access to information is equally important for both. Although, differences in what information women and men focus on as well as which social media platforms were preferred, can be distinguished. Women tend to look into the country of destination while being there more than men. Female participants also preferred asking people for information about their migration journey and Europe. Concerning social media platform use, Facebook was described as the most used platform by both genders, although women used it more widely than men. Instagram was the second most used platform for women, while it was used less by men to gather information.

Perception of trust and credibility was a highly controversial and ambiguous topic for both men and women. The most relied on sources were the social network and social media. Women and men differed in their perception of trust when it came to social media, as women leaned slightly more towards distrust of social media and Facebook. Sources women didn't mention in their debate over trustworthiness were TV and Twitter. Telegram was only spoken about as a source that women didn't deem credible. Finally, women did not share having a decisive view on the credibility of news or being able to trust their social network or social media more. Albeit trustworthiness is a very ambiguous topic for both men and women, they are still frequently in a position where putting their faith in the information given by unreliable sources is the only option, making the precarity of accessing information clear once again.

Another aspect of mobile media use, which showed interesting gender differences was sharing of information and general content online. Women tend to mostly share information, especially if it is of personal nature, with their friends and family in private chats and messages. When it comes to making social media posts, only very few female interviewees mentioned doing so. This is mostly due to a fear of online harassment many women have to deal with. One woman even mentioned seeking out protected Facebook groups, which are limited to women to avoid being harassed by men.

In answering our second research question (**What are female migrants' and refugees' perceptions and misperceptions of the EU and EU's migration policies?**), we find that female migrants' and refugees' perceptions of the EU and its member states are manifold, subjective, and relate to all aspects of society, very much depending on the women's backgrounds and needs. The overall improvement in their standard of living was the most prominent belief women associated with life in Europe. Furthermore, many women perceived an overall improvement related to work, both in terms of freedom to choose a profession but also related to opportunities and the strong European society. Education wasn't a predominant belief female migrants and refugees had in regards to Europe but what important factors are the educational opportunities and safety for their children. In terms of migration and integration policies, some interviewees seemed to be informed about regulations. However, the majority of the women already in Europe mentioned that they have had misperceptions and experienced the feeling of being disappointed by obstacles and regulations, mostly related to the slowness of the asylum system. This hinders them to find a job and fully integrate into the host country. We find that knowledge and perceptions related to migration to Europe also depend very much on the origin of the woman as women from African countries very often have limited knowledge as their human traffickers keep them in the dark about their migration route.

With reference to the perception of women's rights, our findings indicate that it is a central issue for women and an influencing reason to migrate. Women associated life in Europe with freedom of expression and freedom of choice to lift on one's own terms. Besides this, the topic of religion and the religious clothing was prevalent in many interviews. While some women highlighted the freedom of choice to take the hijab off, some women anticipated racism and discrimination and those already in Europe either witnessed discrimination for wearing it or witnessed discrepancies after entering a tolerant European society.

Men's and women's perceptions of the EU and its member states differ only slightly. Both men and women anticipated an overall improvement of their living standards including job opportunities, education, and safety. However, some topics seemed to be more important to women such as safety and education for their children which was a dominant topic among women. Women's rights are more of an issue for women as well with only a few men referring to it. Racism and discrimination were a controversial topic as well with both men and women experiencing it.

With regard to migration policies, women mentioned discrepancies towards migration policies in times of waiting more often than men. This is especially the case for Bosnia and Herzegovina where women were shocked about conditions for refugees. Additionally, women shared their country preferences more often than men and shared their safety concerns and wish for safety migratory routes more frequently.

Taken together, our analysis shows that emphasis has to be put on female migrants and refugees without being aware of the heterogeneity of the group. More research is needed on how female migrants and refugees use mobile media in order to gather information and how they evaluate the information they receive to get an even deeper understanding of how (mis-)perceptions are formed or even spread. We urge

academics, non- and intergovernmental organizations, social workers, as well as authorities and policy-makers to be aware of the complexity of the matter and the vulnerability of the target group.

Getting a better understanding of women's beliefs and perceptions in general but having closer look at women's single backgrounds may help to identify potential misperceptions and allow for more target-oriented support measures by social workers and NGOs. This might include media literacy workshops and exercises in, for example, source critique but also course tackling topics such as women rights, freedom, and democracy. This is equally important to men as it seems that European women's rights are not on their agenda. European authorities have to act jointly and adapt official campaigns in order to successfully address potential migrants as it seems that campaigns, in general, don't play an important role in acquiring migration-related information. This is especially the case for women as campaigns targeting women are missing. Conclusively, stakeholders involved need to be cognizant of the vulnerability of female migrants and refugees not only along the route but also in their country of destination.

