

Empowering cities of migration, new methods for citizen involvement and socio-spatial integration: findings from the EMPOWER project

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Empowering Cities of Migration, New Methods for Citizen Involvement and Socio-spatial Integration

Findings from the EMPOWER Project

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Table of Contents

Meet the Teams	4
Acknowledgements	5
Executive Summary	6
Chapter 1. Introduction	10
1.1. Overall aims and related research objectives	12
Chapter 2. Context to the study	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Integration and superdiverse neighbourhoods	13
2.2.1 Approaches to integration	13
2.2.2 Superdiverse neighbourhoods and socio-spatial integration	14
2.2.3 Understanding migration and integration as a gendered and stratified process	17
2.3 Addressing housing challenges, housing governance, place and place-making in urban areas	18
2.3.1 Housing, integration, place and place-making	18
2.3.2 Differential experiences of place-making and housing integration	20
2.4 Citizen empowerment and involvement in the context of place-making, housing, and neighbourhood initiatives	21
2.4.1 Empowerment and place	21
2.4.2 Gender, empowerment, and place-making processes	22
2.5 Integration Indicators and a ‘Theory of Change’ to promote empowerment and inclusion	24
Chapter 3. Methods	27
3.1 Research design and case study selection	27
3.1.1 Research design	27
3.1.2 Case study selection	27
3.1.3 Methods and ethical considerations	29
Chapter 4. Results and analysis	35
4.1 Introduction	35
4.2 Outcomes for migrant integration and empowerment	35

4.2.1 Outcome 1: Suitable housing for all	35
4.2.2 Outcome 2: Trust and Reciprocity	40
4.2.3 Outcome 3: Safety, security and belonging	46
4.2.4 Outcome 4: Improved access to local infrastructure and services	49
4.2.5 Outcome 5: Involvement in shaping housing and neighbourhood infrastructures	53
4.2.6 Outcome 6: Vulnerable populations, access, and rights	58
4.3 Discussion and Summary	61
4.3.1 The importance of community led research infrastructures and CSOs for integration and empowerment	61
4.3.2 Experiences of place-making in superdiverse neighbourhoods and implications for integration and empowerment	62
4.3.3 Securing gender aware integration and empowerment through community led research	63
Chapter 5. A Theory of Change for integration and empowerment	66
5.1 Introduction	66
5.2 A theory of change	66
Chapter 6. Conclusion	73
References	75

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Executive Summary

The EMPOWER project provides new gender-aware insights into the integration challenges and opportunities - and housing experiences - of individuals living in three different European cities and three neighbourhoods reflective of increasing population diversity.

The research highlights the critical importance of housing and place in integration processes and the ways in which local residents can be empowered to work with those involved in the governance of neighbourhood and housing services to create appropriate and inclusive responses, and which facilitate engagement and empowerment.

Critically, the EMPOWER project builds upon models of recruiting, training, upskilling and co-producing knowledge with 'Citizen Researchers' (CRs) that live or work in diverse urban neighbourhoods.

The research findings highlight how place-making is important for facilitating migrant integration and empowerment and the role of significant others - such as friends, family and relatives - as well as the existing population and local organisations in shaping such processes.

The report also draws attention to the importance of racial and discriminatory practices in shaping access to and experiences of housing. This can include the actions of some private sector landlords, as well as neighbourhood relations (including the importance of neighbourhood diversity) in shaping integration. This is important as whilst in some of our case study neighbourhoods, experiences of purposeful contact between residents appeared to be convivial, the findings also show that such experiences may be variegated. In turn, this has implications for integration strategies and the importance of language, culture and place as key facilitators of integration.

This report also highlights how empowerment within housing and urban development structures (including consultation, engagement and/or delivery) was often absent. This gives rise to a fundamental question - who is empowering and who is empowered? The evidence from the EMPOWER project highlights that whilst on the whole respondents wanted to engage and participate in housing and urban development structures, a number of barriers existed including a lack of invitation to participate; a lack of time for individuals to participate; a lack of confidence undermining the participation of some individuals; and the need to focus on providing the basic necessities of everyday living (such as securing shelter and food) as a precursor to participation. Such issues mean that whilst migrants and others living in our case study areas can act as 'change agents', their engagement cannot be readily assumed. Nevertheless, many residents were involved in both formal and informal activities such as supporting religious institutions, non-institutionalized support and voluntary sector organisations - and which often began as a consequence of individuals needing assistance. In addition, it was clear that the voluntary sector - including Civil Society Organisations - CSOs - was often crucial in filling gaps and supporting migrant integration in our case study neighbourhoods.

More specifically, Ndofor-Tah et al.'s (2019) 'Indicators of Integration' framework was utilised to organise the results of the research around six key themes / outcomes of relevance to the development of a '*Theory of Change for migrant integration and empowerment*'.

Outcome 1: Suitable housing for all: There were there some clear parallels between all three case study areas in respect of problems with the condition of housing and poor responses from local housing landlords - including experiences of discrimination, insecure tenancies and a lack of power to co-design such property. Overcrowding also stood out as an issue which impinged on housing conditions: the size of available and affordable accommodation, intra-generational living and insufficient economic resources were real concerns for migrant interviewees in that they felt unable to provide meaningful spaces for homework and recreational activities. Thus several respondents mentioned the need for local meeting places and for activities to be provided for children and young people.

Outcome 2: Trust and Reciprocity: Whilst in general racism was not generally reported as an issue and with respondents being able to count on the support of others if they had a problem, it was also clear that such support, relations and connections were not uniform for all groups. There was evidence in all of the countries that certain groups and individuals were less likely to meet others. In response, the actions of local voluntary and community sector organisations were noted as being of considerable importance in encouraging integration and inclusion, both in terms of their role in providing safe places for individuals to meet and in respect of getting individuals involved in particular activities; this was deemed to be very important, especially for women who may find themselves more isolated. However, generating such engagement was not always straightforward due to challenges associated with childcare; time; language; lack of knowledge about the local area and poverty.

Outcome 3: Safety, security and belonging: The research findings highlighted common themes of residents generally feeling safe but with concerns expressed around i) being out and about in certain places in the evening; ii) the territorial stigmatisation of each case study area; and iii) the presence of crime often related to drugs. Concerns around the future well-being and prospects of children and youth growing up in the area also stood out. In all of the neighbourhoods, issues associated with overcrowding and neighbourhood reputation meant that in overall terms there were mixed levels of attachment to the respective case study areas.

Outcome 4: Improved access to local infrastructure and services: The lack of financial resources available to residents was deemed to limit opportunities for access to different local infrastructures and services and in turn impact on integration. Challenges associated with providing affordable housing, as well as employment, education and healthcare and language support services, along with unequal access to such infrastructure also emerged. Access was differentiated along the lines of income, linguistic skills, local knowledge and gender-specific characteristics. In terms of the latter, issues concerned with safety and overcrowding - as well as home and caring responsibilities - were of particular relevance to female residents and likely to reinforce socio-spatial segregation. CSOs were identified as helping to overcome some of these issues, including their role in providing language support, in providing employment experience and in referrals and facilitating contact with other service providers.

Outcome 5: Involvement in shaping housing and neighbourhood infrastructures: A lack of time for individuals to become involved in neighbourhood organisations and formal public consultation activities was identified. There was also a lack of confidence across respondents that their views would matter. In addition, there was some evidence of a lack of knowledge of who to contact and how to get involved, and questions over what benefits would be received from becoming involved. Concerns were also raised about a lack of diversity in the staffing structures of local public and private sector organisations involved in housing and urban planning in some of our case study areas, and which simply did not reflect the superdiverse communities that they served. Consequently, it is advocated that there is a requirement for public sector organisations in particular to move away from a “transaction-based” approach (one-way communication and with interactions between professionals and communities being occasional) to a more holistic and consistent approach that offers the prospect of more tangible benefits for individuals becoming involved in consultation and engagement exercises.

Outcome 6: Vulnerable populations, access and rights: CSOs were deemed to offer a wide range of support on issues relating to immigration, employment and language services. However, there is a need for a fundamental change in democratic dialogue - and associated “go-to” structures if there is to be a step up in community engagement and to support greater levels of self-responsibility. It will also require a change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of service providers to change the democratic dialogue and to secure a positive culture change conducive to the delivery of ‘adaptive solutions’ (Gustavsen, 1991).

A new ‘*Theory of Change for integration and empowerment*’ (Chapter 5) based on the results of the research highlights the actions needed to generate gender sensitive approaches for migrant integration and empowerment. The framework sets out the problems identified in relation to each thematic / outcome area (see above) and the types of activities that could be developed to address such problems. These activities will subsequently need to be incorporated within specific initiatives of stakeholders (to be defined). The framework also details the outputs and output indicators that are of relevance to measure progress. The outcomes listed in the Theory of Change are contextualised in relation to the outcome indicators of relevance from the Indicators of Integration framework. Stakeholders will be required to monitor these carefully to evaluate the effectiveness of their current and future interventions.

To summarise, in practical terms the EMPOWER project highlighted some of the barriers to empowering female residents living in superdiverse areas. Nevertheless, it was clear that individuals were also being empowered through the development and utilisation of a variety of place-making strategies to negotiate and navigate life in superdiverse neighbourhood settings. Moreover, EMPOWER was very much focused on developing and co-creating new methods of knowledge production to create a new democratic dialogue, to improve engagement in decision-making and to help facilitate gender-aware integration and empowerment. To this end, the use of CRs was integral. However, this was not always straightforward. To do this type of activity properly takes considerable resources and time and especially given the collaborative research design, co-production methodology and sequential research approach that was utilised across three different countries and differing local contexts of superdiversity.

The use of a gender lens in the EMPOWER project also drew attention to the social norms, hierarchies and unequal power structures that also significantly impact on the integration, inclusion and empowerment of

individuals - and how these can be overcome. A diversity perspective additionally helped to identify the intersectionality of issues such as legal status, gender, country of birth, employment status, duration in the neighbourhood etc. on shaping processes of inclusion and empowerment.

Finally, given that EMPOWER linked local residents' perceptions and experiences to policy interventions, this helped to shape the new 'Theory of Change' framework presented towards the end of this report in order to identify how migrant integration and empowerment may become a reality in superdiverse neighbourhood settings. This - as far as we are aware - is the first time that the Indicators of Integration framework has been operationalised at a local level, and certainly within superdiverse settings, and provides a framework for stakeholder action moving forward.

Chapter 1. Introduction

This report presents the initial findings which emerged from the EMPOWER research project. It provides new gender-aware insights into the integration challenges and opportunities - and housing experiences - of individuals living in three different European cities and three neighbourhoods reflective of increasing population diversity. In doing so, the research highlights the critical importance of housing and place in integration processes and the ways in which local residents can be empowered to work with those involved in the governance of neighbourhood and housing services to create appropriate and inclusive responses, and which facilitate engagement and empowerment.

Previous approaches to consultation, engagement and citizen empowerment have often undermined the management of integration, broadly defined as “*the process by which immigrants become accepted into society*” (Penninx, 2005, p.1). Furthermore, the need to better understand ways to involve all local residents - including women with a migration history - in shaping service provision in an era of increasing population diversity has been widely recognised in recent years. Yet little progress has been made from a gender perspective (Phillimore, 2015; Jenkinson et al., 2017).

Consequently, the EMPOWER project addresses this gap in our knowledge. The adoption of a gender perspective is particularly significant as it provides a lens through which to examine social norms and power structures that significantly impact the settlement experiences of men and women migrants. Migrant women can be more seriously affected by displacement and more vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). At times, they may also be more likely to experience isolation and poor access to services whilst the lack of opportunities to build positive social networks and socio-cultural capital has significant implications for socio-spatial integration and citizen involvement via place-making processes (Elgenius and Phillimore, 2022; Goodson and Phillimore, 2008).

The research presented in this report therefore seeks to provide a better understanding of gender-based integration and housing needs of individuals living in diverse neighbourhoods, as well as how these may be addressed through new ways of working with key stakeholders. Critically, the EMPOWER project builds upon models of recruiting, training, upskilling and co-producing knowledge with ‘Citizen Researchers’ (CRs) that live or work in diverse urban neighbourhoods¹. A key aim of the research was to work with local residents and to upskill the CRs in methodology training, to co-design research instruments and co-create new knowledge alongside other stakeholders. In particular, there was an emphasis on exploring how different communities in increasingly diverse areas of different cities across Europe were being involved in co-creating more sustainable and liveable futures. Such an approach involves the use of a diversity lens to identify how the intersectionality of issues such as legal status, country of birth, gender, employment

¹ The term ‘Citizen Researchers’ is used in this research report in the context of ‘citizen science’ gaining increasing popularity in countries such as Sweden, and which highlights the collaborations taking place between researchers and citizens and the increasing emphasis on involving citizens in the research process. Nevertheless, in Germany and the UK, the term ‘Community Researchers’ is often more commonly used to denote the involvement of individuals from local communities in the research process. Given that this research project focuses on Sweden, Germany and the UK, we use the term ‘Citizen Researchers’ and thus position our work in the ‘citizen society’ tradition.

status and duration in the neighbourhood and country can contribute towards shaping integration and housing challenges, and the ways in which to overcome challenges and barriers through co-creative approaches via multi-sector stakeholder partnerships.

Our research design and partnerships have been instrumental in shaping country-specific research on the integration and housing governance challenges of relevance to our case study areas. The engagement of CRs from the very outset of the project has been integral to the success of the community-led partnership approach, which underpins the EMPOWER project. The research includes interviews undertaken by CRs with migrant women and a survey of all residents living in our case study neighbourhoods, as well as stakeholder interviews with those involved in local housing, integration and neighbourhood development activities (see Chapter 3).

The findings of the EMPOWER project are detailed in Chapter 4 and are of relevance at a time of welfare pluralism and with local actors and civil society groups being encouraged to support welfare provision. A number of key issues are highlighted and discussed including the importance of practices of place-making for facilitating migrant integration and settlement. In this respect, the research highlights the fundamental importance of housing and place for integration as well as the temporal and spatial dimensions to integration and settlement. The role of ‘significant others’ - such as friends, family and relatives - is also highlighted, as well as the existing population and local organisations in shaping such processes. The research also draws attention to the importance of racial and discriminatory practices in shaping access to and experiences of housing. This can include the actions of some private sector landlords, as well as neighbourhood relations (including the importance of neighbourhood diversity) in shaping integration. This is important as whilst in some of our case study neighbourhoods experiences of purposeful contact between residents appeared to be convivial, the findings also show that such experiences may be variegated. In turn, this has implications for integration strategies and the importance of language, culture and place as key facilitators of integration.

This report also highlights how empowerment within housing and urban development structures (including consultation, engagement and/or delivery) was often absent. This gives rise to a fundamental question - who is empowering and who is empowered? The evidence from the EMPOWER project highlights that whilst on the whole respondents wanted to engage and participate in housing and urban development structures, a number of barriers existed including a lack of invitation to participate; a lack of time for individuals to participate; a lack of confidence undermining the participation of some individuals; and the need to focus on providing the basic necessities of everyday living (such as securing shelter and food) as a precursor to participation. Such issues mean that whilst migrants and others living in our case study areas can act as ‘change agents’, their engagement cannot be readily assumed. Nevertheless, many residents were involved in both formal and informal activities such as supporting religious institutions, non-institutionalized support and voluntary sector organisations - and which often began as a consequence of individuals needing assistance. In addition, it was clear that the voluntary sector was often crucial in filling gaps and supporting migrant integration in our case study neighbourhoods.

There was also some evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic had detrimentally impacted on integrated urban development insofar as having an impact on the withdrawal of local services, an undermining of individuals’ sense of place and challenges of maintaining property.

Given the focus on ‘Empowering Cities of Migration’, the issues which emerged from the research are subsequently organised, presented and elaborated in relation to a new ‘Theory of Change’ for integration and empowerment, and which is set out in Chapter 5. This highlights the practical actions needed to generate gender sensitive approaches to integration and empowerment and is an important tool which can be utilised and further developed by different stakeholders in respect of their own current and proposed activities, as well as helping them to monitor their progress in supporting integration and settlement over time.

1.1 Overall aims of the EMPOWER project and related research objectives

Overall Aim: To develop new methods of citizen empowerment and knowledge co-creation for gender-aware integration in areas subject to increasing population diversity.

Research project objectives:

Objective 1: To recruit, upskill and empower Citizen Researchers (CRs) to engage with migrants and host communities in areas subject to increasing population diversity and to co-create new knowledge on the housing needs of what is often defined as “hidden groups and communities”.

Objective 2: Through a ‘whole community’ approach, develop participatory gender-aware insights into housing challenges of relevance to local communities and in so doing address segregation and discrimination in the housing market in areas of population diversity.

Objective 3: To undertake a wider stakeholder engagement and thereby contribute towards empowering local residents and stakeholders to work with housing and urban planning specialists to inform gender-aware housing strategies and policies which tackle problems of housing affordability, segregation and discrimination in areas of increasing population diversity.

In Chapter 4 (Results and analysis) we consider these research objectives further and develop a narrative that sets out the key research findings from each country. The research findings are framed in the context of six specific outcomes which emerged from the work, and which are subsequently utilised to implement a Theory of Change for migrant integration and empowerment. Moreover, the framework also includes details on the desired impacts, outputs and activities that are required to help deliver integration and empowerment.

Finally, whilst this report provides a detailed summary of the key themes which emerged from the research and the types of actions that could be taken forward by stakeholders in conjunction with local residents, it is important to note that the research data which was generated through the EMPOWER project will be further processed and analysed in due course. This will inform the production of additional research articles exploring a number of important themes, including new models of citizen and community engagement, place-making, local mobilisation and spatial and social justice. Some initial observations in relation to some of these areas are therefore presented in the discussion set out at the end of Chapter 4.

Chapter 2. Context to the study

2.1 Introduction

The overall focus of this research project involves providing new gender-aware insights into the integration challenges, opportunities and housing experiences in the context of three different European cities and three neighbourhoods reflective of increasing population diversity. In so doing, the emphasis is on empowering local residents to work with stakeholders to create new governance responses which help to facilitate integration and empowerment.

Consequently, in the review that follows there is a focus on place. First, we are particularly interested in issues of integration in the context of ‘superdiverse’ neighbourhoods (Vertovec, 2007) and the importance of socio-economic vulnerability and diversity for integration and empowerment experiences of local residents, including the importance of gender (Section 2.2). Second, there is an emphasis on the importance of housing (including type / availability / quality and location) and place - including processes of place-making and neighbourhood / urban planning therein in shaping inclusion in superdiverse areas (Section 2.3). Third, issues relating to gender and empowerment (and issues of power therein) in the context of place-making, local housing and neighbourhood initiatives are also considered (Section 2.4).

It is also important to note that whilst predominantly the literature review is focused on Europe, other studies from elsewhere in the world are also cited when they make a considerable insight into the key issues addressed. Furthermore, a focus was placed on individuals who have themselves migrated and with ‘leave to remain’, thereby including refugees; such an emphasis is linked to empowerment, housing and integration issues more specifically. Finally, the review also introduces a ‘Theory of Change’ for integration and empowerment (Section 2.5), and which is subsequently used and developed to order the findings from the research in Chapter 4.

2.2 Integration and superdiverse neighbourhoods

2.2.1 Approaches to integration

Integration has been broadly defined as “the process by which immigrants become accepted into society” (Penninx, 2005, p.1) and we hereby approach integration as a process of inclusion. With migration policies mainly defined at the national level, cities have been typically expected to develop their own strategies and policies to integrate people into the community (Charles et al., 2018). For example, in Germany policies of education, healthcare and employment have been formulated for the population as whole and with cities implementing more targeted approaches to integration at a local level that meets the specific needs of their communities (ibid.). Integration can thus be viewed across several domains or policy areas, including housing, employment, education, social inclusion and citizenship (McGinnity et al., 2020).

In addition, integration is now increasingly seen as a “dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents” (Phillimore 2021, p.1946). Nevertheless, much of the focus to date in

integration theory, policy and practice has been placed upon refugees or migrants themselves. In a Swedish context, for instance, Dahlstedt (2007, p.160) problematizes and describes the politics of integration as a fluid process that involves a range of both explicit and implicit demands of immigrants, that also changes character depending on what political positionalities are dominant at any time. However, the role of receiving societies in supporting and providing the context for integration has not been systematically interrogated (Phillimore 2021, p.1946) nor the influence of host society opportunity structures. As such, research too often has focused on the responsibility of newcomers to integrate and that this has left established residents out of the picture (Caglar and Schiller, 2018).

In response, much of the recent work on integration has highlighted the need for a multi-dimensional, multi-directional, context-specific approach. Research has therefore explored the multidimensionality of inclusion and integration processes. Furthermore, a focus on opportunity structures can help us to understand the multi-dimensionality of inclusion. The nature of integration opportunities can depend on multiple factors such as types of immigration and integration policy and practice (e.g. restrictive or more permissive) resettlement countries' orientation and attitudes towards refugees and migrants (e.g. political and media discourses and the nature of relations), the importance of place (e.g. the quality and availability of local resources) and national economies and civil society (e.g. the importance of state projects and civil society organisations; see Phillimore, 2021, pp.1952-1957; also see Section 2.6). This perspective also parallels recent work by Caglar and Schiller (2018) who uses the notion of 'emplacement' to explore how newcomers and established residents build relationships and connections within the framework of constraints and opportunities of a specific locality.

To exemplify the importance of local context, Drolet and Teixeira (2022) focus on integration practices in smaller cities and note how unaffordable housing (limited supply of affordable rental housing), limited employment opportunities (non-recognition of credentials) and language barriers (how the housing system works; information on employment opportunities etc.) were the biggest challenges in these types of cities - and with all of these issues being interconnected.

2.2.2 Superdiverse neighbourhoods and socio-spatial integration

The concept of superdiversity was introduced by Vertovec (2007) to describe a demographic condition in which populations are more diverse than ever before. It acknowledges that since the 1980s, there have been profound quantitative and qualitative changes to global flows of people (Arnaut and Spotti, 2014). Whilst superdiversity encompasses the idea of individuals arriving from many places, it is simultaneously conceptualised as 'the diversification of diversity' wherein populations are diverse in multiple and intersecting ways, for example by ethnicity, faith, immigration status, rights and entitlements, gender and age, and patterns of spatial distribution (Vertovec, 2007).

Superdiversity has been invoked in different ways, such as a contemporary synonym of diversity, a backdrop for a study, a call for methodological reassessment, a way of simply talking about more ethnicity and so on (Vertovec 2019, p.125). This has led some to criticise the term as no more than an amplification of multiculturalism (i.e. 'more ethnicities'; see Back 2015) or as overly focused on immigrant populations at the expense of the host population, thereby concealing structural inequalities while offering

individualising explanations for a lack of integration, inequality and segregation (see section 2.2.1; Sepulveda, Syrett and Lyon 2011; Raco et al., 2017). However, if applied appropriately – and with an awareness of such concerns – a focus on superdiversity can help to draw attention to new social complexities by moving beyond existing ethno-national approaches to place (Vertovec, 2019; Pemberton, 2022). Indeed, it highlights how barriers to integration can be shaped by migration background, as well as by socio-economic deprivation, and with such issues often being inter-connected. Consequently, Pride (2015) identifies the importance of the ‘space-place’ domain of superdiversity given the importance of different dimensions of difference which exist within and between different groups and individuals. As such, the concept of superdiversity extends Logan and Zhang’s (2010) idea of global communities residing in mixed race neighbourhoods. It moves away from taking ethnic groups as the optimal unit for analysis (Cooney, 2009). Rather, superdiverse neighbourhoods are demographically ‘layered’, accommodating both old (‘established’) and new (‘more recently arrived’) immigrants from multiple countries of origin, as well as long-standing non-migrant populations (Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018).

In addition, the concept of superdiversity emphasises the importance of local context and place in shaping experiences of diversity and difference (Berg and Sigona, 2013). This is important when considering issues concerned with integration and inclusion. In this respect, a number of intersecting features of superdiversity arguably set such neighbourhoods apart. First, they are often areas characterised by ‘newness’ (Phillimore, 2015) whereby the churn of individuals in and out of such areas means a proportion of residents are perpetually new.

Second, as we have already noted, superdiverse neighbourhoods accommodate migrants and longer established minority groups and non-migrant residents, including gentrifiers who may be attracted by the superdiversity of the neighbourhood. Such individuals may engage in different practices of seeking access to different services. In this context, superdiverse neighbourhoods are characterised by ‘novelty’, with different providers of services being subject to different types of encounters with different individuals - including women with a migration background. This may prove challenging for providers to accommodate and address the different demands on accessing services.

Finally, superdiverse neighbourhoods are inherently ‘diverse’. We have already indicated how no ethnic group predominates and diversity itself may become the predominant neighbourhood identity. Such diversity can attract some individuals who feel able to ‘blend in’ (i.e., gentrifiers), but may deter others (Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018). The proliferation of individuals with differing languages, country of birth, legal status, employment status, educational attainment etc. may provide opportunities for new forms of formal and informal support to emerge (see Duckett, 2015). Individuals may also have abilities to operate at different scales – both within and beyond the neighbourhood (Chimienti and van Liempt, 2015, p.19) and have a range of connections from the local to the regional, national and transnational, meaning that a territorial and a relational perspective on superdiverse neighbourhoods is required.

Hence the increasing diversity of many European cities and their neighbourhoods as a consequence of new patterns of immigration has been seen as both something to celebrate in terms of the creative potential that this may lead to (the ‘diversity dividend’) as well as something that is more problematic in terms of socio-spatial segregation (Matejskova and Leitner, 2011). In terms of the latter, the focus of interest is whether

voluntary or forced segregation is of relevance. In the case of forced segregation, the mechanisms of the housing market and the allocation practice for social housing play a role in the segregation of individuals. Residents in socio-economically vulnerable areas with comparatively fewer financial resources are confronted with challenges of accessing the housing market. Consequently, they can become spatially concentrated given regulatory factors of the housing market, “state-sponsored” segregation in housing policy (El-Mafaalani and Kurtenbach, 2014) and the ways in which welfare regimes either facilitate or deny access to different sets of resources, including housing (Phillimore et al., 2021). This point is considered further in Chapter 4.

With reference to voluntary segregation, the importance of social networks and local infrastructure which responds to specific migrant needs is of importance (Horn, 2005). Chain and internal migration can be shaped by individuals’ desires to live in spatial proximity to others who may be similar ethno-culturally, linguistically and / or religiously. Furthermore, many migrants may move to certain neighbourhoods - including those that are increasingly ‘superdiverse’ to escape perceived or actual processes of racism, stigmatisation and/or discrimination elsewhere (Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018; Pemberton, 2022). Research on segregation/integration also acknowledges the agency of local residents and emphasises their agency in countering stigmatisation, poverty and structural injustices through organisation and mobilisation, as well as how they may challenge public discourses. Such discursive negotiations are especially important in shaping how challenges are understood and framed by different movements, organisations and stakeholders (Dahlstedt et al., 2018; Sernhede, Rosales and Söderman, 2019).

Work that has focused on arrival infrastructures for migrants - which may or may not be conducive to integration - has specifically looked at how the neighbourhood context impacts recently arrived newcomers. Arrival infrastructures can include a variety of housing typologies (including asylum centres or squatting), shops as information hubs, religious sites, facilities for language classes, hairdressers, restaurants, transnational networks and call centres (Meeus et al., 2020). Unpacking the arrival process therefore helps us to understand how individuals construct their future pathways along three dimensions: (1) *directionality*, which refers to the engagements with multiple places over time; (2) *temporality*, which questions imaginaries of permanent belonging; and (3) *subjectivity*, which directs attention to the diverse current and future subjectivities migrants carve out for themselves in situations of arrival (Meeus et al., 2020, p.1). Hence a perspective on arrival infrastructures enables an analysis of integration which goes beyond assumptions of co-ethnic support. Rather, it explores how arrival infrastructures, set up by long-established migrant communities, might benefit newcomers from various backgrounds (Hanhorster and Wessendorf, 2020). The arrival infrastructural lens additionally contributes to an understanding of integration processes “shaped not only by newcomers’ own social, cultural and economic capital and by broader national and city-wide integration policies, socio-economic conditions and support structures (or the lack thereof), but also by the presence of long-established migrants and ethnic minorities with specific settlement expertise” (Hanhorster and Wessendorf 2020, p.7). This is a crucial point given the emphasis on citizens and community research in the EMPOWER project to generate new insights into the integration and settlement experiences of individuals.

2.2.3 Understanding migration and integration as a gendered and stratified process

It is now widely accepted that migration is a complex, gendered and stratified process - in both countries of origin and settlement. This has an impact on integration and inclusion (Hatzidimitriadou and Cakir, 2009; Goodson and Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2017). Desiderio (2020) has noted that women have worse prospects in new countries of settlement compared to male counterparts. Migrant women also receive less integration support than men in terms of language training and access to the labour market as a consequence of gendered norms and discrimination in relation to legal status and citizenship, difficulties in validating professional skills and educational qualifications, a lack of social networks and gender-based violence (for example, see Pertek, 2022), all of which make integration more challenging (Apicella et al., 2021). Such issues have been well documented in Sweden - including discrimination on the basis of the intersection of origin, gender, race, religious and cultural background - and which has hindered access to the labour market (Barberis and Solano, 2018). The workings of the labour market - and the prioritisation of responsibilities and duties for women - has also impacted on their full participation in employment and more specifically in relation to entrepreneurship programmes (Apicella et al., 2021). They are also less likely to participate in political or professional associations compared to males (Desiderio, 2020; McGinnity et al., 2020).

Women with a migration history are a highly heterogeneous population with reference to education and opportunities in the labour market. Hence in countries such as the UK or Sweden, the introduction of more selective immigration systems will exacerbate inequalities between those newly arriving - and who are likely to be more highly skilled on average - and refugees and asylum seekers (Desiderio, 2020). The latter - who may have a weaker link with the labour market upon arrival - will face more challenging integration experiences given multiple disadvantages stemming from gender, country of origin, migration status and comparatively low levels of education.

Liebig and Tronstad (2018) identify that in 2018, 45% of refugees in Europe were women. Yet little is known on their integration outcomes and the specific challenges they face. The limited evidence that is available highlights how refugee women face particular integration challenges associated with poorer health and lower education and labour market outcomes compared to refugee men, and who are already disadvantaged in comparison to migrant populations (Goodson and Phillimore, 2008). Access to affordable and decent housing is viewed as key to refugee integration as it informs language and skills development and job searching. Nevertheless, in countries and neighbourhoods where private rental housing remains unaffordable for most refugees, deeper levels of marginalisation are faced due to race and class positionality (Bhagat, 2021).

Age and sexual orientation also impinge on access to the labour market and with younger/older migrant women either being delayed in accessing the labour market and/or being more susceptible to social isolation (Tong et al., 2020). In addition, LGBTQ women of migrant background may suffer from discrimination based on their migration status and sexual orientation, and which can impact on their integration (Desiderio, 2020) According to Lundqvist and Mulinari (2017), official discourses in Sweden have traditionally tended to code the term "immigrant" as a man, effectively rendering migrant women invisible. When migrant women have entered into the public discourse, they have typically been de-personified and presented as victims and problems or 'subjugated beings'.

Finally, Hatzidimitriadou and Cakir (2009) highlight how institutional, social and cultural barriers make integration problematic for migrant women in the UK and difficult to achieve. In particular, they draw attention to the challenges of integration for migrant women who are dependents of male migrants and who are often seen as ‘voiceless’ and ‘powerless’ in welfare policy discourse and service planning. However, Saksena and McMorrow (2020) argue that social support measures from within migrant and refugee communities, as well as others - coupled with group learning - can improve integration experiences. Such issues are considered further in Chapter 4.

2.3. Addressing housing challenges, housing governance, place and place-making in urban areas

2.3.1 Housing, integration, place and place-making

One of the biggest challenges cities face is providing adequate and affordable housing, and which is often in limited supply (Charles et al., 2018). There are a number of reasons as to why newly arrived migrants encounter difficulties in access to adequate housing and these include language deficits, lack of knowledge about local housing markets, discrimination through elevated rental and purchase prices, higher search costs and mortgage lending practices of institutions etc (Rohde, 2009). On average, migrants are twice as likely to be in overcrowded accommodation and under greater pressure from the cost of housing relative to their income. They are also less likely to own their own homes than individuals born in the country (adjusted for age and income) (Ramirez et al., 2018). A review of the literature highlights that work about housing and migration has focused on the challenges of accessing and securing affordable housing, and the key role of housing in integration and inclusion. These themes are discussed briefly below.

The conceptualization of social housing is not necessarily well-defined as European countries have developed several parallel models; nevertheless, in comparative research it is often referred to by the singular term “social housing”. Thus comparative cross-national reports on the social housing sector in Europe identify how the nature, availability and conditions associated with social housing vary significantly across different countries (Boverket, 2016). Thus, social housing - in the context of this report - refers to affordable housing or housing subsidised by the state in order to keep costs down and is distributed to households with limited incomes. Nevertheless, in Sweden the term ‘social housing’ has been resisted by many actors on the basis that it may (and opposite to its intention) single out low-resource households and increase segregation (Boverket 2016, p 126).

According to Scanlon et al., (2014) migrants tend to be over-represented in social housing in Europe. Robinson (2007) highlights that in the UK, access to social housing - owned by the state - is shaped by availability, eligibility and allocation policy and practice. In Germany, Hanhorster and Lobato (2021) have also identified the impact of the organisational culture of housing providers, their allocation policies and corporate guidelines and day-to-day front-line practices in restricting access of migrants to affordable housing. Furthermore, the mechanisms of the housing market and allocation practices of housing providers for forced migrants can play a role in segregation given the regulatory factors of the housing market (El-Mafaalani and Strohmeier 2015, p.21).

Given the overall context of vulnerabilities connected with migration, housing is approached as a key 'domain' of integration, and which represents a particular context within which integration can take place (Bosswick et al., 2007; Rohde, 2009). As such, it is a key marker (outcome) as well as means for integration and can structure individual experiences. Housing location is also connected to social mobility, accessibility, affordability and habitability. This may directly impinge on the ability of individuals to seek employment and secure access to education and healthcare (UNECE, 2021). However, EU Member States have often been slow to recognise the connection between housing and integration at the local level, with the exception of problems resulting from segregation. Solutions have also tended to be short term and incoherent, rather than being integrated and which emphasise the medium and long-term process of integration of migrants and refugees (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe - UNECE, 2021). Exemplifying the former approach, Phillips (2006) has drawn attention to how the previous Labour government in the UK viewed housing as a key dimension of its strategy for refugee integration. Yet this approach was hindered by conflicting local government agendas and multiple gaps in housing provision choice and support.

More specifically, successful housing integration requires that migrants and refugees: i) have the same access to the housing market as others, thereby overcoming discrimination and language difficulties; ii) are able to afford housing in different segments of the housing market; iii) have access to social institutions which contribute to the quality of social housing; and iv) demonstrate similar housing satisfaction levels to others. In so doing, residential segregation - detrimental to equal chances and opportunities - would therefore be avoided. Thus it is argued that improving local housing and infrastructure would be conducive to integration and the availability of property of different sizes, price and quality (Rohde, 2009).

Alongside housing, place itself is fundamental in shaping integration. In this respect, place-making has been advocated as a key activity to help secure migrant integration in different European cities and neighbourhoods given the way in which it can be used to improve the quality of the social environment, generate a sense of personal security, enhance community relations through the use of neighbourhood regeneration projects, target young people to improve community cohesion, and to facilitate intercultural events and festivals and intercultural housing, as well as helping to mediate housing-related conflicts (such as noise or rubbish).

Nevertheless, Dupre (2016) highlights how there is no agreed definition of place-making as such. He highlights four themes in the place-making literature which reflect the differential use of the term:

- i. Place-making to increase 'sense of place' in the context of globalization.
- ii. Place-making as a participatory mechanism to engage local communities in shaping planning at a local level.
- iii. Place-making as a targeting tool towards particular groups / economic activities, and which can lead to challenges / conflicts.
- iv. Place-making as a strategy to deliver high profile events and to embed sustainability principles locally.

Most commonly, place-making is understood as a process of urban design that makes places liveable and meaningful (Fleming, 2007). It is a set of intentional practices spanning different disciplines that targets neighborhoods, parks and paths, features of landscape, housing developments, streetscapes, long-term care facilities, and hospitals (Project for Public Spaces, 2022). It thus refers to (efforts to shape) the physical structure (of places) but also includes policies, capital investment to generate economic growth and promote cultural tourism (Martin, 2003). In this respect, UNECE (2021) has advocated the development of shared public spaces and activities to support integration, applying innovative architectural design for cheaper but high-quality, modular prefabricated housing and generating additional resources for housing projects for migrants and refugees through partnership working (UNECE, 2021, p.viii).

Supporting positive processes of place-making can help individuals to become aware of / access different opportunity structures available in relation to their everyday spatial contexts. This can help to deliver 'distributive' spatial justice. This focuses on the way resources are allocated and distributed across space, and opportunities for different people to use them (Nordberg, 2020). Furthermore, place-making may also help to deliver - through engagement and empowerment practices (see next section) - 'procedural' spatial justice. This is often less recognised but equally important in terms of ability of individuals to shape decision-making processes influencing the distribution of resources and their subsequent ability to access them. Furthermore, procedural spatial justice focuses on decision-making processes and power mechanisms that shape the distribution of resources and the capability to access such resources (ibid.). Consequently, there is a need to consider how to improve housing governance through enhancing data gathering / monitoring and facilitating political leaders, city administrations and parts of civil society to work together on migrant housing and integration. This includes the development of institutional and structural arrangements to generate co-operation between various actors and departments - including those with responsibilities for housing, urban planning, young people, social work, social justice etc. (Bosswick et al., 2007).

From a migration perspective, place-making has traditionally implied the development of a collective identity articulated through expressions such as monument building and festivals (Edensor, 2002). The predominance of shops and other facilities based around a distinct ethnicity are suggested as being clear indications of place-making (Friedmann, 2010). However, Pemberton and Phillimore (2018) have focused on areas of superdiversity and highlighted the importance of 'diversity identity' place-making with the diversification of diversity associated with new migration patterns. They have therefore called for more work exploring "the experiences of those living in / with diversity" (2018, p.748) and the implications for empowerment (see Section 2.4), as well as the role of urban planners and others such as civil society organization in place-making processes conducive to securing distributive and processual spatial justice. This is considered further in the latter sections of the report.

2.3.2 Differential experiences of place-making and housing integration

Whilst the work of Pemberton and Phillimore (2018) stands out as one of the few studies that has explored place-making through a superdiverse lens, a number of other studies have considered issues related to housing integration for different migrant populations, although once again these tend to focus on specific national or ethnic groups. For example, in terms of refugees, Kandylis and Maloutas (2020) discuss how a

dual housing model approach emerged in respect of responses to the Syrian refugee emergency from 2011 onwards: i) rented or free temporary housing in apartments or hotels; and ii) refugee camps. In terms of the former, there was a tendency to allocate refugee housing or other accommodation relatively close to socio-economically disadvantaged and diverse neighbourhoods (Vergou et al., 2021) and which did not automatically result in networking opportunities or community support. There is also evidence of the local state devolving responsibility for refugee housing to civil society organisations: the latter having been instrumental in developing flexible forms of interaction between local state actors and refugees to tackle housing and other social issues associated with refugee integration (ibid.).

Lombard (2023) has also explored the housing experiences of low-paid economic migrants in the UK. She found that their ability to address poor housing conditions was dependent upon stable networks and incomes, their immigration status and access to stable benefits, as well as broader contextual factors such as levels of English, their social networks and reforms to benefit and immigration regimes.

With reference to migrant women, studies are more piecemeal in respect of their engagement with housing and its role in shaping integration. Nevertheless, a key strand of research - in a European and wider international context - has identified a relationship between gender-based violence and homelessness. It also found that economic stability, food and housing was important in prolonging exits from abusive relationships, along with citizenship status for individuals who depended on the status of their spouses. In turn, the marginal economic position of those made homeless coupled with their limited access to housing were the strongest obstacles to housing stability (Mayock et al., 2012).

From a spatial perspective, Alam et al. (2020) employ the concept of ‘unbounding’ to consider the relationship between migrant women’s informal homes and the wider urban setting which they traverse on a daily basis. They note how ‘homemaking’ occurs beyond the house itself and with the movements of individuals outside of the ‘material home’ (in other homes, the street, the neighbourhood, through transnational connections etc), contribute to either a sense of home or experiences of homelessness. Hence a key conclusion which arises from their work is the need for urban planners to consider ‘neighbourhood socio-ecologies’ and the differential ‘spatial chances’ of migrant women beyond material shelter, and which may be informed by the incremental infrastructures of cities shaped via place-making processes.

2.4 Citizen empowerment and involvement in the context of place-making, housing and neighbourhood initiatives

2.4.1 Empowerment and place

This section focuses on empowerment strategies in the context of housing, place and place-making. On the whole, evidence is limited and confined to local case studies in Europe in the context of specific housing developments that have emerged since 2011 and new refugee flows across Europe.

Empowerment has been used by academics, politicians and policy makers in a number of different ways. Challenges of defining empowerment relate to whether it is seen as a goal, a process or an approach

(Slettebo, 2021). Fundamental questions arise over who is empowering and who is being empowered? Hence a common feature of the concept is that it involves the transmission of power (Fernandes, 2015) and that there is an individual (self-realisation) and structural (social structures that weaken the ability of individuals to control their own lives) element to it. Fundamental to the concept of empowerment are understandings of participation, user involvement, individualization, power, influence, and self-realisation (Jönsson, 2010). Empowerment can therefore be defined as “the set of knowledge, skills and relational skills that allow an individual or a group to set goals and develop strategies to achieve them by the existing resources” (Bimbi 2013, p.191). As such, migrants and others living in different contexts of superdiversity can act as important change agents if their knowledge and skills are harnessed effectively.

Fernandes (2015) has argued that programmes focused on migrant empowerment have frequently failed due to their focus on attempting to transform individuals without taking into account the structural barriers that exclude individuals of a migrant background from (for example) entering the labour market. In the context of Sweden, it is suggested that policies focused on integration are mandatory: this means that those who do not participate are effectively disempowered through a lack of access to ‘introduction allowances’ (Fernandes 2015, p.259).

Empowerment measures can also refer to initiatives which aim to mobilise residents in superdiverse neighbourhoods. Such measures may support socialisation processes of children and young people, improve their health, assist in attaining qualifications and enable participation in social and political processes (Bosswick et al. 2007, p.58). In various instances, residents in superdiverse areas have been encouraged to participate in place-making processes, including planning and implementing housing projects and in housing management to improve local neighbourhood and housing conditions. This has been taken forward through the creation of panels and advisory groups for housing construction and renovation projects, training and employment of migrants in local housing services and the direct involvement of migrants in the provision or revitalization of buildings (UNECE 2021, p.ix).

2.4.2 Gender, empowerment and place-making processes

There is a well-established body of literature that explores the interrelationships between gender, empowerment, and broader processes of urban development. Scholars such as Wekerle (1980); Valentine (1990), Moser and Moser (2005), Massey (2013) and Beebejaun (2017) have made significant contributions to the discourse, advocating for gender equality in urban planning and housing. Valentine's work, spanning from the 1980s onwards, sheds light on the gendered dimensions of urban space and how gender influences individuals' interactions, experiences, and opportunities within cities. She emphasizes everyday practices and how gender shapes individuals' routines, access to resources, and opportunities for social interaction. Valentine argues that urban spaces are not neutral but are permeated with gendered meanings and power relations. These influences shape the production of urban spaces and how people move, use, and experience those spaces. She also examines how gender affects individuals' perceptions of safety and fear in urban environments, exploring the strategies women adopt to navigate and avoid certain spaces due to concerns about harassment, violence, or the fear of crime (Valentine, 1990). Some 30 years on at a recent World Urban Forum in 2020 the mantra that modern cities are ‘designed by men for men’, thereby curtailing women’s access to economic and social mobility, was still ever present. A recent World

Bank Report (Horacio et al., 2020) highlights a number of issues relating to the built environment that intersect with gender to create conditions that constrain and / or create vulnerability and risk, including access (using services and spaces in the public realm), mobility (moving around the city safely, easily, and affordably), safety and freedom from violence, health and hygiene, climate resilience and security of tenure. Such issues are considered further in Chapter 4, and where evidence is presented of the different spaces and places that migrant women avoided in our case study superdiverse neighbourhoods, as well as challenges concerned with access and tenure.

In terms of women with a migrant background and their involvement in housing and urban planning, more work is needed. The ‘politics of presence’ (Phillips, 1998) and ‘parity of participation’ (Fraser and Honneth, 2003) are also concepts to consider in the context of inclusive planning and place-making processes. The politics of presence recognizes that historically marginalized groups, such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other disadvantaged communities, have often been excluded from positions of power and influence. By increasing the presence and visibility of these groups in political processes, the politics of presence seeks to challenge power imbalances, address systemic inequalities, and promote procedural social justice for more equitable and democratic outcomes. Equally, ‘parity of participation’ draws attention to the need for arrangements that permit all members of society to interact with one another as peers and to integrate equity and material well-being with considerations of diversity and participation (Fainstein, 2005).