7. References

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Appendix

Table A1. Overview of Refugees and Migrants Interviewed

Nr.	Origin	Age	Gender	Place of Interview
IP1	Iraq	43	woman	Vienna
IP2	Iraq	65 & 57	man/woman	Vienna
IP3	Iraq	46	man	Vienna
IP4	Iraq	21	man	Vienna
IP5	Syria/Saudi Arabia	20	woman	Vienna
IP6	Iraq	26	man	Vienna
IP7	Iraq	40	man	Ušivak
IP8	Somalia	50	woman	Vienna
IP9	Nigeria	21	woman	Vienna
IP10	Somalia	20	man	Milano
IP11	Benin	18 & 22	man	Vienna
IP12	Benin	20	man	Vienna
IP13	Nigeria	39	man	Vienna
IP14	Mali	23	man	Pavia
IP15	Cameroon	26	man	Milano
IP16	Ivory Coast	27	man	Milano
IP17	Senegal/Guinea	32	man	Milano
IP18	Iran/Afghanistan	21	man	Vienna
IP19	Iran	32	man	Ušivak
IP20	Pakistan	30	man	Ušivak
IP21	Pakistan	24	man	Borići
IP22	Iran	23	man	Ušivak
IP23	Pakistan	21	man	Ušivak
IP24	Iran/Afghanistan	20	man	Vienna
IP25	Iran	19	woman	Ušivak
IP26	Iran	35	woman	Borići
IP27	Iran	40	man	Borići
IP28	Iran	45	woman	Pavia
IP29	Iran	40	woman	Sedra
IP30	Iran	40	woman	Sedra
IP31	Iran	40	woman	Sedra
IP32	Iraq	53	woman	Vienna
IP33	Iraq	36	woman	Vienna
IP34	Iraq	36	woman	Vienna
IP35	Iraq	45 & 38 & 18	man/woman/woman	Vienna
IP36	Iraq	20	woman	Vienna
IP37	Sudan	25	man	Pavia
IP38	Iraq	24	woman	Borići
IP39	Palestine	39	man	Milano
IP40	Iraq	35	woman	Vienna
IP41	Syria	35	woman	Vienna
IP42	Iraq	26	woman	Milano
IP43	Nigeria	25	woman	Ušivak
IP44	Nigeria	32	woman	Pavia
Nr.	**Origin**	**Age**	**Gender**	**Place of Interview**
IP45	Cameroon	30	woman	Pavia

IP46	The Gambia	30	woman	Veneto
IP47	Nigeria	28	woman	Veneto
IP48	Nigeria	26	woman	Veneto
IP49	Nigeria	23	woman	Veneto
IP50	Nigeria	25	woman	Veneto
IP51	Iraq	42	man	Vienna
IP52	Iraq	37	man	Vienna
IP53	Iraq	n/a	woman	Vienna
IP54	Iraq	46	man	Ušivak
IP55	Pakistan	35	man	Pavia
IP56	Iraq	31	man	Borići
IP57	Iraq	40	man	Borići
IP58	Iraq	43	man	Ušivak
IP59	The Gambia	23	man	Finland
IP60	Afghanistan	21	man	Vienna
IP61	Afghanistan	20	man	Vienna
IP62	Afghanistan	19	man	Vienna
IP63	Afghanistan	40-45	man	Ušivak
IP64	Afghanistan	29-33	man	Borići
IP65	Afghanistan	21	man	Vienna
IP66	Afghanistan	23	man	Vienna
IP67	Afghanistan	61	woman	Vienna
IP68	Afghanistan	28	man	Ušivak
IP69	Iran	24	woman	Borići
IP70	Iran	40	man	Borići
IP71	Afghanistan	n/a	woman	Vienna
IP72	Afghanistan	45	man	Vienna
IP73	Afghanistan	22	man	Vienna
IP74	Afghanistan	35	woman	Borići
IP75	Iran	38	man	Borići
IP76	Iran	55	woman	Borići
IP77	Iran	30	woman	Borići
IP78	Iran	35	woman	Sedra
IP79	Iran	32	woman	Sedra
IP80	Iran	34	woman	Sedra
IP81	Afghanistan	n/a	man	Erzerum
IP82	Iraq	n/a	man	Kırşehir
IP83	Iraq	n/a	man	Kırşehir
IP84	Iran	n/a	woman	Niğde
IP85	Afghanistan	n/a	woman	Nevşehir
IP86	Turkmenistan	20-25	woman	Istanbul
IP87	Iran	40-45	man	Denizil
IP88	Syria	33-35	man	Gaziantep
IP89	Iran	n/a	man	Van
IP90	Iran	n/a	man	Van

Nr.	**Origin**	**Age**	**Gender**	**Place of Interview**
IP91	Iran	n/a	woman	Gümüşhane
IP92	Syria	n/a	man	Gaziantep
IP93	Iran	n/a	man	Eskişehir