In this respect, Escalante and Valdivia’s work (2015) draws attention to how planning departments and municipal governments have generally been open to the idea of supporting (migrant) women’s empowerment. They also point out how there has been some willingness to involve migrant women in consultations over place-making and place-based development projects. However, their study also points out how they are less likely to allow women to directly intervene and become involved in the design and delivery of changes planned for a built environment. As a consequence, they suggest that more training is required for urban planners to include migrant women in projects which transform local areas. This is consistent with the arguments of Fainstein (2005) who has advocated the need for involving diverse stakeholders in shaping the built environment so that planners can gain a better understanding of social and economic inequalities and incorporate this knowledge into policy formulation and city design.

Hatzidimitriadou and Cakir (2009) also focus on community self-help or mutual aid groups that have helped to empower women with a migrant background. This has included such individuals benefiting from learning, exchanging information and securing social support and personal development. In turn, they discuss how such activities have also helped to increase their political activism and their ability to communicate and build relationships with others, as well as acting as a positive role model for their children, family, and wider community. In addition, Elgenius and Phillimore (forthcoming) also highlight the role of civil society - including formal and informal organisations - in providing support for female residents in superdiverse areas (also see Elgenius 2023).

2.5 Integration Indicators and a ‘Theory of Change’ to promote empowerment and inclusion

Ager and Strang (2008) provided a framework for integration, the ‘Indicators of Integration’ framework, which identified a series of integration domains (such as housing, employment etc.) which act as ‘markers and means’ of integration and which are informed by the nature of social connections and facilitated by issues such as language, safety and cultural knowledge. This was recently updated to emphasise the social, political and economic contexts within which migrants integrate at the local level (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019). It has also been adapted to various countries and sectors.

The updated ‘Indicators of Integration’ (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019) (see Figure 1) identifies 14 key domains within four main headings that normatively are understood as central to integration. The first theme - ‘markers and means of integration’ - includes five domains: Housing, Work, Education, Health and Social Care and Leisure. These domains represent major areas of attainment that are widely recognised as critical to the integration process. Whilst accepting that integration is multi-dimensional, the EMPOWER project particularly focuses on the housing domain as a marker and means of integration and the context within which integration can take place (see Chapter 4). Also relevant for our study, in view of the multidimensional and multidirectional character of integration processes, is the adoption and use of the indicators of integration framework to map civil society responses to all of the integration domains (see Elgenius et al., 2022; Elgenius, 2023).

The second theme - ‘social connections’ - has three domains: Bonds, Bridges and Links. Social bonds relate to connections with others with a shared sense of identity; social bridges relate to connections with people of ‘different backgrounds and origins’; and social links refer to connections with institutions, including local and central government services. Taken together they recognise the importance of relationships to our understanding of the integration process and elaborate different kinds of relationships that contribute to integration.

The third theme relates to ‘facilitators’ and has five domains within the framework: Language, Culture, Digital Skills, Safety and Stability. These represent key facilitating factors for the process of integration.

Finally, there is one domain within the framework under the heading ‘Foundation’: Rights and Responsibilities. This represents the basis upon which mutual expectations and obligations which support the process of integration are established.

Nevertheless, picking up on the earlier point in this chapter about the importance of opportunity structures to understand the multi-dimensionality of integration, there is also a need to further consider the importance of different types of opportunity structures for integration, as follows:

i) **‘Locality’**: the conditions and resources of the local area shape integration outcomes and differ between those migrants/refugees who are dispersed and those who are not.

ii) **'Discourse'**: the nature of political and media discourse on migration has been shown to be highly influential on public opinion. Media and political discourses represent a "receiving-society opportunity structure" that may differ at local and national levels.

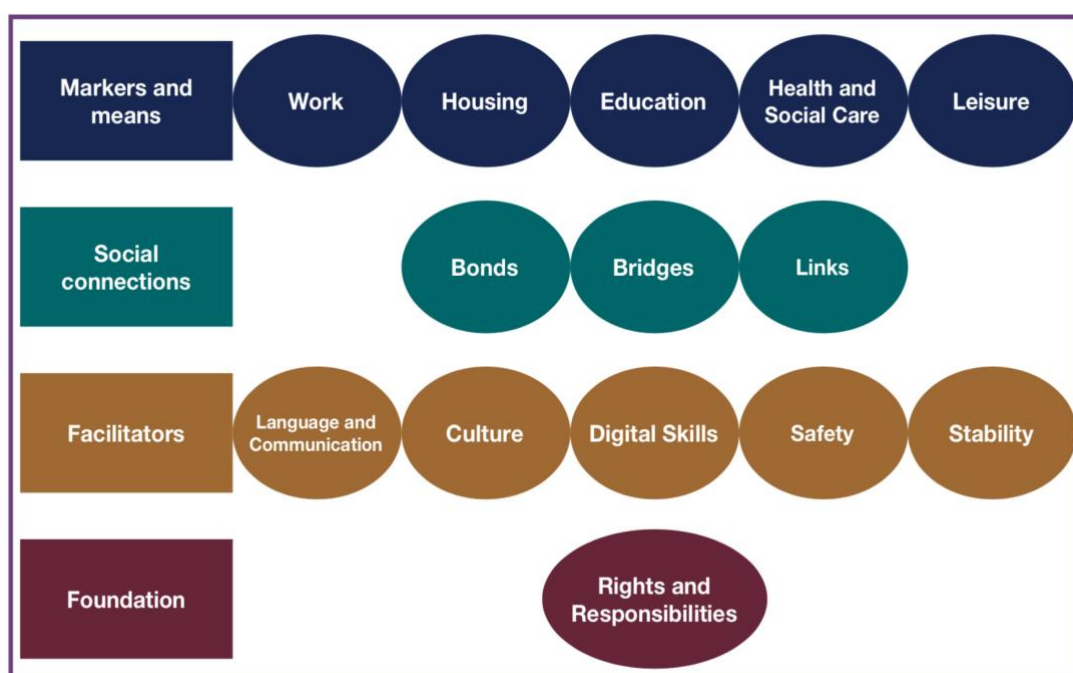
iii) **'Relations'**: the nature of relationships and the extent to which communities are welcoming or hostile are key to integration opportunities.

iv) **'Structure'**: the range of structural factors associated with migration and integration policy may shape opportunity structures.

v) **'Initiatives and support'**: the ways in which the actions of voluntary and community sector organisations help to shape integration outcomes.

(Phillimore, 2021)

Figure 1: The ‘Indicators of Integration’ framework 2019



Consequently, such opportunity structures are associated with the integration domains set out in Figure 1 above. Taken together they are also utilised to develop a **new Theory of Change for Migrant Integration and Empowerment (see Chapter 5)**. This framework organises the research findings from the study around the themes set out in this chapter, namely integration, housing, and empowerment - and the importance of place-making and gender-related issues therein.

More specifically, a Theory of Change explains how and why a desired change is expected to occur in a particular context. It fills the gap between what a programme/change initiative does and the desired goals (Harries et al., 2014). Furthermore, it explains how a group of early and intermediate goals sets the path for achieving long-term goals and can include assumptions about the processes of change that are occurring. In addition, it specifies the links between early, intermediate and long-term goals, and how changes will be brought about and recorded (ibid.). A Theory of Change is often developed with contributions from stakeholders and is modified throughout the programme/initiative and evaluation process (De Silva et al, 2014).

Thus in the context of the EMPOWER study, it is a useful and appropriate framework to plan, monitor and evaluate the extent to which integration and empowerment interventions in areas of increasing population superdiversity are helping to create connected communities.

Chapter 3. Methods

3.1 Research design and case study selection

3.1.1 Research design

A sequential mixed-methods and collaborative research design was adopted for this programme and which heavily emphasised a co-production methodology. Initially, this involved the recruitment and training of Citizen Researchers (CRs) living or working in each of our case study areas. The CRs helped to co-design the research instruments used for the study - namely the semi-structured interview guide and the digital questionnaire survey. The CRs were also trained in interview skills, ethical concerns and collecting digital survey responses and were involved in interviewing, surveying and interpretation of the findings. The intention was to develop new forms of collaborative learning and participatory, diversity sensitive (Jünger et al., 2022) forms of knowledge production (Sprung, 2016), drawing on the experiential knowledge (i.e. the “lived experiences”) of local residents and the on-site CRs. The approach also requires regular methodological reflection within the entire project team and a shift from the "subject-object" relationship to a "subject-subject" relationship" (Fontanari et al. 2014, p.114), as well as the development of ‘eye-level’ relationships (Falge, 2018) that tap into the everyday knowledge of residents.

3.1.2 Case study selection

Three European cities Bochum (Germany), Gothenburg (Sweden) and Birmingham (UK) were selected for this programme on the basis of having both long-standing and newly arrived migrant populations and high yet different levels and types of migration and varying degrees of population diversity (Vertovec, 2007). For example, around 31.5% of people currently living in Bochum have a migration background - a category that includes first, second and third generation migrants (Integrationsprofil Bochum, 2019); in Gothenburg this figure is 26% (Boverket, 2020) whilst in Birmingham 23.9% of the population are so called “foreign born” (Migration Observatory, 2018); NB definitions vary by country so data are not directly comparable). They also reflect different challenges in respect of integration and housing governance: whilst Gothenburg is one of Sweden's most diverse cities, it is also claimed to be one of the most segregated (Elgenius et al 2022); similarly whilst Birmingham is expected to be the first minority-majority city in the UK by 2024 the city's varied ethnicity has also been identified as major factor in social segregation (Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018). Likewise, Bochum is highly diverse due to the city’s industrial history and influx of migrant workers over the last century; hence it has a long-standing and newly arrived migrant population. However, Bochum has experienced significant economic challenges with the demise of key employers and which has contributed to recent integration challenges.

Within the wider city conurbation, the neighbourhoods of Uni Center and inner Hustadt (Bochum), Bergsjön (Gothenburg) and Smethwick (Birmingham) were selected for analysis based on the diversity of their resident populations (each neighbourhood accommodates individuals from at least 40 different country of origins), as well as high levels of multiple deprivation. Consequently they were suitable areas to investigate a range of issues concerned with local integration and the provision of accommodation.

With reference to Bochum, both of the selected case study neighbourhoods are located about six kilometres from the city centre in relatively close proximity to each other and have an urban form characterised by high-rise buildings that are either partly owned by local housing cooperatives, real estate buildings owned by stock indexed companies or are in private sector ownership. Such buildings have become less popular over time due to some of the challenges that have emerged with high-density urban living and with families on lower incomes / migrants moving in. Despite some attempts at urban regeneration by the city council, properties owned by private investors remain in very poor condition due to a lack of investment and up-keep. Whilst official statistics on the case study neighbourhoods are lacking, it is estimated that the Uni Center neighbourhood accommodates roughly 1,200 (mainly elderly) first generation Russians, ethnic Kurds from Turkey, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, a number of Arabs from Syria, a few Germans and international students. The other case study neighbourhood of the inner Hustadt is inhabited by approximately 3,000 people, 90% who are estimated to have a migration background and with less than a fifth of the population having German citizenship (the population of both neighbourhoods is around 4,200 in total). The neighbourhood is highly diverse in terms of national, ethnic and religious diversity and with migrants from up to 40 origin countries and with at least eight different religious identities. Local fieldwork undertaken by members of the project team has identified that the majority of the inhabitants living in the inner Hustadt are first and second generation ethnic Kurds from Turkey, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria and Iran. The inner Hustadt is one of Bochum's youngest neighbourhoods and is characterised by the cities' highest health inequality index (Gesundheitsamt Bochum, 2017). More than 50% of the inhabitants of Hustadt and Uni Center depend on welfare (Falge, 2021) and have relatively low incomes (between €10,000-€20,000 'purchasing power'; see infas 360 GmbH). Whilst both neighbourhoods are deprived, they vary in terms of local services on offer: unlike the Uni-Center the inner Hustadt has few retail outlets and leisure / recreation services. Access to public transport is also problematic.

In relation to Gothenburg and one of its outer city areas, the Bergsjön neighbourhood, this consists of East Bergsjön (9,748 residents) and West Bergsjön (8,146 residents); 17,894 residents live in the area in total. The population of the neighbourhood is relatively young and the so called 'foreign-born' constitute around 59% of the population, and with the majority of migrants born in either Iraq, Somalia, Syria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Iran. Whilst ethnicity is not recorded in Sweden, it is estimated that there are about 140 different ethnic groups living in the neighbourhood and over 80 nationalities. The main languages spoken are Arabic, Somali, Serbo-Croatian and Farsi/Dari. Bergsjön has been identified as an "especially vulnerable area" to crime by the Swedish Police and has been characterised as "resource-poor" (BRÅ, 2017), and with high numbers of residents in receipt of welfare and income support. Health and education deprivation are also prevalent. There are a number of services present within the neighbourhood, including a shopping centre, five schools, three churches, a library, a health centre, a dentist, health and social service organisations and several civil society organisations (CSOs). Most of the accommodation in the neighbourhood has been constructed since the 1960s and with high-density living prevalent and subject to ongoing regeneration (BRÅ, 2018).

Finally, with reference to Birmingham, the Smethwick neighbourhood lies on the western edge of the urban conurbation in the borough of Sandwell. Smethwick has a relatively young population with around 54% of the population being from ethnic minorities (White 45.9%; Indian 16.9%; Pakistani 9.3%; Black Caribbean

5.6%; Chinese and Asian Other 4.2%) and just under a third of the population being foreign-born (30.9% 2011). There are long-standing Kurdish, Pakistani, Albanian, Indian and Somali communities, as well as more recently arrived migrants from Romania and Poland. Overall, there are migrants from over 100 countries in the neighbourhood. It is also a relatively deprived area - it is in the 20% most deprived areas of England and with health, employment and education deprivation being of significance (Research Sandwell, 2021). Key languages spoken include English, Arabic, Romanian and Kurdish.

3.1.3 Methods and ethical considerations

In the first phase, a gender-aware mainstreaming approach in our work was used to elicit the views of migrant women through biographical-style interviews (and with subsequent comparison to others through a wider survey of residents, see below). In line with Martinello (2013, p.16) this is important as “having neglected or totally ignored women in the migration process....(and)....after having moved to the other extreme by focusing exclusively on women, migration and post-migration studies should move more systematically towards a gender mainstreaming approach by systemically paying attention to the potential relevance of female-male comparisons”.

In turn, we used a placed-based approach stressing migrant emplacement within (and beyond) our selected case study neighbourhoods. Diversity sampling was the preferred approach to recruit 20 migrant women in each neighbourhood (n=61 interviews in total; Germany 21; Sweden 20; UK 20). This type of sampling helps to overcome methodological “groupism” and nationalism often associated with migration studies (Elgenius et al., 2022). In the context of a focus on our ‘superdiverse’ case study neighbourhoods, we aimed at a diversity sample (Phillimore, 2015) with interviewees being of different ages and countries of origin (Goodson and Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2017). With reference to the migrant women interviewees, the focus was on those with ‘secure immigration status’ - defined as being a citizen, a recognized refugee or having exceptional or indefinite leave to remain (Balaam 2017, p.2). As a purposive form of sampling, individuals were to be strategically recruited. However, generating a diversity sample in practice was more challenging, and especially in Germany where researchers were not necessarily proficient in all of the languages spoken in the neighbourhood. Thus, whilst a reasonably diverse sample of residents was secured across all three case study areas, there were limitations to the approach in terms of what could be achieved given the frames of the relatively modest project budgets.

The Swedish sample comprised 20 female residents, the majority of which were first generation migrants aged between 20 and 57 and originating from 12 different countries. The largest numbers were from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Sweden, Somalia, Syria, and Turkey but with others also from Argentina, Gambia, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, and the former Soviet Union. They had been in Sweden for between four years and 31 years and in the neighbourhood for between one year and 28 years. The sample included women who were single (5), cohabiting (1), married (8), divorced (5) or preferred not to say (1). The majority (17/20 of respondents) were tenants with “first-hand contracts”, followed by those who rented from tenants (2) or who had their own apartment (1). 13 women who were interviewed were employed; one was self-employed; one held an internship; four were students and one was retired. Most participants worked in the healthcare profession as caretakers, doulas, personal assistants, nursery and/or recreational assistants, or in the education sector as teachers or substitute teachers.

The German sample comprised 21 female residents in total and with the majority also being first generation migrants. Interviewees aged from 26-77 years and originated from seven different countries representing the largest local communities in the neighbourhood: Somalia, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Tajikistan, Russia and Ukraine. One German without a migration history and who had lived in the area for 21 years was also interviewed. They had been in Sweden for between five years and 23 years and in the neighbourhood for between seven months and 22 years. The sample included two single women (one of whom was married by Afghan customary law), 14 married women, one divorced, two widowed and two women of unknown marital status. Everybody in the sample was a tenant. Most were unemployed: four were pensioners, seven were housewives and one was a trainee. Six participants were employed (1 housekeeping, 1 elderly care, 1 childcare, 1 social science, 1 domestic care, 1 unknown); three individuals chose not to disclose their employment status.

The UK sample comprised 20 female residents and similar to the Swedish and Germany case studies, the vast majority, with the exception of two individuals, were first generation migrants born overseas. Interviewees were aged between 33 and 57 and originated from 14 different countries representing the largest communities in the area: Pakistan, India, Kurdistan, Somalia, Eritrea, Poland, Latvia, Afghanistan, Turkey, Yemen, Ivory Coast, Albania, China and USA. They had been in the UK for between two years and 19 years and in the neighbourhood for between one month and 16 years. The sample included 12 married women, three divorced, one single and one separated woman. Three women chose not to disclose their marital status. The majority of participants were housed in private rented accommodation: of those that disclosed their housing status, 12 were in private rented accommodation, a further three owned their own properties, one rented from the council, another rented from a social landlord and one had house sharing arrangements. Most were unemployed (12); however, five worked full time in civil engineering, health care and welfare advice, one participant owned their own business (in Sales and worked part time) and two participants were full time students.

The intention of the interviews was threefold. First, to give CRs the opportunity to apply the topic guide and gain experience of interviewing. Second, to explore in more detail reasons for, and experiences of, migrant women who had moved into each of our case study neighbourhoods. In particular, the emphasis was on examining their experiences of finding housing/accommodation and experiences of accommodation support; their relations with others; issues of relevance to accessing services; their involvement with neighbourhood organisations and their participation (or not) in decision-making processes of relevance to the neighbourhood. Third, our intention was to identify topics / issues to be explored further through the project's digital survey.

The interview schedules were co-designed with the CRs, project partners and Research Assistants (RAs) in order for interviews to be conducted by the CRs with support from the Research Assistants (RAs) employed on the project in each country, and Primary Investigators. The interview guides were translated into a number of key languages where needed and by the CRs to make sure interviews were conducted with respondents who did not speak English, German or Swedish. Subsequently, interviews were transcribed and translated - as required - in each country and checked for consistency. Eventually all of the interview transcriptions were translated into English via a suitable software package licenced by the German team.

Additionally, summaries of the interviews were prepared, which also included socio-demographic information about the interviewees. In total, the interviews lasted between 25 minutes and two hours.

The findings from the migrant interviews were coded and analysed by the research project team through NVivo and a common set of codes - reflective of the interviewees in each of our three case study neighbourhoods - were developed to highlight dominant themes / strands of experience in relation to housing, integration and empowerment issues. However, it must be acknowledged that given the emphasis on empowering CRs to take forward the interviewing process in order to capture the lived experiences of migrant women, some variation emerged in respect of local responses to the interview schedule. This meant that it was not possible to generate comparative findings on every topic covered by the interview schedule.

The information that emerged from the interviews subsequently shaped the digital questionnaire survey. A 'whole neighbourhood' and location-specific approach was adopted to survey c.100 residents in each case study area and which reflected the diversity of each neighbourhood (migrants and non-migrants, males and females etc). In practice, this meant that there were small variations between each country in terms of the exact questioning and questions (and potential responses) set out in each questionnaire (for example, questions around ethnicity). Additionally, this also meant that some questions relating to housing, neighbourhood or engagement were not directly relevant / comparable with those used in other international studies.

The survey was carried out through the application of Digital Participatory Spatial Analysis (DiPS). DiPS is an innovative methodological tool which adopts a place-based approach and which is used to promote dialogue and participation in policy-making processes. DiPS surveys gain their effect by being relatively short and easy to answer and given that they can be run through a variety of participatory research methods - virtual and otherwise. The intention is to involve those subject to structural disadvantage and / or different practices of discrimination in decision-making processes. In many instances, broader topics (such as housing, neighbourhood integration or engagement / empowerment) are split into single DiPS-modules and where one module is one single survey. However, given constraints over resources and time, in this instance we combined such modules into one single survey (focused on 'housing', 'neighbourhood' and 'engagement') in each neighbourhood. The survey was based on a 'structure table' which took each theme and then highlighted key issues to be probed through the survey, as follows:

- Neighbourhood decision-making
- Residential decision-making and experiences of current accommodation
- Experiences of living in the neighbourhood and access to services
- Involvement with neighbourhood organisations
- Participation / engagement in decision-making for neighbourhood
- Relations / support from others

The questionnaire (in English) was subsequently translated into eight different languages with help of the CRs and reflected the predominant languages spoken in each of our case studies (*Bergsjön*: Swedish, Somali, Farsi, Arabic; *Uni-Center/Hustadt*: German, Russian, Arabic, Somali and *Smethwick*: Polish, Romanian, Somali, Farsi, Arabic). Thus, the questionnaire was translated into those languages identified as particularly relevant by CRs and stakeholders. Each of the translated questionnaires was also checked for consistency by CRs proficient in such languages. Subsequent translation of responses back into English was facilitated by the use of appropriate software.

Time-space / time-location sampling coupled with snowball sampling was adopted as the preferred sampling framework in each case study area. The approach involves the use of well-known recruitment areas (for example in front of buildings, work, shops, parks, outside schools etc.) where specific participants can be accessed and reflecting where certain groups / individuals gather at certain times of the day / week / month or year. It is therefore a useful sampling approach if the target population (migrants and non-migrants) congregates in such a way. Hence - and in conjunction with our CRs - we identified a list of sites / locations of relevance in each neighbourhood and which were sampled at different times of the day / week / month.

In total, 177 responses were received from Sweden, 117 responses from the UK and 102 responses from Germany (n= 396). The survey explored a number of similar issues to the migrant interviews, including decision-making in relation to moving into the case study neighbourhoods and finding accommodation; experiences of living in the neighbourhood and access to services; involvement with neighbourhood organisations; participation / engagement in decision-making for the neighbourhood and relations with / support from others. All the variables were split by gender given that it was a key focus of the EMPOWER project. Country of birth and income were also used to interrogate the data and to differentiate responses. In turn - and in a similar vein to the interviews with migrant women - the project lead in conjunction with the country leads, NGO partners and CRs/RAs subsequently analysed the data.

Overall, around 60% of the respondents to the survey were female and about 40% were male, although in the UK there were slightly higher numbers of males (53%) compared to females (47%). Respondents were aged between 18 and 90 and just over half of those who participated had a net income below the relative poverty line for their specific country of residence (defined as 60% of net median income before housing costs). Germany had the highest proportion of individuals (who participated in the survey) below the poverty line; conversely, the Swedish case study neighbourhoods had the highest proportion of individuals with incomes exceeding net median income. More people were also in employment in Sweden and the UK compared to Germany and around 10-15% of respondents in all of our case study neighbourhoods were seeking work. Respondents had varied educational backgrounds: around 25% had a degree qualification and a further 25% held a University-entrance qualification. A separate report is available highlighting the DiPS approach in more detail, as well as the findings which emerged from the survey ("*Online Survey on housing conditions in super-diverse neighbourhoods*"; Hochschule für Gesundheit Bochum, 2023).

Furthermore, a number of key stakeholders involved with migrant housing / integration and broader aspects of neighbourhood planning were also interviewed by the Primary investigators in each country (n = 35 in total; UK 12, Germany 12 and Sweden 11). Such stakeholders included officials from local city

administrations (local authorities), local and regional politicians, migrant support organisations, other voluntary and community sector (VCS) representatives, housing organisations and local tenant associations and resident groups. The interview questions focused on challenges of providing accommodation (for migrants and others); issues of neighbourhood integration/segregation and migrant engagement and consultation processes, as well as barriers and opportunities of relevance to migrant empowerment in housing and urban planning activities. In a similar vein to the migrant interviews, the interview material was subsequently analysed and coded via NVivo - with a common code book produced - and with all interviews translated into English via DeepL.

The sample of stakeholders in Sweden included 11 local actors that represented different civil society organisations (CSOs - for the advancement of community cohesion, tenants' rights and housing association, and women's' health) (3), Gothenburg City Authority (1), Office for Municipal Work around Safety and Security (1), law enforcement (1), housing companies (2), housing consortium for stakeholders (1), the educational sector (1), and the health sector (1).

The sample of stakeholders in Germany included 12 local actors representing different organisations connected to the topic of migrant housing and migrant integration. These included a Bureau for the Elderly (1), Bochum City Council (1), Communal Integration Centre of the City of Bochum (2), a regional Member of Parliament (1), Head of a local political party (1), housing companies (2), a migrant association (1), a tenants' rights organisation (1), and local resident groups (2).

The UK sample of stakeholders in the UK included 12 local actors of relevance to the focus on housing, integration and empowerment. These included representatives from Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council involved in housing, neighbourhood services and migrant support (6), community associations (2), a migrant support organisation (1), a local councillor (1), a voluntary sector organisation (1) and a representative from the health sector (1).

In Sweden and the UK two separate ethics reviews were prepared and which set out particular protocols that were subsequently followed. In this respect, interviewees and survey participants were fully briefed on the purposes of each research study and were required to complete and sign a consent form indicating their willingness to participate and which authorised anonymised pieces of information and quotations to be reported. Participants were also given assurances about the confidentiality of responses, how their responses would be used and who to contact if they had any further queries.

For the interviews with migrant women and with wider stakeholders, the information sheet and consent forms were provided in a range of different languages (see above) and used by CRs (migrant interviews) and the primary investigators (stakeholder interviews) to provide some initial information about the project, to explain the topic guide and content, to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of taking part in the interview, and to set out data management protocols, as well as the arrangements if individuals wished to withdraw their contributions.

In respect of the wider resident survey, an information sheet and consent form - again in different languages reflective of those spoken in each case study area - were embedded at the start of the survey form and which had to be completed before individuals were able to proceed to the survey questions. The information sheet

provided details on the rationale for the survey, participant selection and issues relating to data use, data management and data analysis, as well as how individuals could cease their participation (by not completing / submitting the survey).

Finally, in each country, a number of Policy Cafes (6 In total; Germany 2; Sweden 2; UK 2) were also held with i) residents and CRs; and ii) key stakeholders involved in housing, migrant integration and neighbourhood/urban planning processes. The intention of such events was to provide the opportunity for local residents and stakeholders to have their say on the research findings. They were also used to bring the thoughts of local residents and service providers together and to suggest different policy recommendations. Furthermore, the overall intention of holding the policy cafes was to empower CRs and citizens to work with those involved with housing, integration and planning to develop a forward-looking strategy for future migrant engagement in planning processes and accommodation provision in different cities, including short, medium and long term 'healthy' gender-aware housing solutions, as well as the location of such housing in order to avoid socio-spatial segregation.

Chapter 4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 sets out the research findings which emerged from the resident and stakeholder interviews - as well as the EMPOWER resident survey in our case study neighbourhoods. To frame the results, we draw upon Ndofor-Tah et al.'s (2019) 'Indicators of Integration' framework to organise the research findings from the EMPOWER project around a series of desired outcomes for migrant integration and empowerment. In this respect, housing (as a marker and mean of integration), as well as different social connections and facilitators (such as culture, safety and stability) are highlighted as being of particular importance to shaping the delivery of such outcomes, as well as the influence of place / neighbourhood context.

4.2 Outcomes for migrant integration and empowerment

4.2.1 Outcome 1: Suitable housing for all

With reference to the first outcome - suitable housing for all - the emphasis was on assessing residential decision-making and experiences of settlement and how this was shaped by issues such as perceived / actual discrimination in local housing markets, challenges of overcrowding, high levels of population turnover, the availability and affordability of property and the nature of tenancy agreements. Such issues are fundamental to address given the importance of housing in shaping integration (see Bosswick et al., 2007; Rohde, 2009).

4.2.1.1 Addressing discrimination

In Germany migrant interviewees highlighted key reasons for living in the Hustadt / Uni Center neighbourhood related to the relatively cheap rental accommodation and the size of flats available, and which compared favourably to the rest of the city. This was also evident in respect of the results from the resident survey, with 65% of respondents (101) in Germany noting how the cost of housing was a significant or very influential factor in shaping decisions to locate to these neighbourhoods. But crucially, they also felt excluded from other neighbourhoods due to issues of affordability connected to their low incomes and due to perceived discrimination in the local housing market. In the words of one interviewee: “... *Germans live in nice houses and quiet streets.....the rent is made (emphasis added) extra expensive in other neighbourhoods in order for us not to move there*” (Germany Resident 4, Country of origin Somalia, 9 years in the area). A similar perspective was highlighted in the resident survey as 30% of respondents stated that they had experienced significant or very significant discrimination when finding their accommodation. A number of stakeholders also argued that private sector landlords discriminated against individuals with a migrant background on the basis of perceived cultural traits: “.....*a few landlords I talk to.....they say 'I don't rent to foreigners.....they have different habits....they all go to bed late; the whole hallway stinks (when they cook) and the children are really loud'*” (Germany Stakeholder 2, member of Regional Parliament, North-Rhine-Westphalia). Discrimination in respect of the selection of tenants was

also based on perceived poverty and language barriers (see Rohde, 2009). Coupled to this, challenges for migrants who are dependent on welfare benefits to move elsewhere were compounded by the fact that such payments were deemed to be insufficient to cover higher rents in other neighbourhoods. In addition, social landlords are also unable to afford the higher rental costs associated with securing other properties elsewhere. Hence - sometimes deliberately and sometimes inadvertently - the way in which the German housing market operates locks migrants into poverty segregated conditions. This all leads to a sense that “*migrants are set in concrete in their poverty and immobility*” (Germany Stakeholder 2, member of Regional Parliament, North-Rhine-Westphalia). Indeed, almost 50% of survey respondents born abroad in the Hustadt / Uni Center neighbourhood highlighted how they had no choice to move to their current neighbourhood.

At the local level in Germany, migrant interviewees residing in the Hustadt neighbourhood were more positive about their accommodation than those in the Uni Center area due to the condition of their accommodation. As such, much of the property in Hustadt is owned by a local housing cooperation, and which was argued to be relatively well maintained in comparison to privately owned real estate (high-rise) accommodation in the Uni Center. The latter was identified as being poorly maintained, lacking cleanliness (mould and damp being commonplace) and overflowing with garbage. This, it was suggested, was a consequence of ‘outsiders’ dumping their excess garbage in the neighbourhood. Property in Uni Center was additionally deemed to be more crowded as a result of private landlords renting cellars / ground floor basements separately; thus such storage space was deemed to be unaffordable, unsafe and prone to theft. Consequently, this meant that households had to store items such as bicycles on their balconies. Results from the resident survey confirmed such problems in relation to the condition of property and local stakeholders also argued that the poor housing conditions in Uni Center, such as broken heating and water pipes and defective lifts and doors were a health and safety risk.

Further challenges highlighted by interviewees renting from private landlords / real estate companies in Germany related to being asked for additional payments for heating, and which they perceived was an additional layer of discrimination given that they argued that this was not demanded from non-migrant German nationals. Indeed, fears of being reported to the German ‘Schufa’ (a credit investigation company) for non-payment of heating bills - and which could subsequently restrict access to bank or mobile phone accounts - was frequently identified. Discrimination in respect of access to accommodation was also highlighted as having an ethnic and gender dimension and cutting across private and social housing landlords. For example, some residents in Hustadt who participated in the research argued that they were only offered apartments from the local housing co-operative that “*nobody else wants*” (Germany Resident 18, origin country Afghanistan). Similarly, in Uni Center individuals in both privately owned buildings and buildings owned by stock indexed companies noted how they were being exploited by the private sector landlord in terms of additional (years-long) heating payment contracts, and which they paid out of fear of being deported or reported to the German ‘Schufa’. It was claimed that even if they paid off one contract, the next one was imposed on them almost immediately. Such findings are therefore consistent with those presented by El-Maffalani and Kurtenbach (2014) and Hanhorster and Lobato (2021) in respect of restrictions on access to good quality affordable housing, but with an interesting new insight on how such issues can be exacerbated through the actions of credit companies and more distant real estate companies.

Consequently, in Germany the overall feeling from the resident interviewees - and confirmed in survey responses and stakeholder interviews - was one of fear, powerlessness and shame when dealing with private landlords and real estate companies. Language barriers and the lack of familiarity with the local letting system and a fear of deportation also meant interviewees did not - in general - challenge perceived and actual experiences of discrimination: *“they hate the mail.....because most of the time it is...always work...filling out an application, (services) getting cut (by the real estate company) or whatever”* (Germany Stakeholder 2, member of Regional Parliament, North-Rhine-Westphalia). In turn, the constant challenge of making ends meet in order to remain in their current accommodation impinged on wider efforts to integrate in other aspects of society. As such, simply retaining the ability to remain insitu was a real effort - and over and beyond what has been reported in the literature in terms of attempts to secure alternative accommodation (see Hanhorster and Lobato, 2021).

4.2.1.2 Challenges of overcrowding, sub-letting and population turnover

With reference to the Swedish neighbourhood of Bergsjön, there is a predominance of rented apartments in the neighbourhood. 83 percent of all housing are rented accommodation (Göteborgs Stadsledningskontor, 2022), and about 40 percent of apartments are owned by municipal housing companies. The city council is therefore able to allocate accommodation to individuals although the proportion of allocated accommodation is relatively small. Those who responded to the resident survey also stated that they had a choice when moving to Bergsjön: as many as 63 per cent of respondents indicated that they had some sort of choice, which contrasts to findings in Germany. Residents in Sweden typically highlighted that they had moved to Bergsjön due to the availability of accommodation, the lower rents, or due to the fact that they had been allocated a flat by the city council - for instance, as refugees. Around 30 percent of survey respondents noted that the availability of housing was a motivation for moving to Bergsjön and a similar proportion stated that the lower cost of housing was important. Similarly, proximity to family and friends was also given as a reason (32 percent of respondents) as was the size of available apartments (25 percent of respondents) and the green areas surrounding Bergsjön (23 percent). Thus the reasons are similar to those reported for our German case study neighbourhoods.

Around 15 percent of households in Bergsjön consist of five people or more (compared to a figure of 6 per cent for the City of Gothenburg), which means that overcrowding is a key challenge, especially for the so called “foreign-born”, young adults and households with comparatively low income to the city average (Boverket, 2020). Incomes in Bergsjön are on average 60 percent of the average for the City of Gothenburg. Income levels for women are even lower and under the relative poverty line. Hence local stakeholders such as local civil society organisations, tenant associations and those involved in promoting community relations also drew attention to overcrowding as a key challenge and with such issues being especially pronounced for those on low incomes. In addition, most of the female residents who were interviewed and participated in the survey live in rented apartments. The residents and survey respondents stressed the importance and safety of having first-hand contracts in their own names to avoid exploitation through sub-letting processes. This was referred to as a problem by residents and stakeholders alike and extends Rohde’s (2009) arguments on the impacts of mortgage lending practices of institutions in shaping discriminatory housing practices.

The high turn-over of residents was also identified as a challenge. In this respect, the survey results pointed towards issues of transiency and around 46 per cent of the 177 respondents had lived in the neighbourhood for less than 10 years. However, one intervention in Bergsjön has focused on the construction of new detached and semi-detached housing in the neighbourhood to encourage settlement and retention of residents, as well as encouraging others to move in and contribute to housing-led regeneration. The financialization of such construction (and renovation) was nevertheless criticised as a key method being used by absentee private landlords to maximise profit through increasing rents to tenants. This is less recognised as an issue in the existing literature. Additionally, local stakeholders pointed out that building new property in Bergsjön was - on average - more expensive than elsewhere in Gothenburg given challenges of raising funds as a consequence of the territorial reputation of the neighbourhood (Sweden Stakeholder 1, Housing Consortium of Stakeholders). Thus, a challenge is to develop and renovate property in a way which meets the needs of residents and which is affordable.

Residents in Bergsjön also highlighted the poor quality of housing conditions and the need for renovations and repairs. Survey results indicate that nearly a third of respondents had reported a problem with their existing accommodation and that the three biggest problems were rubbish, rats and the conditions of the accommodation. The lack of response from landlords or housing companies was also commented upon: *“They (the housing companies) do not seem to care.”* (Sweden Resident 21, country of origin Nigeria, 5 years in the area). Similarly, ongoing concerns about rent increases were also articulated: *“They (the landlords) raise the rent all the time, we are afraid that we will not be able to pay the rent and that they will throw us out. That is what the people who live in Bergsjön are afraid of”* (Sweden Resident 16, country of origin Somalia, 13 years in the area). Furthermore, being discriminated against in respect of access to accommodation was also reported by around one-fifth of survey respondents.

4.2.1.3 Improving choice: the affordability and availability of property, better regulation and security of tenure

In the UK, survey results identified how residents had lived in the Smethwick neighbourhood for a shorter period of time in comparison to the German and Swedish neighbourhoods. Furthermore, in contrast to Germany and Sweden, in the UK most survey respondents lived in houses rather than flats or apartments, and renting was less prevalent (59% of respondents rented compared to 75% in Sweden and 100% in Germany). Having said this, female residents in Smethwick recognised the area had a mixed portfolio of housing - ranging from accommodation in flats (often occupied by singles) to more sizable family orientated properties provided through the private rented sector.

Reasons to move into Smethwick were consistent with Germany and Sweden and included the affordability of renting: private rented tenancies were reported to be relatively cheap compared to less affordable nearby (and more affluent) neighbourhoods such as Bearwood, Edgbaston and Harborne. Stakeholders also drew a distinction between newcomers who moved in due to connections with family and friends (and which acted as key ‘pull’ factors providing a social anchor) and others who were motivated by access to the wider labour market, education and religious infrastructure, as well as the availability of larger family sized housing: *“They're close to their relatives....(also) new migrants come into this area for a number of*

reasons.....they would like to live closer to school, closer to places of worship and things like that” (UK Stakeholder 7, Local councillor).

As per Germany and Sweden, partners and wider family and friend networks were also important in shaping female residents’ housing decisions and neighbourhood choice. Husbands, sons, brothers and in-laws were often involved in decision-making processes. Housing and neighbourhood choice were often directly influenced by the desire to be close to family members following a life changing event such as marriage, divorce or death of a family member. In contrast to the Swedish findings, female residents in Smethwick cohabiting with family members spoke of how they often had little involvement in housing decision making processes: *“Always my son and his wife make a final decision about everything especially about the area if we want to choose for living in because of their children and they want to put their children in better school and better house”* (UK Resident 7, Country of origin Albania, 16 years in the area). For some women, having strong family connections in Smethwick was also instrumental in being able to escape domestic violence: *“I came here to be safe after my relationship breakdown with my husband....I couldn’t stay in Birmingham in my own house... so I chose to move to Smethwick to be close to my brother who could take care of me and my children”* (UK Resident 12, Country of origin Pakistan, 4 years in the area).

In relation to exploitation and discrimination, female residents of Smethwick referred to ‘rent exploitation’ by private landlords charging over the odds for substandard accommodation (again, see Rohde, 2009 for similar arguments). Stakeholders similarly referred to variability in private landlord standards: *“they come in all different shapes and sizes ...some are absolutely excellent, some fairly average and some frankly probably not fit to be landlords”* (UK Stakeholder 3, Housing representative, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council). Racial discrimination from private landlords, believed to be on the grounds of skin colour and ethnic background, was also reported by some female residents in Smethwick. Indeed, they spoke of how such practices limited the pool of private sector tenancies available to them. This has parallels with the situation in Germany. The shrinkage of social housing in the UK over time was additionally acknowledged to have limited housing options in the area and most interviewees had low expectations in securing a council tenancy. Hence those accommodated in council housing aspired to a transfer into a more spacious council house, preferably nearby. Whilst all female interviewees wished to become owner occupiers, affordability and mortgage availability were key barriers to purchasing a property, confirming El-Mafaalani and Stroheimer’s (2015) arguments. Those who had managed to purchase their own property had done so on the basis that it could accommodate the whole family.

Indeed, council housing advisors in Smethwick understood that council housing was considered a more secure form of tenancy, compared to the private rented sector, where notice to vacate the premises can be enacted at any point. Access to property maintenance was also considered to be more reliable. Notwithstanding such a perspective, they spoke of how they actively encouraged council applicants to look to the private sector where there was a greater tenancy turnover and pool of properties. In this respect, whilst private tenancies were perceived to be more precarious than renting via a social landlord, most migrant women interviewees opted to rent privately because they felt that this may eventually lead to them securing a ‘nicer’ and larger energy efficient house in a good state of repair, and in proximity to local schools, culturally diverse services and places of worship. Such issues warrant further attention in future research.

Whilst the general terms and conditions of tenancy agreements were not raised by migrant women *per se*, many did complain that the current property that they rented from private landlords was in a poor condition and with property maintenance being sporadic at best. Hence - and as was the case elsewhere - migrant women were more likely to try and resolve any problems with their accommodation themselves, and also through the support of family and friends (before sending the landlord the bill): *“I am just not satisfied as we must wait for so long until they will come and fix things and sort out the problems”* (UK Resident 7, Country of origin Albania, 16 years in the area). This meant that their relations with landlords were often strained - but not for all - and indeed on average survey data revealed how fewer problems were reported with property in the UK. Council tenants also raised issues about extensive waits for repairs and council housing stakeholders were keen to see relationships with private landlords improve in order to open up wider housing choices. Free housing insurance to incentivise private landlords to offer accommodation through a ‘Housing Choice System’ was cited by stakeholders as one initiative that had been helpful in this respect.

As in Sweden and Germany, problems of rubbish, lack of space and rent inflation were additional factors impacting satisfaction with housing. Similarly, stakeholders also pinpointed overcrowding as *“key to the top-level housing crisis in Smethwick”*, despite substantial expansion of the private rented sector in recent years: *“In terms of the housing market, all the tenures have changed in Smethwick over the last 20 years. So across Sandwell as a whole we’ve had a massive growth in the private renting sector and I think it is probably fair to say that has been none more so than in the Smethwick town area”* (UK Stakeholder 3, Housing representative, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).

To conclude, there are some clear parallels between all three neighbourhoods in respect of problems with the condition of property and poor responses from local housing landlords - including experiences of discrimination and insecure tenancies. Overcrowding also stands out as an issue which impinged on housing conditions: the size of available and affordable accommodation, intra-generational living and insufficient economic resources were real concerns for migrant interviewees in that they felt unable to provide meaningful spaces for homework and recreational activities. From a gender perspective, it was evident that some migrant women had moved into the case study areas to avoid violence elsewhere but some respondents claimed that the intersectionality of gender and race was leading to rent exploitation and access to property. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents in all three areas indicated that they wanted to stay in their respective cities and with interviewees in Smethwick and Bergsjön not having any real plans to move out of the local neighbourhood (which contrasts with Germany). Indeed, in Smethwick, women identified that the price-performance ratio was better in Smethwick compared to where they previously lived and that despite some failings, the size of their private rented accommodation was generally larger and better located in relation to schools and public services than hitherto.

4.2.2 Outcome 2: Trust and Reciprocity

The second outcome focuses on the importance of trust, reciprocity and the nature of networks and relations between individuals with similar or different backgrounds for integration and empowerment. This includes

analysing the types of support that individuals may receive from others ‘similar’ or ‘different’ to themselves. A consideration is additionally required of the relative importance of enablers / barriers to building social connections between different groups, such as shared meeting spaces / places.

4.2.2.1 Developing a culture of solidarity and generating positive relations in shared community spaces

In Germany, resident interviewees generally highlighted a culture of solidarity in the case study neighbourhoods and which enabled newly arrived individuals or those with language barriers to access informal support to help negotiate formal government institutions, to find jobs and to access education. It was claimed that conviviality was evident within and between different groups (see Wessendorf, 2014), especially in the Hustadt neighbourhood. Such assertions are supported with reference to the resident survey where out of 97 respondents, almost 40% said it was possible to get help from their neighbours and 35% said it was ‘easy’. Indeed, given the superdiversity of each neighbourhood, individuals noted how they had developed formal and informal networks with others who were ‘different from themselves’ (see Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018 for similar arguments), and with survey respondents reporting that they had made contact with people who were different in relation to age (68% of respondents), gender (58%), linguistic background (70%) and national origin (60%), although the figures fall in respect of individuals of a different religion (48%) and sexual orientation (31% - this may be due to this issue being deemed a private matter). However, some of the interview material highlighted how the development of such networks was not uniform across all groups, although this requires further qualification.

Both formal and informal activities were identified as contributing to the culture of solidarity and conviviality in Hustadt and Uni Center. In respect of formal activities, CSOs and local community groups were deemed to be very responsive to the needs of local people: “*we organise together with the associations...with the schools*” (Germany Resident 10, country of origin Syria, 23 years in the country). They were also noted as offering a space for people to meet others with different backgrounds and with a number of respondents to the resident survey noting how such organisations helped them to learn more about other people in their community and to extend their social connections (16 out of 26 respondents).