IP94	Iran	n/a	man	Istanbul
IP95	Iran	n/a	man	Nevşehir
IP96	Iran	n/a	man	Yalova
IP97	Iran	n/a	woman	Yalova
IP98	Iran	n/a	man	Istanbul
IP99	Iran	n/a	woman	Istanbul
IP100	Iran	25-30	man	Denizli
IP101	Iran	20-25	man	Denizli
IP102	Sudan	26	man	Alkhums
IP103	Sudan	24	man	Alkhums
IP104	Sudan	25	man	Alkhums
IP105	Sudan	18	man	Alkhums
IP106	Sudan	23	man	Alkhums
IP107	Sudan	23	man	Alkhums
IP108	Sudan	20	man	Alkhums
IP109	Sudan	31	man	Alkhums
IP110	Sudan	24	man	Alkhums
IP111	Sudan	33	man	Alkhums
IP112	Nigeria	20-25	man	Zuwara
IP113	Nigeria	25-30	woman	Zuwara
IP114	Nigeria	30	man	Zuwara
IP115	Nigeria	24	man	Zuwara
IP116	Ghana	25	man	Zuwara
IP117	Ghana	32	man	Zuwara
IP118	Sudan	34	man	Tripoli
IP119	Sudan	35	man	Tripoli
IP120	Sudan	40	man	Tripoli
IP121	Sudan	30	man	Tripoli
IP122	Sudan	32	man	Tripoli
IP123	Sudan	28	man	Tripoli
IP124	Sudan	25	woman	Italy

Table A2. Overview of Experts Interviewed

Nr.	Description	Gender	Place of Interview
EXP1	Project manager. International service provider in the field of international cooperation, migration and integration.	male	Afghanistan
EXP2	Project manager. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	male	Austria
EXP3	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	male	Austria
EXP4	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	female	Austria
EXP5	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	female	Austria
EXP6	Managing director. Afghan cultural association.	male	Austria
EXP7	Regional coordinator. International organisation in the field of migration.	male	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP8	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration and reintegration.	female	Côte d'Ivoire
EXP9	Cultural mediator. Refugee accommodation centre.	male	Italy
EXP10	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration, integration and refugee accommodation.	female	Italy
Nr.	**Description**	**Gender**	**Place of Interview**
EXP11	Managing director. NGO in the field of migration, integration and refugee accommodation.	male	Italy
EXP12	Associate. Government agency providing job programs for migrants	female	Finland
EXP13	Social worker. NGO in the field of migration, integration and refugee accommodation.	female	Italy

EXP14	Project team leader. NGO in the field of migration, integration and refugee accommodation.	male	Jordan
EXP15	Project team leader and social worker. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	male	Jordan
EXP16	Aid distribution officer. Humanitarian aid organization.	male	Jordan
EXP17	Community assistant, and distribution assistant. NGO in the field of migration.	male	Jordan
EXP18	Distribution assistant and distribution officer. NGO in the field of migration.	male	Jordan
EXP19	International relations researcher, focus on Libya.	male	Libya
EXP20	Social anthropology researcher with a focus on Libya.	male	Libya
EXP21	Researcher and consultant, focus on security, international cooperation and development with a focus on Northern Africa.	male	Libya
EXP22	Project manager. International service provider in the field of international cooperation, migration and reintegration.	female	Nigeria
EXP23	Legal sector manager. Humanitarian aid organisation.	male	Turkey
EXP24	Political scientist and researcher.	male	Turkey
EXP25	Journalist, migration-related media outlet.	male	Turkey
EXP26	Researcher. International organization in the field of law enforcement, crime, and governance.	male	Libya
EXP27	Journalist and researcher focusing on migration and politics in West Africa and the Sahel.	male	Libya
EXP28	Managing director. NGO involved in maritime rescue.	male	Italy
EXP29	Criminal lawyer. Specialized in protection of gender violence's victims.	female	Italy
EXP30	Criminal lawyer. Reception center for unaccompanied minors.	male	Italy
EXP31	Associate information manager officer. UN agency.	male	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP32	Humanitarian aid expert.	female	Greece
EXP33	Associate. NGO in the field of migration and integration.	male	Turkey
EXP34	Programme Coordinator. International organisation in the field of migration.	female	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP35	Humanitarian aid expert.	female	Greece
EXP36	Managing Director. NGO and social service provider.	male	Turkey
EXP37	Associate. International organisation in the field of migration.	male	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP38	Board Member. NGO network in the filed of migration and integration.	male	Greece
EXP39	Country Director. International organisation in the field of migration.	male	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP40	Senior finance and operations officer. International humanitarian response agency.	male	Turkey
EXP41	Associate. Ministry for interior Republike Srpske	male	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EXP42	Grants and partnerships manager. International humanitarian organisation	male	Turkey