Nevertheless, informal activities - such as organising and celebrating religious festivals, celebrating weddings etc. - were seen as being of considerable importance in supporting conviviality and reciprocity within and between different groups in each neighbourhood. Indeed, the Hustadt and the Uni Center were frequently referred to as a ‘global village’ and informal cross-ethnic engagement was deemed to be the key support structure for newly arriving migrants and refugees: “*They said that they didn’t have anyone except us who could help (during the long summer of migration in Germany in 2015)*” (Germany Resident 18, country of origin Afghanistan). Importantly, both stakeholders and migrant interviewees identified how social connections within and between different groups in each neighbourhood had predominantly developed between women rather than between men - as such conviviality and solidarity appeared to be gendered and arguably related to such individuals having the opportunity to meet within different community spaces such as outside the local school and/or in local retailing spaces. This is despite migrant women often receiving less support than men in terms of language training, for example (see Pertek, 2022).

Hence the spatial layout of neighbourhoods can support the development of relations between different groups and individuals. For example, in the Hustadt neighbourhood in Germany it was noted how people regularly met at the central Brunnenplatz (square) whilst in the Uni Center neighbourhood the shopping centre served as a meeting point. However, some interviewees also identified hierarchies between different groups in the Uni Center neighbourhood and together with linguistic barriers, it was claimed that such issues impinged on relations between different groups. Stakeholder interviewees also argued that hierarchies existed in respect of access to housing and other services but primarily related these to the length of residence of individuals in Germany. Thus the so-called “guest worker generation” were said to be “integrated into multiple aspects of society” and in contrast to others more recently arrived. It was noted how a moral economy in arrival neighbourhoods often helped new arrivals secure support from those already settled: “*new immigrants...(may) have some advantages in that certain structures already exist...experiences (can be) passed on*” (Germany Stakeholder 11, Municipal Integration Centre Officer). Interestingly, the resident survey also indirectly pointed to the importance of social support structures as opposed to purely economic factors in shaping relations with others: those who reported higher incomes in all of our case study neighbourhoods did not necessarily have a greater pool of people that they could rely on if they had a serious problem.

In respect of relations with German non-migrants, stakeholders suggested that institutional socio-spatial and residential segregation mechanisms worked against individuals with a migrant background coming into contact with German non-migrants, and shaped - in part - by the territorial reputation of the two neighbourhoods: “*The person from Bochum who is confronted with Hustadt says ‘No, I’m not moving there, because I’m in a minority there’in this respect if there is no interest.....then the Hustadt is filled with other groups of people.....it is a structure that is pretty much cast in stone, in concrete*” (Germany Stakeholder 3, Chief Executive Officer, Housing Co-operative). Similar arguments were presented in relation to the Uni Center neighbourhood where non-migrant Germans were noted as being more likely to move out rather than move in and with the territorial reputation of both areas acting as a further reason to reside in other parts of the city. Consequently, Caglar and Schiller’s (2018) work on ‘emplacement’ strongly resonates with this point - but with the research findings from EMPOWER also highlighting the importance of territorial reputation as a significant constraint on shaping relationships and connections between different individuals.

4.2.2.2 Addressing socio-economic deprivation and moving away from a ‘deficit’ model (of individuals) to facilitate integration

In Bergsjön (Sweden), CSOs and other local community organisations often mixed and shaped relationships between those with similar and different backgrounds, as well as linking individuals to other stakeholders for help with issues such as housing, employment or health. Female residents who were interviewed also typically referred to the conviviality of the neighbourhood and the possibilities for interacting with others of different backgrounds *as well as* people of similar backgrounds. Moreover, many resident interviewees spoke about their positive relations with others in Bergsjön and how they participated across potential boundaries such as age and nationality, as well as how they collaborated on community activities and the help they could expect and rely on from their neighbours. For example, one interviewee described her relationship with a neighbour: “*those from Bosnia are almost like our culture. That’s why I was able to*

contact her. She is a very nice woman; she has two children like me. Sometimes she cooks good food for me and I for her." (Sweden Resident 2, country of origin Iraq, 18 years in the area). Female residents also highlighted the *shared roles and shared experiences* of women from different countries: interviewees referred to the conviviality which emerged from sharing food from different places and across nationalities. Linguistic and religious ties also shaped cross-cutting ethnic ties: *"You feel comfortable (in Bergsjön) as you are living with people from the same culture, and the majority are Arabis or Somalian, I mean the same religion or way of thinking or language"* (Sweden Resident 15, country of origin Syria, 5 years in the area).

Nevertheless, findings from the resident survey in Sweden in relation to cross-cutting ties provided a more mixed picture. Residents were asked if they "regularly met with others different from themselves" and mixed across ages (c.59 per cent of all respondents), national origin (55 percent), linguistic background (51 percent), gender (50 percent), religion (48 percent) and sexual orientation (24 percent). These figures need unpicking in future articles and are lower for those reported for Germany. In this respect, there is a need to investigate further why it appears that a proportion of individuals are not mixing with others of different backgrounds than themselves. Such questions were therefore discussed with CRs and in stakeholder meetings; the response was that participants were possibly more hesitant or unwilling to respond to these questions for a variety of reasons. For example, the wording specifies "regularity" and which may therefore have made responding to this question more difficult. The sampling strategy in Sweden was also focused on reaching out to those in Bergsjön that were more isolated and who may require more assistance in responding to the survey. Moreover, even some interviewees in Sweden expressed prejudice about "others" and claimed that Bergsjön was overcrowded by particular national or religious groups (Sweden Resident 6, country of origin Syria, 29 years in the area). That said, less than ten percent of those who participated in the resident survey stated that racism or community relations were a major problem.

From a stakeholder perspective, many stakeholders in Sweden highlighted that socio-economic deprivation rather than cultural diversity was key to explaining barriers to integration and inclusion: *"(integration barriers) are explained by poverty rather than diversity"* (Sweden Stakeholder 1, Housing consortium). Similarly, a local CSO explained how they wished to encourage intercultural encounters by involving people from Bergsjön in their organisation and focusing less on integration as something to do with ethnic background, and more about improving conditions in the local area (Sweden Stakeholder 2, Civil society representative). Other interviewees involved with the provision of education additionally noted the importance of delivering new and adaptable forms of education and training to enhance integration - regardless of individuals' previous education / language proficiency (Sweden Stakeholder 7, Education provider). All of these points are crucial - they acknowledge the importance of local context and place - and especially the spatial concentration of poverty and deprivation - as being at least as important as migration background in shaping integration and inclusion (see Berg and Sigona, 2013).

Building upon the research of two previous research projects (Elgenius et al., 2022; Elgenius 2023), the importance of local organisations in encouraging participation and the provision of meeting places (outside of overcrowded homes) cannot be underestimated in respect of integration and inclusion between different individuals. Specifically, "mother groups" or "women groups" were highlighted as *"aiding immigrant mothers get access to the (local) community and support system in Sweden"* (Sweden Resident 12, country of origin Kenya, 28 years in the area), whilst spaces for women to meet were identified as key by all

interviewees. Consistent with other research (Elgenius and Phillimore, forthcoming), interviewees in Bergsjön again reiterated the ways in which migrant engagement in local organisations enabled relations to develop for such individuals, and which could help them access resources and meeting places. In this respect stakeholders identified challenges of engagement related to socio-economic deprivation and unemployment, territorial stigmatisation of the neighbourhood, the high turn-over of local populations and a lack of knowledge / language proficiency of individuals in Swedish. This is consistent with the work of Drolet and Texeira (2022) on challenges associated with integration practices in smaller cities. However, a more fundamental point is that the focus by stakeholders remained on resident's perceived "lack of capital" and "lack of knowledge" rather than problematizing communication as a two-way process or looking for potential failures of the system to reach out to residents through various diversity-sensitive strategies. Indeed, residents themselves called for more opportunities for local language training in Swedish and translations of information into other languages, for example.

From a gender perspective, some local stakeholders in Sweden demonstrated an awareness of the need to specifically create meeting places for women and/or to install lights in places where women had reported feeling unsafe to promote cross-cultural mixing. However, resident interviewees and local stakeholders also argued that exclusion of women from opportunities to integrate was structural and that males were significantly more mobile and had greater access to the main public spaces in Bergsjön (such as sports arenas). Yet, it was also mentioned that women could get an education while men worked and that women often had greater support structures than men; the latter was understood as a sign of empowerment rather than an outcome of gender inequality (see Apicella et al. (2021) for a similar discussion).

4.2.2.3 The need for safe meeting spaces

In Smethwick (UK), part of the area has historically been home to vibrant South Asian and Caribbean communities (particularly in relation to the Smethwick, Soho and Victoria wards) and with a number of enduring family networks emerging from 'Windrush' ancestral relations (i.e. people arriving in the UK between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean countries). Incoming families, from successive waves of forced and economic migration, therefore highlighted how they were more comfortable moving into such areas given the ethnic mix, availability of services and relatively affordable private rented housing. On the other hand, the St Pauls and Abbey ward in Smethwick town is characterised by a proportionately larger number of owner occupiers alongside Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and one-bedroom flats that have historically housed single male migrants through National Asylum Support Service (NASS) arrangements with private landlords.

Whilst such networks provided a strong foundation that helped many female residents move into and settle in the area, those of a number of residents who were interviewed tended to be more siloed and with more limited connections across different identity markers that serve to build a sense of belonging and / or sense of community. In addition, relationships with institutions were more 'transactional' and sporadic rather than 'deep' and consistent (see following sections). Female residents in Smethwick also spoke of how some people tended to '*keep themselves to themselves*' and justified such actions in the context of the challenges that increased overcrowding had posed. Over time, the lack of mixing was - for some - explained as having led to both ethnic and racial cleavages. Racial discrimination was reported on different levels and from

different perspectives of inequality. For example, ‘white participants’ mentioned their discrimination experiences with non-white gangs in the neighbourhood whilst Asian and Black participants emphasised the role of ethnicity and colour as a source of discrimination by landlords.

Language and cultural barriers were also cited as challenges to the development of relations between those with different backgrounds and with local institutions. The lack of safe space where mixing and contact on an ‘interest first’ basis with others outside of their ‘own groups’ was also acknowledged as a key challenge by migrant women and stakeholder interviewees. For women with caring responsibilities, especially single mothers, time constraints and the pressures of daily life impacted on engaging in activities outside of the home (the ‘private sphere’), as did a lack of financial independence and subordination: “*Many nationalities are struggling at the moment.....And most of them are single mothers as well with three or four kids....New country. New language. New everything. And they have no idea. So it’s very difficult for them to settle in*” (UK Stakeholder 9, Senior Manager, Community Association). Once again, this is consistent with the work of Pertek (2022).

In addition, interviewees noted that a lack of school places had resulted in some children being out of school for significant periods of time. For some respondents, this acted as a significant barrier to building relations within and between different groups and a lack of trust in local institutions - such as the local council - was also recognised by stakeholders as an issue that prevented female residents from engaging with local services and meeting others. Consequently, more work is required to build trust and overcome some of the barriers preventing some individuals from mixing with others, including a lack of awareness of local support on offer. Once again, it was clear that providing more safe spaces where women feel physically and psychologically comfortable and holding meetings at appropriate times to reduce the fear of moving around the area in the dark and to avoid clashes with school drop off and pick-up times were cited as gender aware interventions that could strengthen social connections and networks in the area. Meeting travel costs for individuals to access such spaces / attend such meetings and providing payments to voluntary and community sector organisations to cover the time involved in organising such meetings were considered essential, as was the provision of childcare to encourage women to attend (and from a range of economic and family backgrounds).

Thus overall whilst the survey results revealed that racism was not generally reported as an issue across all of the case study areas - and that on average respondents could count on the support of others if they had a problem - it was also clear that such support, relations and connections were not uniform for all groups. There was evidence in all of the countries that certain groups and individuals were less likely to meet others. In response, the actions of local voluntary and community sector organisations were noted as being of considerable importance in encouraging integration and inclusion, both in terms of their role in providing safe places for individuals to meet and in respect of getting individuals involved in particular activities; this was deemed to be very important, especially from a gender perspective given that some women may find themselves more isolated. However, generating such engagement was not always straightforward due to challenges associated with childcare; time; language; lack of knowledge about the local area and poverty. More work is thus required from a gender perspective on the relative importance of such issues and the impacts arising.

4.2.3 Outcome 3: Safety, security and belonging

The third outcome is concerned with the factors that make people feel safe in public and private spaces and their respective neighbourhoods, as well as the influences shaping a sense of attachment or belonging to the local area. All are important in contributing to integration and processes of empowerment.

4.2.3.1 Improving security and infrastructure for place attachment and belonging

In both German neighbourhoods, 60 percent of local residents reported feeling safe when walking through the neighbourhood in the day or at night; however some residents disagreed. Whilst no spaces were specifically mentioned in either the interviews or the resident survey to be avoided, stakeholders referred to challenges of crime, vandalism and drug taking in each case study area, and especially in specific locations in the Uni Center: *“there is a drug mafia of residents.....they have tried to get this under control with the police and public order office.....but in the evenings the public order office is not staffed at all and the police do not have enough manpower....”* (Germany Stakeholder 2, local politician, Bochum). However, attempts to respond and improve security by a private sector housing landlord were criticised by local residents as increasing both the fear and perception of crime in each neighbourhood, as well as placing a financial burden on residents through the imposition of an additional cost for the introduction of a ‘security service’: *“(this) is being introduced for the tenants, for the people here in the neighbourhood, and they now have to pay for it as tenants. The rent is going up: For a one/two-person household by 26 euros approximately”* (Germany Stakeholder 9, Social Worker, Uni Center).

Following on, whilst resident interviewees in Germany did not necessarily feel unsafe, there were mixed views on how attached they were to their respective neighbourhoods and the development of a sense of belonging. On the one hand, the culture of solidarity and conviviality between different individuals already referred to - as well as the affordability of housing - were key factors shaping neighbourhood attachment and belonging in Hustadt and Uni Center. In the words of one interviewee: *“Everybody knows everybody here”* (Germany Resident 11, country of origin Syria, 2.5 years in the area). Other residents also noted the importance of festivals, cultural events and informal reciprocity between different individuals in shaping place attachment and a sense of belonging, as individuals were able to benefit from support which helped them to find employment. Stakeholders also pointed out that the fact that individuals - regardless of their background - were frequently experiencing the same challenges of poverty, welfare support, the negative territorial reputation of the neighbourhoods and problematic housing conditions meant that they were “comrades in fate” and which contributed to a sense of belonging (also see Pemberton and Phillimore, 2018). Some residents who responded to the resident survey additionally pointed out that they had been discriminated against in the past in other urban neighbourhoods and which thus contributed to their identification with their current area of residence (see Pemberton, 2022 for similar arguments). Others, nevertheless, suggested that such a sense of belonging was differentiated according to employment status, and with those unemployed less likely to feel positive about living in the area given their reception by others. This is an interesting finding that requires further research as there has been less focus on the importance of employment status - and how this is perceived - in shaping individuals’ sense of belonging.

The negative territorial reputation of each neighbourhood and the poor quality of housing and housing maintenance and local infrastructure also undermined place attachment. Some respondents expressed

worries about the future of their children because of a lack of role models in the neighbourhood but felt stuck due to the challenges of moving as reported earlier. Others expressed concerns that any sense of attachment and belonging could be removed in an instant if they were forced to move once their children had reached working age and their housing support was cut. Hence it is not surprising that the resident survey provides a mixed picture in terms of future moving intentions: about 30% of individuals surveyed wished to move from Hustadt / Uni Center in the next five years, whilst around 35% wished to stay. More specifically, resident interviewees - on average - demonstrated a stronger sense of attachment and belonging to the Hustadt neighbourhood due to local community support structures (for example, two CSOs supporting children and youth and one for youth only), and which were often financed (at least in part) by the state. Such structures were deemed to be important in fostering a sense of belonging within and between individuals with different backgrounds. Improving security in respect of accommodation in the area - according to interviewees - was also noted as a factor which could enhance attachment to the area, along with the introduction of new services / facilities such as a post office and a gym.

4.2.3.2 Addressing territorial stigmatisation and more opportunities for young people

For the residents of Bergsjön in Sweden, two key themes emerged around neighbourhood attachment. On the one hand, individuals pointed out how attachment to the local area had developed and that an identity was being created around resisting the negative image of Bergsjön in public and political discourses, and around addressing inequalities through mobilisation for action (see Elgenius et al., 2022, Elgenius, 2023). Bergsjön's green areas, shops, playgrounds, services as well as its residents were mentioned by interviewees and survey respondents alike as important for creating an attachment to the area. Indeed, the overall rating of the neighbourhood according to survey respondents was “very good and good”. However, on the other hand, interviewees and stakeholders alike expressed deep concerns about the life chances of children and young people growing up in the area.

Consequently, there is a dissonance between such positive and negative experiences, and which are often presented together. For example, a number of female residents and survey respondents expressed pride and love for Bergsjön and said they “wanted to stay” “stay and fight” and described Bergsjön as a “home” and highlighted that “*there really is such a feeling of community in Bergsjön*” (Sweden Resident 3, country of origin Sweden, parents from Bosnia, 8 years in the area). In terms of wanting to stay and leave, as many as two-thirds of respondents in the resident survey said that Bergsjön was a “very good” or a “good” place to live, whilst only around eight percent stated that it was a “bad” or a “very bad” place. Residents mentioned that they liked the different services that were available in the area, the green areas in or around Bergsjön and the opportunity to meet friends and family in various places.

Similar to the German case, residents in the Swedish neighbourhood reported that they felt safe. Results from the resident survey indicated that around nine out of ten individuals who participated felt “safe” or “very safe” during the daytime. However, this figure fell to around six in ten individuals during the evening and night-time and 38 percent of respondents disagreed that they “*felt safe when walking in Bergsjön during the night*”. Interviewees with female residents also highlighted similar feelings: many stated that they avoided going out at night, citing crime and individuals selling drugs as their main worry. Places that they avoided included bus and tram stations and public squares as per the survey maps provided in “places I

avoid". In the survey, as expected, women reported feeling more unsafe than men and both men and women mentioned their concerns about groups of young people and drugs in the area (this is consistent with work by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention which reported that one in three residents of East Gothenburg, which includes Bergsjön, reported being a victim of crime, see BRÅ, 2021). The subject of safety also came up regularly with stakeholders. Depending on their roles, stakeholders emphasised the significance of being visible in the neighbourhood, the need to ensure that streetlights are up and running, the availability of good quality meeting spaces, addressing litter and rubbish, and reducing traffic where people walk, play, and enjoy themselves.

A main theme that emerged from the Swedish material was the concern and worries about children and youth growing up in Bergsjön. Indeed, the concern about children and youth was one of the most salient themes of the interviews with female residents and was reiterated in the open answers of the survey responses. The worries related to existing and experienced inequalities associated with local children's lack of opportunities such as the lack of role models, concerns about the impact of living in overcrowded conditions on their ability to do homework or after-school activities and worries about children being discriminated against in the labour market. As stated by one interviewee: "*it is unfortunate that employers today look where you live and when they see that I live in Bergsjön, then you do not get such a good reaction from other people*" (Sweden Resident 7, Country of origin Syria, 2.5 years in the area). Residents and survey respondents also expressed concerns about "inadequate schooling" and how children in Bergsjön did not get equal opportunities (compared) to "Swedes".

Arguments relating to the lack of opportunities for children and young people growing up in the area and of unequal life chances were articulated together with worries that children may get mixed up in destructive social networks and crime. Requests from participants included more local activities for young people such as homework provision (which exists and was mentioned) but also recreational activities and crime prevention measures. The call for more local activities for the young was suggested as a remedy to mitigate inequality and disadvantage in interviews as well as in survey responses.

Integral to discussions about Bergsjön with residents and local stakeholders, was the area's negative territorial reputation or the "stigmatisation of the area" in the media, and again confirming work in other superdiverse communities of the relevance of territorial stigmatisation on place attachment (Pemberton, 2022). A strong resistance was found by residents and stakeholders alike to claims in public and political discourses about the neighbourhood and was related to the identification of the area as "especially vulnerable" as mentioned above (BRÅ, 2018). Residents and stakeholders would speak about their affection for Bergsjön and the ways in which they resisted how the area was portrayed in local and national media. Such negative coverage was cited by residents and stakeholders as burdensome. One of the more memorable ways to describe the impact of labelling the area as an "especially vulnerable" neighbourhood was as a "heavy backpack" that gets "heavier and heavier" to carry.

In the interview with Swedish stakeholders it was clear that the label "especially vulnerable area" was found to be "overly simplistic", constructed only from the police's point of view and overlooking the many qualities of Bergsjön (Sweden Stakeholder 10, Representative of a Housing Company). The term "especially vulnerable areas" was also raised as a term that could be "misused" or "abused" by locals and

outsiders alike who may have low expectations of the residents. Thus, children and youth are subjected to conditions of stigmatisation as a result of having to view themselves through the lens of others and of living in an area designated as “especially vulnerable”. (Sweden Stakeholder 10, Representative of a Housing Company). Other stakeholders also highlighted that the terminology did not adequately reflect all of the positive aspects of the area. Moreover, the terminology was understood as damaging residents’ trust in each other (Sweden Stakeholder 5, Representing Municipal work around safety). Stakeholders also noted (and consistent with resident interviewees) that it had become more difficult to achieve employment as a resident of an “vulnerable area” (Sweden Stakeholder 8, City of Gothenburg).

4.2.3.3 Temporal concerns over safety

In the UK, safety, security and belonging were discussed more broadly and to a more limited extent. The majority of survey respondents rated the Smethwick neighbourhood as being ‘neutral’ rather than ‘good’ or ‘very good’. The diversity of the area was however seen as a positive characteristic: having the “*whole world in an area*” made residents feel less conspicuous. Whilst Smethwick was considered a relatively safe place to live and described as ‘*safer than my previous area*’, concerns about night-time safety were raised by several respondents. Women spoke of how they tended not to go out at night yet reported feeling safe on the whole in the neighbourhood. Places lacking street lighting and CCTV such as local parks were considered as places to avoid. Youth violence and ethno-racial relations were perceived to be getting worse. “Being white” made some women feel they were more at risk of youth violence. Aside from litter and rubbish complaints, safety concerns were the main issues raised in relation to improving the area and with demands for i) enhancing police presence; ii) better CCTV coverage; iii) prevention work to address youth crime; iv) more safe spaces for local residents to meet; and v) a better understanding of how overcrowding influences perceptions and a fear of crime.

To conclude, when comparing our three case study neighbourhoods there are common themes around residents and especially for women residents generally feeling safe but with concerns expressed around i) being out and about in certain places in the evening (especially in Smethwick and Bergsjön where specific places were highlighted as places “I prefer not to visit”); ii) the territorial stigmatisation of each neighbourhood; and iii) the presence of crime often related to drugs. Concerns around the future well-being and prospects of children and youth growing up in the area also stood out in Bergsjön as well as in Hustadt and Uni Center. In all the neighbourhoods, issues concerned with overcrowding and neighbourhood reputation meant mixed levels of attachment to the respective neighbourhoods.

4.2.4 Outcome 4: Improved access to local infrastructure and services

The fourth outcome examines issues of access to different services, places and spaces in shaping integration and empowerment and how access may vary by gender and other dimensions of difference, including country of origin or immigration status.

4.2.4.1 Support to access local opportunities through gender-aware solutions

In all three countries, the lack of financial resources available to residents was deemed to limit opportunities for access to different local infrastructures and services and in turn impact on integration. Moreover, the

results from the resident survey identified the need to improve local language services in order for individuals to access and find out about local services. Local CSOs in Germany, Sweden and the UK were again identified as offering places where residents could access support from other organisations such as the city council and housing landlords.

A number of stakeholder interviewees in Germany also noted how migrant support structures could help newly arrived migrants to access local facilities / organisations and with longer-established communities passing on their accumulated knowledge. But such support, once again, was not uniform and some migrant women were identified as especially vulnerable. Women's domestic responsibilities were offered as an explanation as to how their opportunities for socialising and meeting others were reduced. Unequal access to employment and education - and associated opportunities for improving language skills - was also mentioned. A local politician therefore suggested that migrant women were in need of more support with accessing day-care centres and educational facilities to help *“support women with their specific problems in their family and cultural environment, I believe that the day-care centres, the schools and the district management are of particular importance.... because the husband or the sons have always organised everything, or the daughters”* (Germany Stakeholder 2, local politician, Bochum). Reaching vulnerable (migrant) women in general was also recognized as an ongoing challenge given cultural and gendered barriers: *“it is not always easy to get an insight into the family, unless the person tells us.... access to courses is not as easy for women as it is for men, because the reason often given is that, yes, the child is at home”* (Germany Stakeholder 10, Migrant Support Officer, Bochum City Council).

Hence it was also suggested by stakeholders in Germany, Sweden and the UK that it was important to reach and include vulnerable residents into various activities and networks offered by CSOs. Stakeholders described how residents would “blossom” and how participation in various networks would improve their self-confidence. The latter was deemed to be crucial to participation and also supported by survey findings.

In Bergsjön, access to accommodation support services highlighted gendered experiences and their impact on enforcing socio-economic vulnerability. Residents and stakeholders mentioned in particular their varied access to housing services, to networks, to education but also as resources and mobilisation. Female and male residents identified how women would often rely on male partners or children to call housing companies to report problems and request assistance. Language barriers and the fear of not being taken seriously were offered as explanations. This is consistent with the work of Hatzidimitriadou and Cakir (2009) who note the challenges of integration for migrant women who are dependents of male migrants and who are often seen as ‘voiceless’ and ‘powerless’ in welfare policy discourse and service planning.

In response, several stakeholders, including those from the city council and housing companies indicated there was a need for gender-aware solutions in respect of improving access to local services (Sweden Stakeholder 1 Housing consortium, Sweden Stakeholders 4, 10, Housing Companies; Sweden Stakeholder 8, City council). One stakeholder pointed out that there had not been enough activities directed towards women in Bergsjön in comparison to some other neighbouring places. However, the general impression was that this situation was changing and that CSOs were increasingly focusing on reaching female residents (Sweden Stakeholder 3, Housing tenants association). Such a perspective correlates with the findings of

Saskena and McMorrow (2020) and the importance of harnessing and utilising social support measures from within migrant and refugee communities.

4.2.4.2 Facilitating local mobilisation and access to language support

In practice, some initiatives that were mentioned as being successful in reaching female residents appeared (to a degree) to be dependent upon the individual initiatives of individual actors within stakeholder organisations, their commitment and knowledge about the neighbourhoods in which they were working and their attempts to find new ways of reaching those ‘hard to reach’ (see Escalante and Valdivia, 2015). Some local collaborations between residents and local stakeholders were apparent and had mobilised around education and women and children. One stakeholder provided an example of how women themselves had mobilised around their interests and needs locally and with such mobilisation leading to the formation of a local organisation that was now providing support that would otherwise be lacking (Sweden Stakeholder 2, CSO advancement of community relations) Another stakeholder also highlighted female residents’ agency and emphasised how important mothers’ were in helping community officers address youth issues (Sweden Stakeholder 6, Law enforcement).

Gendered practices and unequal access to services such as health and education were also mentioned with reference to female residents in Sweden. Female survey respondents and interviewees reported that they found it hard to access information about local services and required posters in different languages and information on the provision of health support at suitable locations to help them find out about meetings etc. A representative from the local health centre also noted how female residents were not always able to communicate their medical problems due to language barriers. A lack of trust and having to speak to a doctor via an interpreter were thus mentioned as barriers to good health (Sweden Stakeholder 11, health sector). Consequently, the importance of providing local language training coupled with making information available in different languages was requested by female residents and survey respondents: this is also reported in Meeus et al’s (2020) work on the importance of language classes within migrant arrival infrastructures. Another stakeholder emphasised that female residents were also limited in access to services on the basis of traditional gender norms and expectations from their families. One stakeholder recalled how a woman had studied to become a nursing assistant because “they”, her family, were “letting her” study (Sweden Stakeholders 10, Housing Company). Thus female residents were described in many different ways: as “strong and independent” but also “constrained by their cultural background or their families” despite their desire to live “normal lives” (Sweden Stakeholder 6, Law enforcement). As such, this finding identifies how the family unit itself may act as a structural barrier to entering the labour market and thus provides a new insight beyond those barriers noted by Fernandes (2015) as of relevance for empowerment.

4.2.4.3 Superdiverse support structures for enhanced access

With reference to Smethwick, given concerns by female residents on moving around the neighbourhood after dark, this impinged on their ability to engage with activities being provided by public and voluntary and community sector service providers. In turn, this had implications for building relationships with others from different backgrounds. However, relations with other family members and friends within ‘the home’ (private domain) - for example, through family meetings, events and religious celebrations - were deemed

to be less problematic. Nevertheless, opportunities for women to build relationships with those outside of their 'own group' and with organisations that could assist with their integration via the development of activities and networks that usually took place in community spaces (public domain) were impacted by safety concerns and often led to the practice of "keeping yourself to yourself". For some women the fear of crime had less of an impact on their daily lives but for others safety concerns constrained their use of the neighbourhood at certain times of day, thereby highlighting the temporal aspects of integration and extending Pertek's (2022) recent work on challenges of integration for migrant women.

Whilst stakeholders discussed issues of overcrowding in relation to pressures on local services (and especially housing and schools), interviewees noted how overcrowding raised safety concerns linked to increased population diversity, and which reinforced notions of "keeping yourself to yourself". Stakeholders in Smethwick described an "internalised stigma" that newcomers faced when housed in asylum accommodation and how this would prevent them from mixing because of the 'shame' that they felt was being imposed on them by conditions associated with their immigration status. Thus, immigration status can have a fundamental role in socio-spatial segregation (Phillimore, 2021). As noted by one stakeholder: "*Hotels are quite isolated. I think there's perhaps an internalised stigma so people won't try to access something if they have this general feeling about themselves that they won't be welcomed or accepted there....that's something that our team was trying to do something about*" (UK Stakeholder 8, health representative).

As in Germany and Sweden, several female residents in Smethwick discussed how balancing family, employment and their partners' work commitments meant that 'socialising' or volunteering fell low on their daily agenda. Hence there were a series of layers that influenced and impacted on the ways in which they navigated their daily lives; as such, Women's interactions with others from different backgrounds were often said to be siloed through family and friend connections (see Apicella et al., 2021).

To support women, a project set up jointly between Child and Adult social services, NHS providers (GPs and health advisors) and education professionals had helped to improve referrals and signposting in Smethwick and the wider area. Additionally, other stakeholders identified how local ethnic entrepreneurship also led to increasing cultural diversity in local services available, and which was conducive to integration given opportunities for some (but admittedly not all) groups and individuals to benefit from employment and the opportunity to learn about other cultures and meet others: "*On Bearwood High Street, we have 19 I think different nationalities of food offers, and that is a really, I think, optimistic thing*" (UK Stakeholder 5, Voluntary Sector Organisation). There was also considerable optimism about the role of local voluntary and community sector organisations in the local area supporting migrant integration: "*Over the years, our community groups have formed and they benefit the needs of our multicultural communities in several ways*" (UK Stakeholder 1, Housing representative, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).

In Smethwick there was also evidence that voluntary organisations that were traditionally focused around a single (ethnic) group had changed their remit over time to accommodate the needs of others. Whilst in some instances, this was a pragmatic decision based on funding prohibiting mono-ethnic initiatives, there were a number of genuine examples of a broadening of their remit. For example, the creation of foodbanks

was referred to by stakeholders as a ‘welcoming space’, particularly for newcomers. Indeed, one particular food bank located in a local church had been proactive in promoting multi-faith community spaces, networks and activities to bring people from different religious and cultural backgrounds together: *“It’s not in silo, in isolation.....it is very diverse and that is something to celebrate”* (UK Stakeholder 7, Local councillor).

Stakeholders therefore acknowledged the important role such groups and organisations played through their inter-community and inter-sectoral work but acknowledged the strain on the sector, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and which had led to the closure of a number of local community groups and services. Stakeholders also pointed to the need for voluntary sector organisations to work more closely with the public sector (as noted earlier by Bosswick et al., 2007) to respond to the needs of different communities more effectively: *“I think the connections that are the strongest ones are between housing, public health and the community and voluntary sector, with the work done around TB..... this is what the gold standard should look like”* (UK Stakeholder 8, health representative).

In summary, challenges associated with providing affordable housing, as well as employment, education and healthcare and language support services, along with unequal access to such infrastructure emerged from a gender perspective emerged. Indeed, access was differentiated along the lines of income, linguistic skills, local knowledge and gender-specific characteristics. In terms of gender, issues concerned with safety and overcrowding - as well as home and caring responsibilities alongside cultural norms and expectations - were of particular relevance to female residents and likely to reinforce socio-spatial segregation. CSOs were identified as helping to overcome some of these issues, including their role in providing language support, in providing employment experience and in referrals and facilitating contact with other service providers.

4.2.5 Outcome 5: Involvement in shaping housing and neighbourhood infrastructures

In terms of the fifth outcome, the focus was on local involvement and individuals’ opportunities for participation, engagement and empowerment in shaping housing and neighbourhood infrastructures.

4.2.5.1 Improving confidence in the outcomes of engagement and participation and making the benefits of participation tangible.

In Germany, residents who were interviewed were generally unaware of activities that would facilitate formal community involvement, engagement and/or empowerment in housing development or urban planning processes. Stakeholder interviewees also noted that residents were often absent from city or neighbourhood governance structures. Again, this was deemed to be related to a lack of awareness but also due to individuals having a lack of confidence in state institutions, coupled with the lack of knowledge about their roles and responsibilities and how to participate in their activities. A lack of diversity in the staffing structures of such institutions (they were not felt to be reflective of local populations) as well as challenges of linguistic diversity were also contributing to a lack of engagement: *“we have to start with the authorities; the administration must open up interculturally.....this would make their work easier, improve*

communication and improve the whole city” (Germany Stakeholder 7, Integration Committee member, Bochum).

The results from the resident survey in Germany also confirmed a lack of involvement in formal decision-making processes by foreign-born populations: very few respondents indicated that they participated in local politics whilst considerably more engaged in more informal community-based or activities based around recreation and leisure in each neighbourhood. Indeed, interviewees cited a number of reasons for their involvement in community activities such as NGOs and schools. These included receiving direct benefits from their engagement, such as language support and help with filling out forms, opportunities for social engagement or involvement and getting to know one another, as well as a desire to give “something back”. Such a culture of helpfulness was described as partly intrinsic-cultural and partly religious: *“When I help someone, then I calm down. Then say, thank God, I did something. A good deed done....”* (Germany Resident 18, country of origin Afghanistan, several years in the area).

Other barriers to engagement and empowerment in Germany related to a lack of time for individuals to become involved in shaping or delivering local services. Post-COVID 19, some respondents stated that they were re-prioritising their focus towards their family and wider family relations and taking care of children and grandchildren at weekends.

More specifically, the ability of residents to exert pressure on corporate property owners responsible for the poor quality of privately owned real estate accommodation was deemed to be extremely limited: *“the Uni Center is a very bad example of what happens when you sell off property to (private real estate) companies.....you can see that nothing is being invested.....(and) you have no possibility from the political side to put pressure on the company”* (Germany Stakeholder 12, local politician). This also meant that getting help with repairs was often difficult for migrants who faced language barriers in liaising with private sector landlords given that in Germany maintenance services are frequently reached through telephone hotlines (although children were often used to help overcome language barriers). Moreover, such support was often distant to the neighbourhood and difficult to access, and with landlords reluctant to intervene. Hence those migrants who participated in our research either looked to civic institutions and CSOs for help or sought to undertake repairs themselves or through their family, friends and / or personal networks: *“..it is 10-15 minutes until they see my name on a computer.....my hand basin leaked.....for one week.....I have now done it myself - me and my husband.....despite that they get their rent every month on time without missing a cent”* (Germany Resident 21, country of origin Iraq, 12 years in the country).

Thus, the overall feeling in Germany was that engagement and empowerment of women with a migration background in housing and urban planning processes needed more encouragement, and in so doing help to facilitate diversity mainstreaming in organisations with responsibilities for housing and urban planning: *“we have to encourage and empower individuals to get involved in such processes with their own ideas and with their own designs”* (Germany Stakeholder 2, local politician, Bochum). Furthermore, new “access points” were advocated by interviewees and which offered a different approach to the “come-to” engagement structures that predominantly had been used hitherto (also see Berchem et al., 2022 for similar arguments).

In Sweden, female residents highlighted how they were actively engaged in a number of neighbourhood-based organisations, including community-focused activities of the Swedish Church, local homework groups and women's support organisations among others. Through such involvement, respondents stated that they subsequently learned a lot more about opportunities for participation locally (c.f. Hatzidimitriadou and Cakir, 2009). However - and in similarity to the results from Germany - some female residents identified that despite being invited to become involved in local community activities they simply did not have the time. This was confirmed through the survey results where responses from females confirmed that they had less time to become involved due to family responsibilities; in contrast males argued that they were not involved due to a lack of knowledge and information.

4.2.5.2 The role of CSOs in participation and empowerment

All stakeholders in Bergsjön emphasised in some way the importance of CSOs in the area as a platform for liaising with residents and for developing projects and confirming Elgenius et al.'s (2022) recent research on the role of CSO's in contributing to inclusion and grassroot action. For instance, one community organisation identified how they worked to facilitate meetings, to foster collaboration, and to develop and launch activities based on local interests (Sweden Stakeholder 2, CSO for the advancement of community relations). In addition, an interviewee from a local housing company described how they sought the views of civil society actors before they initiated and / or modified community-based projects based on their input (Sweden Stakeholder 10, Housing Company). Whilst some highlighted that the needs of civil society were not consulted enough (Sweden 8, City council), for instance with reference to women's health (Sweden Stakeholder 9, CSO Women's Health), other stakeholders identified how during the COVID-19 pandemic, they had cooperated with a local mosque to reach people about the importance of vaccination (Sweden Stakeholder 11, Health Centre). Furthermore, the importance of local organisations in connecting work opportunities with local people to improve employment rates in the local area was referred to by a number of interviewees. Thus in the Swedish case, CSOs constitute an important part of the neighbourhood, both for residents and the stakeholders as they act as hubs of knowledge as well as bridges between local residents and the stakeholders, such as property owners.

More formally, around two-thirds of respondents to the survey in Bergsjön had not participated in any public engagement or consultation events in the last five years and of those who had been involved in public meetings, these were mostly concerned with information provision, local authority consultations or tenant organisation activities. Over half of the participants in the survey had not engaged with any organisations in the neighbourhood in the last five years, whereas around 40 percent indicated that they had been involved (and of those, the overwhelming majority had been involved in sport, health or well-being and education). Topics of concern included community safety, education / training, health services, housing, and neighbourhood / community planning. Correlating to the findings in Germany, of those who had engaged with organisations, these were more likely to be focused on sports, health and recreational activities, although women were more likely to be involved with health and welfare-related organisations and men with sports and housing-related organisations. Very few individuals were involved with local politics and political structures, reflecting Desiderio (2020) and McGinnity et al.'s (2020) findings on the lack of participation of females in political or professional associations. COVID-19 was reported to have most negatively impacted on involvement with religious activities but COVID-19 had less of an impact on

individuals getting help from landlords - this more likely indicates persistent challenges with getting landlords to respond, as highlighted earlier.

With reference to housing, there was little evidence of actual co-design and consultation in Sweden. Whilst as many as 49% of the respondents wanted to become more involved in matters relating to housing, nearly two-thirds of individuals did not know who to contact or how to get involved in shaping housing infrastructures. For instance, stakeholders remarked that property owners sometimes shared information at a late stage (to tenants and interested parties), which created difficulties for residents and stakeholders to get involved or react. Residents highlighted that they would typically be “informed” about what was to happen rather than being invited to get involved and argued that there were underlying strategic reasons for the lack of information and provision in order to avoid protests and mobilisation: *“There are a lot of renovations. So I live on the ground floor and now they have built new flats. To make these, they shut off the water for three weeks. And we didn't get information about it. And the thing is that we had outdoor toilets [while they were building the new flats]. We don't feel too safe there because it's the area where there are too many drugs”* (Sweden Resident 17, country of origin Nigeria, 5 years in the area). Hence between 50 to 60 percent of respondents to the survey in Sweden stated that they either did not have confidence in the actions and decisions of the council or that their involvement would matter; nor did they have the confidence to get involved in decision-making relating to housing provision in Bergsjön.

4.2.5.3 Issues of 'value' and informal activity as a route to more formal engagement and empowerment

In the UK, formal engagement in neighbourhood organisations followed the pattern in Germany and Sweden - as such, there was little evidence of participation of migrant women in Smethwick in formal community engagement activities concerned with planning or housing. Such findings are consistent with the lack of gender equality in processes of urban planning and housing identified by scholars such as Beebejaun (2017) and Massey (2013). There was a lack of awareness of such opportunities and for some a lack of interest in issues that were not deemed a priority. As one interviewee explained “the ‘here and now’ is what is important”; such findings need to be considered in relation to UNECE’S (2021) call for more direct involvement of migrants in the provision or revitalisation of buildings. In contrast, challenges of property maintenance were given as an example of a priority issue, especially given the number of tenants facing difficulties in this area. But there was little reference to ways in which they could become more involved in formal structures of relevance to improving the condition of property in the area.

Similar to Germany and Sweden, the survey results also highlighted that those who were involved were more likely to be active in sports and recreation activities. Indeed, community activities that female residents had engaged in included going to the gym, local cafes, attending places of worship and accessing voluntary and community sector organisations, including the use of meeting spaces provided by such entities. Engagement with voluntary or community groups often commenced on a ‘needs basis’, when legal or welfare support was required. The support received ranged from complex legal issues through to paying groceries or help with the rent. This again reflects how individuals became more involved with local organisations when they perceived that they would generate a direct benefit from their engagement. Consequently, migrant women interviewees in Smethwick suggested that a focus on issues of value to the

community such as improving community safety and initiatives that built acceptance and trust between different groups would be more likely to capture the imagination and lead to positive engagement.

Whilst there was little formal engagement with statutory and non-statutory services there was consensus from female interviewees that the help they had received (for example, accessing education, employment, understanding the UK welfare system etc.) had been significant in assisting their inclusion and integration experiences. A number of different stakeholders therefore recognised that more could be done to encourage community engagement but which involved making the benefits of such involvement clear and tangible: *“There are families and individuals who are proactive enough to take ownership of their own community issues...(but) not everybody is prepared to do that. Not everybody has got time to do that. But they'll be interested if there is something that they think that directly benefits them or they have got some stake in it. We need to create those platforms”* (UK Stakeholder 7, local councillor).

Hence we can see parallels across the neighbourhoods in the different countries in respect of a lack of time for individuals to become involved in neighbourhood organisations (ranging from about 1 in 4 individuals in Germany and the UK to 2 in 5 individuals in Sweden) and formal public consultation activities (Sweden had the highest levels, followed by Germany and the UK). There was also a sense of a lack of confidence across respondents and that their views would matter. In addition, there was some evidence of a lack of knowledge of who to contact and how to get involved, and questions over what benefits would be received from becoming involved (see Kazłowska and Goodson, 2021). Attending information and consultation events was the most common form of public participation activity. Consequently, there is a requirement for public sector organisations in particular to move away from a “transaction-based” approach to a more holistic and consistent approach that offers the prospect of more tangible benefits for individuals becoming involved in consultation and engagement exercises.

The lack of formal involvement stands in contrast to resident interviewee perspectives on their engagement in more informal community-based activities, which were felt to offer a more direct return for their investment of time. Furthermore, whilst in Bergsjön and Smethwick there was a sense that individuals - and especially females - wanted to become more involved, concerns were raised in all of the neighbourhoods about barriers which prevented this (also see Fernandes, 2015). In Germany and Sweden, these related to a lack of diversity in the staffing structures of local public and private sector organisations involved in housing and urban planning, and which simply did not reflect the superdiverse communities that they served. For example, a representative of a local housing company in Sweden described the “fight” to offer local residents’ jobs. Furthermore, the issue of “detachment” was also deemed to exist on appointment panels and which also impinged on participation. Indeed, one resident interviewee in Bergsjön drew attention to how they were deemed to be dis-attached to the area when they stated their parents’ home country when asked about their nationality. Such findings thus extend Escalante and Valdivia’s (2015) arguments in respect of the need for a greater emphasis on including migrant women in projects which transform local areas - both physically and economically.

4.2.6 Outcome 6: Vulnerable populations, access and rights

With reference to the final outcome, the emphasis was on vulnerable populations and assessing the extent to which individuals - such as migrant women - are able to access appropriate advice and guidance on their rights and responsibilities to help facilitate integration and empowerment. This includes engagement with information, advice and guidance (IAG) services in relation to housing and civic engagement / citizenship.

4.2.6.1 Developing “go to” structures and enhancing self-responsibility

In Germany, despite the emphasis on equality of access in constitutional law (see Foroutan, 2020) and claims by resident interviewees of racialized discrimination by real-estate companies and private landlords in respect of access to property, there appeared a lack of will to rebel. Indeed, a number of tenants who were interviewed argued that those with a migration background did not often make a fuss due to such issues becoming ‘normalised’ and for fear of either losing any benefits that they were entitled to or being deported: *“if (an individual) says nothing, everything that has to happen happens. Moreover, they have their peace.....the second reason.....is fear.....it is because of their experiences in life of course.....rebellling against rent injustice is already sticking their nose out”* (Germany Resident 5, Female tenant, Uni Center).

Local politicians and other public and community-based stakeholders in Germany thus advocated the need for developing “go-to” structures rather than (passive) “come-to” engagement structures to enhance individuals’ rights and responsibilities and participation in co-designing local services: *“it’s like, they will stay here and they will see who comes to explain to them what we are planning and doing....these are not outreach structures but ‘come-to’ structures....no....what (people) really want is someone to come by, ring the doorbell and ask them what they want to change”* (Germany Stakeholder 2, local politician, Bochum). Direct action such as this, according to the results of the resident survey, would allow residents to make a positive difference to the local area (35% of migrants in Germany strongly agreed that their involvement in different local activities made a positive difference to the area) and contribute to ‘(micropolitics) and practices of the possible’ (Anderson, 2017).

However, whilst an interview with a social landlord noted that *“is not sufficient to provide support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year”*, there was an acknowledgement by other stakeholders that those more recently arrived were adequately supported to help generate a sense of self-responsibility: *“(those) who have been living in Germany for a few years, they have already gained a bit of experience. You don’t have to take them by the hand, (you need) to show people who simply have a completely different way of living what it’s like in Germany....I cannot tape my windows with a newspaper”* (Germany Stakeholder 10 Social Housing Landlord Community Support Officer, Hustadt).

4.2.6.2 Involvement in community-based activities and CSOs and the use of different platforms for engagement and empowerment

In Sweden, female interviewees in Bergsjön again noted challenges of access to advice, information and guidance about their rights and responsibilities. Some did not know where to find such information, whilst others either stated that they did not have knowledge about the role of specific organisations (such as housing companies) or had encountered language barriers (also see Drolet and Teixeira (2022) for a similar

discussion). Thus, a key take-home message is that many did not know where to turn. Nevertheless, analysis of the resident survey results identified several perceived benefits that residents claimed they had secured where they had been involved with local organisations in the neighbourhood in the last five years. Such benefits included enhanced feelings of belonging; increased confidence and improvements in their networking and well-being; the development of new skills as well as utilising existing skills; opportunities to learn about people and other services in the neighbourhood; and the opportunity to make a positive change to the area. Consequently, there was a sense among residents that there was also a need to continue to promote involvement and engagement of residents in different types of community-based activities to organise around identified needs, improve confidence and for such individuals to advocate for change (see Magnet et al., 2014; Anderson, 2017).

With reference to Smethwick in the UK, landlords were frequently the first port of call with respect to housing issues. Female residents who were interviewed - and who held either private rented or council tenancies - spoke of how their relationships with landlords were often protracted and that relationships needed to be improved in terms of access to information, advice and guidance (IAG). Most relied on securing such information from family and friends or CSOs and thus access to formal IAG support was on a 'needs' basis.

In particular, CSOs were deemed to offer a wide range of support on issues relating to immigration, employment and language services and as identified more broadly by Elgenius (2023). The lack of language services and translations in different languages - as the case in the German and Swedish neighbourhoods - was viewed as a key barrier in accessing information about their rights and entitlements. Thus CSOs often sought to engage and provide such information through a number of different mechanisms, including community café's, arts and craft activities, befriending and other wellbeing activities. However, some CSO interviewees pointed out how female residents were often accompanied by their male partners which could prevent women accessing support on issues such as women's health or intimate partner violence, and which therefore required creative 'work-arounds': *"prior to COVID, people would come to the offices together.....the male could be the dominant force (and) may want to come and do all the paperwork..(whilst) the female's in the reception area possibly looking after the children. So we use(d) it as an opportunity where X could just sort of go in and speak to the lady covertly and have a conversation and we could pick up issues that way"* (UK Stakeholder 2, Asylum Support representative, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).

Additionally, it was suggested by stakeholders that female-led or female only groups that address rights and responsibilities from a women-centred perspective were needed in Smethwick to improve access to IAG and so that individuals could exercise their rights: *"(we need) female-led or female only groups across the Smethwick area so we can get that education across to them that it's not a male dominated world.... to try and educate families so that they don't feel that they're being dominated or what to do if they are"* (UK Stakeholder 1, Housing representative, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council). Another UK stakeholder spoke of how a 'whole person' approach, which considers the holistic needs of the person across a number of domains (for example, health, housing, work) - and how these needs change over time - had been adopted in order to address different barriers to integration. This approach was reported to have led to positive results, especially for some in terms of access to employment. In addition, a stakeholder interviewee

explained how some females struggle to become independent and how continued support in one area, namely English for Students of Other Languages (ESOL), can lead to positive outcomes in another, such as Employment: *“support their English....slowly we provide more. Some people get more education and childcare....many women who don't speak English..... they stay (with us) five years.....then they are working”* (UK Stakeholder 9, voluntary sector representative). Further examples of opportunities for local residents to get involved in education and skills development were cited in relation to the Skills Centre currently being built next to the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital in the Birmingham conurbation, and which could offer opportunities for local residents to subsequently secure work in the National Health Service (NHS). In this respect, it will be useful for the new Skills Centre to understand learning from CSOs that have seen positive results using a ‘whole person’ approach to IAG. Furthermore, the Skills Centre and other advocacy organisations should consider how they can respond to the UK survey findings that revealed how residents often wanted to be involved in regeneration activities and wider local issues but lacked the skills and knowledge to get involved (see Pertek, 2022).

Advances in technology, especially the use of social media, was recognised to have the potential to open up pathways to appropriate IAG on rights and responsibilities as well as helping to ensure local decision-making processes are more inclusive. In turn, more inclusive decision-making processes would help overcome concerns that *“the majority of community development initiatives are driven by particular communities or (currently shaped by the agenda of individual organisations...”* (UK Stakeholder 7, local councillor). Indeed, it was widely recognised by stakeholder interviewees that if individuals were not aware of what was happening in the neighbourhood then they would not be able to contribute and that individuals required motivation to access appropriate IAG to secure / enhance their rights to housing, employment and other services. One stakeholder suggested the need for *“different platforms and forums in different capacities so that we can actually gather intelligence and views in order to shape different agendas...be it housing, be it skills and employment or health and well-being, environmental services, wider engagement and things like that”* (UK Stakeholder 7, Local councillor).

Consequently, the overall point that arises in respect of this outcome is the need in all of the case study neighbourhoods for a fundamental change in democratic dialogue - and associated “go-to” structures (Berchem et al., 2022) if there is to be a step up in community engagement and to support greater levels of self-responsibility. It will also require a change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of service providers to change the democratic dialogue and to secure a positive culture change conducive to the delivery of ‘adaptive solutions’ (Gustavsen, 1991). In so doing, this will help to address the ‘politics of presence’ (Phillips, 1998) and involvement of historically marginalised groups - such as migrant women - in political and decision-making processes.

4.3 Discussion and summary

Through adopting a ‘post-migrant’ perspective (Falge and Betscher, 2022) - rather than a deficit model of migration and a focus on migrants’ disadvantages (Berchem et al., 2022) - this chapter has highlighted some of the structural inequalities that may hinder processes of engagement, participation and / or empowerment, as well as exclusion from adequate living standards. There was also a related lack of trust in local institutions and subsequent challenges of access to good quality housing and other domains of integration, such as employment and education (Lang, Pott and Schneider, 2018; Bonefeld and Dickhäuser, 2018). From a gender perspective, such issues were often exacerbated - for example, there was evidence of concerns of migrant women being ignored by landlords (such as their maintenance duties) as well as being excluded from access to housing / good quality housing in particular neighbourhoods. This was despite the emphasis on equality of access in constitutional law in countries such as Germany (see Foroutan, 2020).

In addition, a post-migrant perspective involves a shift of focus from a singular focus on ethnicity or nationality (Glick-Schiller et al., 2006) and where ethnic or national groups have been perceived as internally homogenous and externally bounded (Brubaker, 2006). Rather, through adopting a superdiversity lens (Vertovec, 2007), the results presented above highlight the difference or differences that make a difference - such as gender, immigration status and place itself - in shaping processes of integration, inclusion and / or empowerment.

4.3.1 The importance of community led research infrastructures and CSOs for integration and empowerment

Within this context, the EMPOWER project illustrated both the methodological challenges and opportunities to the development of community-led research infrastructures in different migratory settings and contexts. Indeed, the results highlight how challenges by providers of reaching certain groups can be directly addressed by involving the marginalised in knowledge production about housing problems and their solutions. EMPOWER has shown that the community research approach is accompanied by a considerable empowerment of CRs (Goodson and Phillimore, 2012). As a participatory research method, the use of CRs builds upon the expertise of local residents trained in qualitative methods and guided and supported by researchers. Whilst such an approach may entail methodological challenges - for example, some interviews with residents were of relatively poor quality or quite short - the very fact that CRs have been empowered, upskilled and generated important community knowledge is a hugely beneficial outcome of this way of working. They also help to provide access to ‘hard-to-reach’ communities in relatively short time frames. As such, CRs are empowered through taking part in different stages of the research process and by identifying (locally) important questions to put to residents in interviews and surveys. CRs also contributed to the findings of the research and presented their results to stakeholders during policy cafés. Following on - and certainly in the case of the German case study - this led to stakeholders and communities’ joint involvement in political processes focused on the improvement of housing conditions. Indeed, a number of outreach counselling structures were established in the German case study neighbourhoods a few months after the policy café. In Sweden, two new projects which built upon existing partnerships - including the CRs emerged. For example, an important new collaboration developed between the city council and national educational associations. In addition, local housing companies have also shown

interest in employing CRs locally. Similar outcomes have also emerged in Smethwick in the UK: CRs have been employed by the local university and other public sector organisations are also taking an interest in adopting this approach.

The results from the EMPOWER project also draw attention to the benefits of, and barriers to, local mobilisation and participation in different forms of local consultations and CSOs. Indeed, the findings identified challenges of territorial stigmatisation in respect of superdiverse neighbourhoods (Elgenius and Rydgren, 2019; Elgenius and Rydgren, 2023). However, research from EMPOWER also illustrated the importance of local resistance against negative framings and how this was an important rationale for local mobilisation (also see Elgenius and Phillimore, forthcoming). In this respect, female residents highlighted that a main barrier to their mobilisation and engagement was the lack of time whereas men stated they did not know who to contact. Thus, gendered practices informed barriers to engagement, including a lack of mixing across boundaries such as gender and nationality. Female residents also reported that they often found it hard to access information about meetings, activities and local services and suggested information in different languages in suitable locations and local language training activities would help overcome such barriers. The lack of trust and confidence in the local municipality and state institutions was also a significant barrier to engagement of some individuals coming from totalitarian states. As a result, empowering benefits of engagement were frequently reported by residents active in local organisations - such as CSOs - and who stated that they had learnt more about the local neighbourhood and other support services and developed connections and a sense of belonging to the local area. Such activity had served to enhance their networks, confidence, and wellbeing, as well as helping to utilise existing skills or develop new ones.

4.3.2 Experiences of place-making in superdiverse neighbourhoods and implications for integration and empowerment

A further key finding which emerged from the research related to the importance of engagement and local mobilisation for broader processes of place-making. However, to date there has been much less focus to date on the experiential aspects of place-making (Aquilino et al., 2021) and how a better understanding of individuals' experiences and feelings of place may enhance place-making (Cilliers and Timmermans, 2014). Consequently, the results highlighted a number of important issues impinging on individuals' experiences of living in superdiverse neighbourhoods and processes of place-making. These included: i) a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood shaped to varying degrees by neighbourhood diversity and the natural environment; ii) networks and relations with others; iii) the ability to develop and express an identity(ies) and iv) feelings of being safe.

With reference to a sense of belonging, our research identified how neighbourhood diversity and multiculturalism had generated - for some - a belonging to the area, especially in Bergsjön (Sweden) and Bochum (Germany). An ability to avoid discrimination that they had experienced from other residents in previous neighbourhoods of residence - primarily on the basis of visible difference - was also a factor in shaping belonging. However, our results pointed towards a sense of belonging being differentiated by employment status - a number of unemployed residents were less positive about living in our case study neighbourhoods given their reception by others, although this does need further qualification. Aspects of

the physical environment - including proximity to nature and green space - were also noted as shaping positive feelings of neighbourhood belonging, along with individuals' involvement in informal community-based activities / community (migrant) support structures. This included engagement in work-related activities offered by CSOs, and which led to enhanced feelings of belonging and self-responsibility; increased confidence and improvements in individual's networking and well-being; an ability to learn about other people / services in the neighbourhood; and the opportunity to make a positive change to the local area. Nevertheless, the poor quality of housing (and housing maintenance), overcrowding and territorial stigmatization by employers, the police and others outside of our case study neighbourhoods were all identified as undermining place-making processes.

In terms of networks / relations with others, many residents had established 'good relations' with others "like themselves", and with friends and family also contributing to positive experiences of living in place. In addition, the opportunity to meet others via meeting spaces provided by CSOs was also noted in all of our neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, some female residents noted how time constraints and caring responsibilities impinged on their ability to meet others; similarly a number of male residents pointed to challenges of time given work commitments. In turn, this meant that interactions were often more focused around immediate family and friends. In addition, whilst virtually all of our respondents identified that they generally felt safe in their home and the neighbourhood, a lack of opportunities for children and young people; ii) fears over deportation and losing benefits; and iii) perceptions of youth criminality and personal safety in the evening by female residents all impinged on positive experiential aspects of place-making.

Furthermore, whilst individuals indicated that they were comfortable in expressing their identities - and particularly in the context of neighbourhood events and the opportunity to participate in religious and cultural festivals - there were some notable caveats. In Bergsjön some interviewees claimed they had suppressed aspects of their identity - particularly in terms of cultural preferences - if they wanted to access the labour market whilst in Smethwick a number of migrant women noted perceived discrimination and marginalisation by landlords, real estate and property management companies on the basis of their identities.

Thus more consideration is required of the experiential aspects of place-making. Supporting such processes will arguably help to generate more meaningful, valued, sustained processes of democratic decision-making and contribute to the integration, engagement and empowerment of individuals, including migrant women. This is important as it segues into concerns with spatial justice: as such, addressing challenges to the experiential aspects of place-making can help to inform the participation and empowerment of individuals in local place-making processes and also help to secure 'procedural' spatial justice.

4.3.3 Securing gender aware integration and empowerment through community led research

Bringing together work on community-led infrastructures, local mobilisation and place-making, from a gender perspective the use of CRs offers a pathway to positive experiences of place-making conducive to 'reclaiming the city' (Harvey, 2015; Haas, 2023) through knowledge, justice and community engagement. Moreover, 'reclaiming the city' as a co-created space can help to push back against neoliberalism, the

commodification of 'everyday life', growing spatial inequalities and exclusionary decision-making processes and their impact on our built environment (, 2015). It is thus important to consider how female residents navigate such spaces and services through their everyday practices in order to bring about social change (De Certeau, 1984; Davies, 2016). There is a recognition that the 'everyday' is a perpetual process that is *lived through* (Sheringham 2006). 'Everyday acts' can therefore serve to reinforce social norms or bring about ruptures in everyday life through micropolitical acts of resistance and empowerment.

In this respect, the results indicate how housing allocation systems were reported to reinforce and perpetuate socio-spatial segregation, particularly as a consequence of discrimination in the housing market and rent exploitation. However, participants - and especially migrant women - did not feel able to challenge injustices in their housing systems and arguably reflected in the lack of engagement in formal decision-making processes. Reported barriers to community participation related to one of more of the following five domains: i) a lack of knowledge of the mechanisms for voicing concerns; ii) a lack of faith in the democratic process and a belief their views will have impact on decision-making; iii) apathy and not feeling strongly enough to voice an opinion; iv) a lack of time; and v) language and cultural barriers. As such, this gives rise to a fundamental question - who is participating, who is empowering and who is empowered?

The findings from interviews with female residents and the survey demonstrated how community participation can enhance a sense of belonging and pride in living in superdiverse neighbourhoods. CSOs may also act as 'trusted' platforms for engaging with residents at an individual level and encouraging social interactions at a community level. Hence the research identified a need to continue to promote the engagement of residents in different types of community-based activities focusing on common interests or needs (Cantle, 2001; 2008) in order to improve skills, confidence, and connections to advocate for change at a neighbourhood level.

A good starting point would be a focus on issues of common value, such as improving community safety and initiatives that build acceptance and trust. The willingness of residents in all three country neighbourhoods to become more involved in local issues highlights the community energy and knowledge that could be unlocked to inform local place-making and decision making. However, the unlocking of such potential requires new opportunities and platforms to open-up democratic dialogue between policy makers, service providers and local communities and the need to embed 'adaptive solutions' in statutory and non-statutory service delivery.

In relation to public space and reclaiming the city, it has long been recognised that men and women use public space differently (MacDowell 1999; Scraton and Watson 1998; Valentine 1990): fear of crime affects women's use of public places and concerns about personal safety are more prevalent among women than men (Massey, 2013). As already noted, women generally reported feeling safe in their neighbourhoods, but for some a concern about night-time safety limited their mobility and use of public spaces after dark, especially 'dark spots' (including parks, public squares, bus and tram stations etc.). Therefore the findings from EMPOWER echo Valentine (1990) and Bell and Valentine's (2003) work in the UK where women produced mental maps of feared environments and dangerous places and where they adjusted their behaviour accordingly. Moreover, whilst safety concerns constrained the use of the neighbourhood for some respondents who participated in the EMPOWER project - and perpetuating patterns of socio-spatial

segregation - there was also a strong sense of female residents being empowered through the use of micropolitical strategies to navigate everyday life in superdiverse settings.

Micropolitics are about power and how one's "social place" is obtained and maintained in relation to hierarchies that are inherently gendered, racialised and embedded throughout societal social structures and everyday encounters (Bottero and Irwin, 2003). Micropolitical tactics are small and often isolated strategies for resisting conditions that can have significant political and/or social effects on everyday life (Magnet et al., 2014). Hence Anderson (2017) views micropolitics as offering hope for an alternative future through micro political actions orienting towards 'practices of the possible'. Indeed, acts of community engagement are micropolitical and have the potential to empower and mobilise marginalised resident groups.

In summary, there is a growing consensus for the need to re-imagine social research and what we consider valuable in terms of knowledge production in order to help tackle widening inequalities, distrust in institutions, hostility towards migration and violence against women in urban areas (Kazłowska and Goodson, 2021). The use of the CR approach offers a vehicle to community engagement which gives voice and influence for those whose skills and experience are often overlooked by mainstream research. Improved engagement in decision making dialogue, is a fundamental step to determining the ways in which policy makers can work towards gaining greater long-term support from their residents in superdiverse neighbourhoods (Goodson and Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2017) and the ways residents can secure a better understanding of one another and a sense of belonging and pride in their area. In superdiverse areas there is a need to better understand the different ways to address intersectional barriers to engagement; failure to do so will continue to promote the status quo in decision making processes that overlook the different constraints residents from different backgrounds are exposed to. Developing opportunities for CR-based research community and wider community activities therefore offers a pathway to 'reclaiming the city' through community participation and involvement in decision making (cf. Goodson and Phillimore, 2012) and in so doing can provide gender and culturally competent integration and empowerment opportunities.

Chapter 5. A Theory of Change for integration and empowerment

5.1 Introduction

Following on from the results and discussion presented in Chapter 4, this chapter draws upon such information to set out a new Theory of Change for migrant integration and empowerment. As such, this is a first attempt to provide policy makers and practitioners in different countries with a set of activities and interventions - along with indicators to measure progress - to help secure relevant outputs and outcomes for migrant integration and empowerment.

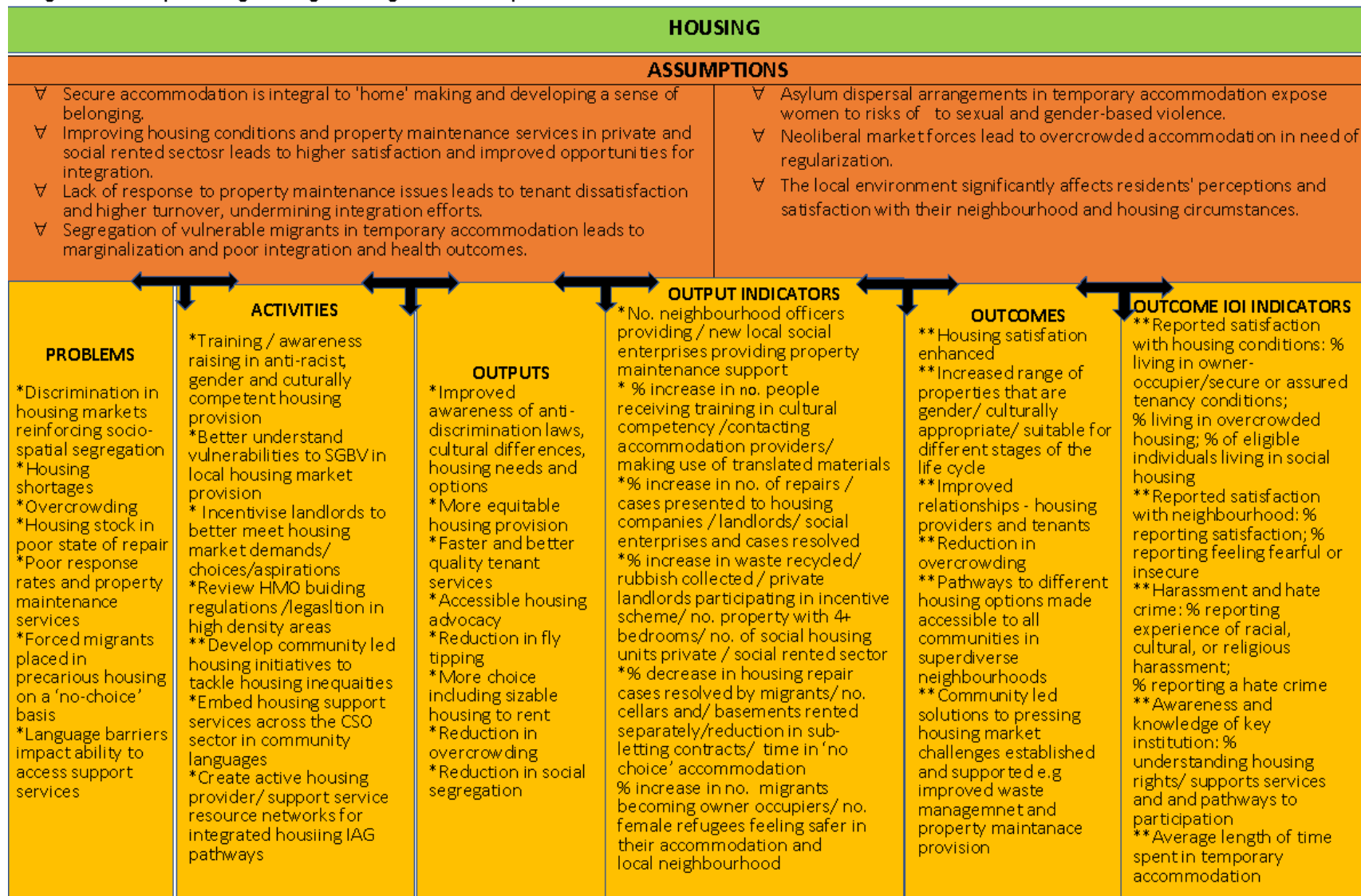
5.2. Theory of Change for integration and empowerment

The Theory of Change (see Figure 5.1 below) is shaped around the six key outcomes / themes that emerged from the EMPOWER research project and which were presented and discussed in Chapter 4:

- Housing-related challenges (suitable housing for all)
- Community relations (trust and reciprocity)
- Safety, security and belonging
- (Improved) Access to local infrastructure and services
- Involvement in shaping housing and neighbourhood infrastructures
- Access to citizenship and housing rights (vulnerable populations, access and rights).

Subsequently, the framework highlights the problems identified in relation to each thematic area (column 1) and the types of activities that could be developed to address such problems (column 2). These activities will subsequently need to be incorporated with specific initiatives of stakeholders (to be defined). The framework then sets out the outputs and output indicators that are of relevance to measure progress (columns 3 and 4). In turn, the outcomes that will emerge are also detailed (column 5). These outcomes are subsequently contextualised in relation to the relevant outcome indicators from Ndofor-Tah et al.'s (2019) 'Indicators of Integration' framework (column 6). Stakeholders are required to monitor these carefully to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions. In so doing, it is envisaged that this will lead to the establishment of new participatory gender-aware approaches which empower local residents and which help to secure integration through reducing socio-spatial segregation in (for example) superdiverse neighbourhoods (see final outcome/theme). In addition, for each outcome / theme, a series of assumptions are also set out which underpin the ability to develop appropriate activities, initiatives, outputs and outcomes.

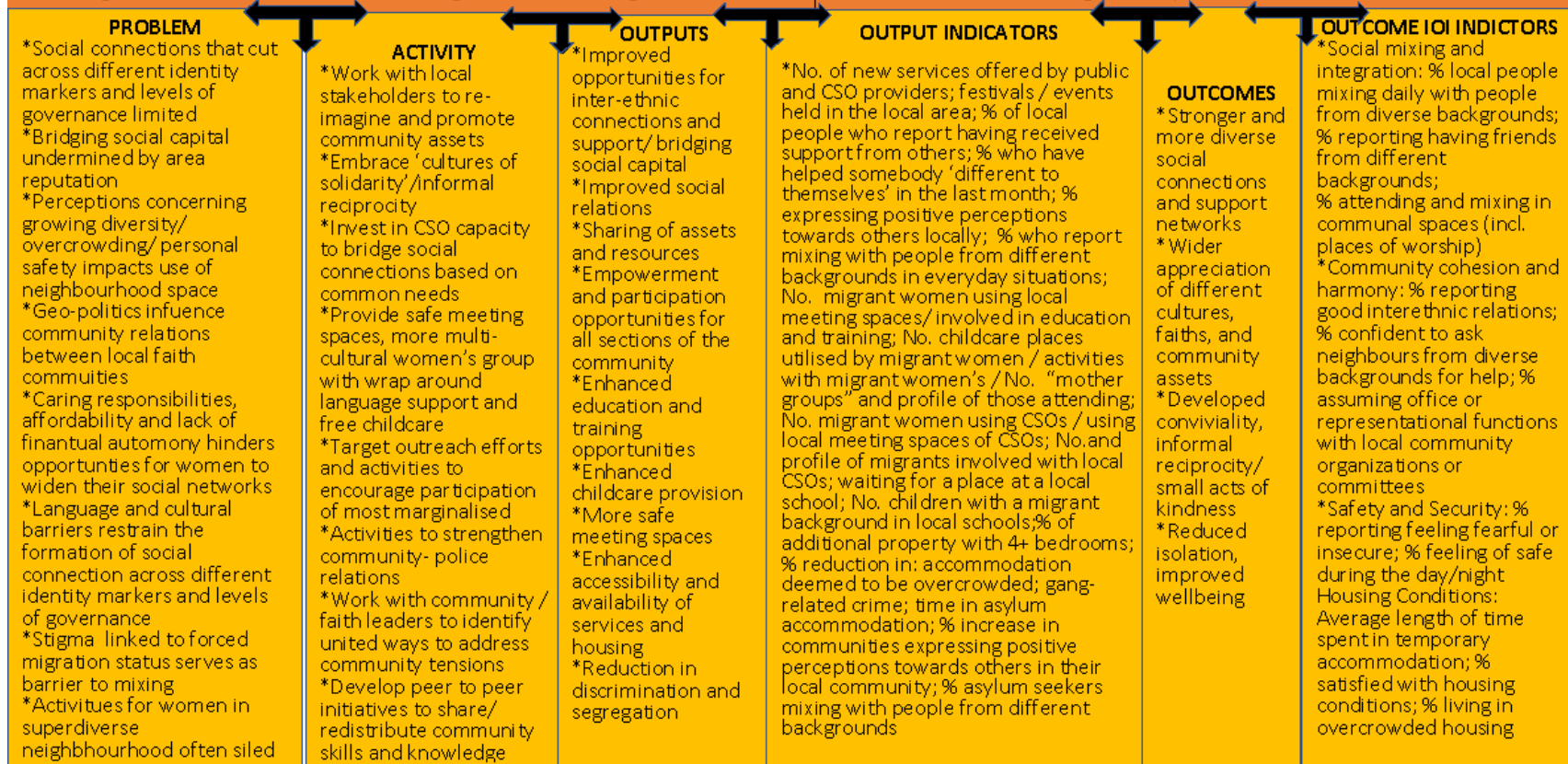
Figure 5.1 Theory of Change for migrant integration and empowerment



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

ASSUMPTIONS CR

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds promote building of social capital. ∇ Lack of safe and trusted spaces to meet with others inhibits migrant women from developing social networks. ∇ Social connections and solidarity positively impact migrant women's well-being and integration experiences. ∇ Stigma and shame serve as barriers to migrant women's integration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Community-based organizations (CSOs) have the power to bring individuals from diverse backgrounds together. ∇ Community initiatives that bring people together aid integration efforts. ∇ Migrant women face barriers such as language, culture, and finances in widening their social networks. ∇ Lack of access to statutory services impacts migrant women's social connections and integration experiences. |
|---|--|



SAFETY, SECURITY AND BELONGING

ASSUMPTIONS

- ∇ Negative neighborhood perceptions undermine a sense of safety and belonging.
- ∇ Housing tenancy and employment status influence attachment to an area.
- ∇ Engagement with positive role models in the local area promotes a sense of belonging.

- ∇ Public places/spaces can feel intimidating, undermining a sense of belonging.
- ∇ Lack of resources in policing impacts migrant women's sense of safety and security.
- ∇ Access to welfare support and fear/experience of crime influence a sense



PROBLEMS

- *Negative territorial reputation
- *Anti-social behaviour
- *Lack of secure accommodation
- *Cuts in welfare support triggering destitution
- *Variations in a sense of belonging across different identity markers
- **Lack of role models and opportunities for young people
- *Lack of police presence and resources for public order
- *Women's use of space effected by poor urban planning
- *Increased security costs for tenants affect perceptions of neighbourhood safety

ACTIVITIES

- *Multi-cultural / faith celebrations to promote superdiversity
- *Invest/ develop community safety infrastructure
- *Initiatives to enhance property and street security: improved lighting/ CCTV/ police presence
- *Embed employability support with work focused ESOL across the CSO sector to facilitate labour market entry and retention
- *Showcase positive role models to highlight opportunity structures
- *Reallocation of policing resources to provide more flexible / demand driven provision
- *Promote safe / underutilised /low-cost meeting spaces
- * Develop community led property and neighbourhood security schemes
- * Invest in initiatives for YP with clear progression pathways

OUTPUT

- * Improved reputation / identity of neighbourhood
- *Reduction in property crime
- *Better awareness of community contributions/assets
- *Enhanced facilities / support for young people
- *Improved lighting and security
- *Enhanced police presence
- New (non-exploitative) security services in local area
- Community cohesion and safety improved
- Fear / experiences of drug and gang-related culture reduced

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- **Service provision and community engagement: Number: of new local services/ festivals / events/ people sharing assets/ helping Someone 'different to themselves' in the last month ; % of local people who report having received support from others
- **Community cohesion and perceptions: Production of rebranding strategy; Number: % expressing positive perceptions towards others in community
- **Empowerment and participation of women: Number: using local meeting spaces; involved in education and training; engaging in community activities, utilising childcare places; "mother"/ "women groups"; attending "mother"/ "women groups"; using local meeting spaces of CSOs and meeting others 'different to themselves'
- **Education and housing: Number: on school waiting list; children with migrant background in schools and % change over time, % of additional property with 4+ bedrooms, % reduction in overcrowded housing, % reduction time spent in asylum accommodation, % reduction in gang-related crime

OUTCOMES

- **Enhanced sense of belonging to local area
- ** Sense of belonging sustained/ remains consistent over time

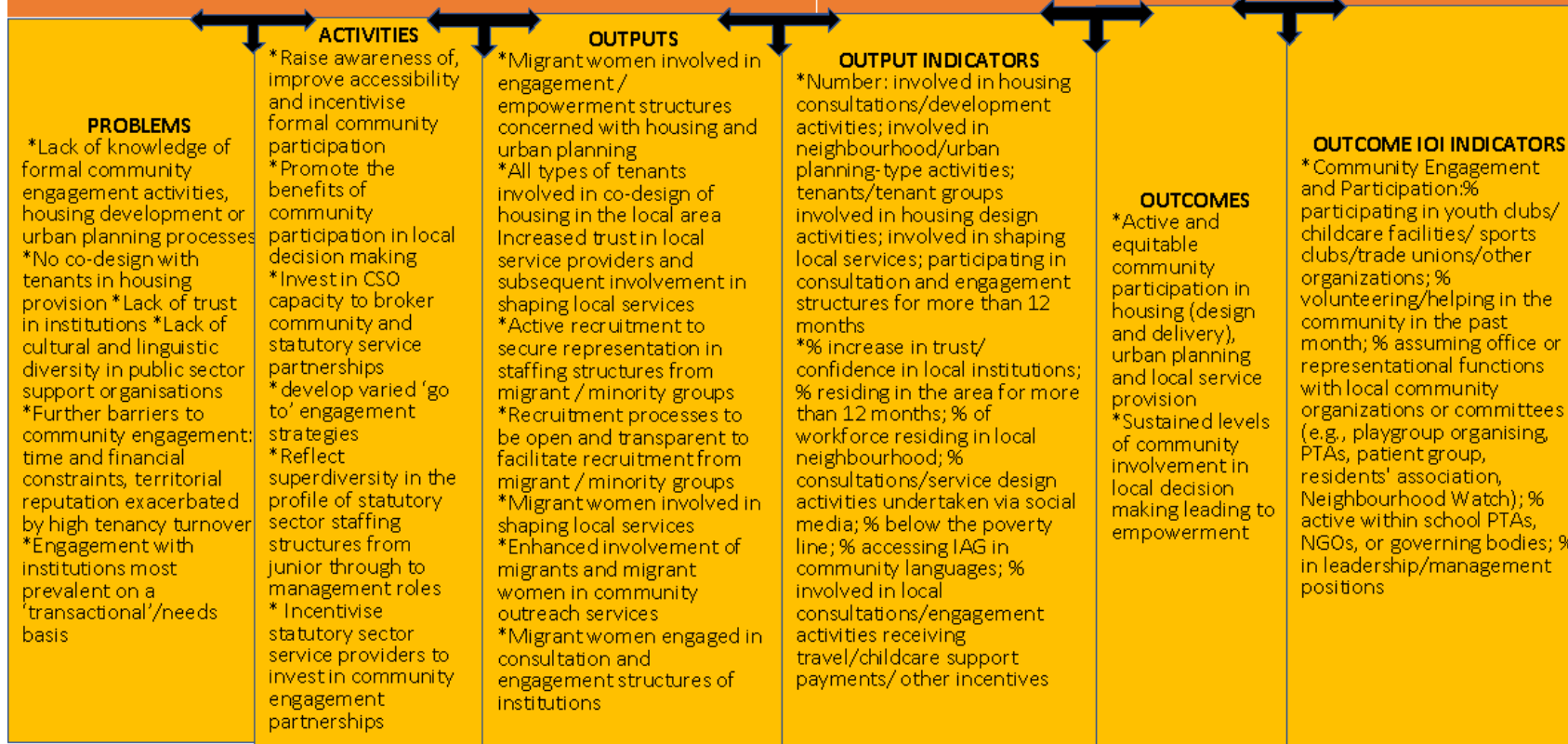
OUTCOME IOI INDICATORS

- **Sense of belonging and community: % reporting sense of 'belonging' ; to neighbourhood and local area
- % reporting that people of different backgrounds get on well in their area
- ** Safety and security: % reporting feeling fearful or insecure; % feeling safe during day/night; % reporting trust in the police
- ** Local area satisfaction: % reporting satisfaction with local area
- **Housing support: % receiving housing benefit; % receiving discretionary housing payments

INVOLVEMENT IN SHAPING HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE

ASSUMPTIONS

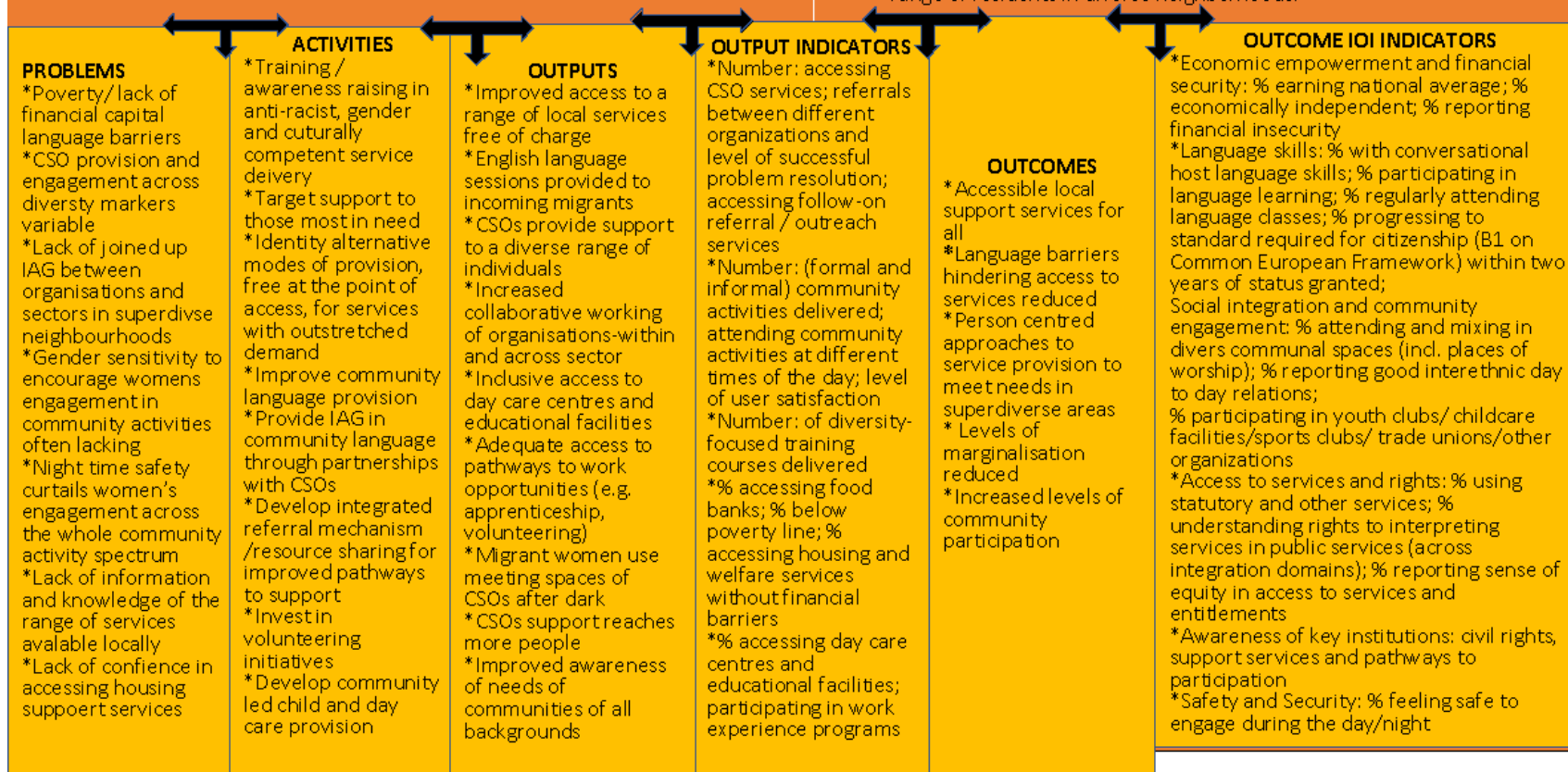
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Intersectional inequalities impact migrant women's access to community participation ∇ Lack of awareness of participatory processes hinders involvement. ∇ Building trust in local institutions is crucial for increased participation in formal engagement and consultation mechanisms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Overcoming barriers such as language proficiency, low income, and domestic responsibilities is necessary for migrant women's involvement. ∇ Community engagement positively impacts sense of belonging and pride. |
|--|--|



ACCESS TO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

ASSUMPTIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Migrant women face intersectional inequalities in accessing local services. ∇ CSOs provide essential information, advice, and guidance (IAG) but barriers exist. ∇ Lack of understanding of the local service infrastructure hinders integration. ∇ CSOs play a role in reducing dependency and empowering migrant women to utilize local infrastructure and services effectively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ CSOs can reduce dependency and empower migrant women to use local infrastructure. ∇ Improving access to information about housing options provides migrants agency to make more informed housing decision. ∇ Safety concerns prohibit engagement with services and encourage self-segregation. ∇ Cultural and linguistic competencies are important for engaging a wide range of residents in diverse neighborhoods. |
|---|---|



ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP AND HOUSING RIGHTS HOUSING

ASSUMPTIONS

- ∇ Lack of understanding of citizenship and housing rights hinders integration.
 - ∇ IAG on citizenship and housing options is crucial for accessing rights.
 - ∇ Immigration and benefit status can pose challenges in the housing market.
 - ∇ CSOs raise awareness of citizenship and housing rights among migrant women.
- ∇ Trauma informed support for survivors of gender and sexual-based violence is necessary for facilitating access to citizenship and housing rights.

ACTIVITIES

PROBLEMS

- *Awareness of IAG about rights limited
- * Low levels of resistance to systemic discrimination and inequalities concerning access to resources for fear of repercussions
- *Disclosure of needs to support organisations can be hindered by presence of family members/ spouse or appointments
- *sporadic rather than consistent engagement with support services

- *Promote engagement in different types of community based activities to improve self-responsibility and advocacy
- *Support CSO befriending, well-being and wider integration initiatives
- *Develop more 'go-to' structures to enhance access to IAG and understanding of the benefits of community engagement
- *Provide opportunities for skills development to improve understanding and confidence to participate in formal community engagement structure and partnerships
- *Provision of women led groups that address rights and responsibilities from a women-centred perspective
- **Introduce safeguarding protocols to create that ensure women have independent space to discuss welfare needs

OUTPUTS

- Improved awareness of IAG services
- *Enhanced involvement of migrants and migrant women in community outreach services and regeneration projects
- *Migrant women discuss / lead discussions on rights and responsibilities with support organisations

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- *% involved in different types of community-based activities; % using local IAG services; % referred to statutory IAG services through CSOs; % using community outreach services; % participating in women led groups
- *Number: of community led initiatives/ women's groups/ regeneration projects

OUTCOMES

- *Access to IAG and support provision improved and trust in institutions enhanced
- *Ability to advocate needs, exercise their rights to access services without fear of discrimination
- *More sustained involvement in engagement activities and local decision-making processes

OUTCOME INDICATORS

- FROM IOI Awareness of key institutions, rights, supports, and pathways to participation: %
- understanding rights to interpreting services in public services (across integration domains); % utilising affordable legal advice; % utilising welfare benefits advice; % having awareness of procedures for complaining about goods and services
 - % overall population reporting knowledge of anti-discrimination laws
 - Equity in access to services and entitlements: % reporting sense of equity in access to services and entitlements

EMPOWER IMPACT

To establish participatory gender aware approaches to housing and urban planning that empower residents and help reduce social spatial segregation in superdiverse neighbourhoods

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Whilst the EMPOWER project has highlighted some of the barriers to empowering and related questions of who is empowering and who is empowered, we find evidence that individuals are supported through the development and utilisation of a variety of place-making strategies to negotiate and navigate everyday life. There was considerable evidence of attempts to ‘reclaim the city’ through the use of different community-led infrastructures, local practices of mobilisation and informal engagement and participation practices and micropolitical strategies.

Moreover - and fundamentally - EMPOWER was very much focused on developing and co-creating new methods of knowledge production to create a new democratic dialogue, to improve engagement in decision-making and to help facilitate gender-aware integration and empowerment. To this end, the use of CRs was integral. The CR model engaged and empowered local communities and residents in the research process and gave a voice and influence for those whose skills and experiences are often overlooked by mainstream research. Indeed, through building upon existing models of recruiting, training, upskilling and co-producing knowledge with CRs it was possible to give greater voice and influence for those whose skills and knowledge are often overlooked or marginalised. Nevertheless, this was not always straightforward. To do this type of activity properly takes considerable resources and time and especially given the collaborative research design, co-production methodology and sequential research approach that was utilised across three different countries and differing local contexts of superdiversity. It also meant that given the developmental and upskilling nature of EMPOWER, some of the research material which was generated and collected / collated was not always consistent in respect of its coverage and depth. This does need to be taken into account in respect of the underpinning evidence for some of the key messages which arise from the research and the need for further consideration of the research material - as well as potential future follow-on projects - to develop some of the initial arguments presented.

The empirical, theoretical and conceptual implications of the EMPOWER project broadly reflect the emphasis on developing new community-led infrastructures and new models of engagement. The research project involved the generation of CR empowerment as well as new knowledge on challenges relating to housing, neighbourhood services and infrastructures and trust, reciprocity, safety, security and belonging, as well as how these can be overcome through new engagement and participation techniques. The use of a gender lens in EMPOWER was also crucial as it drew attention to the social norms, hierarchies and unequal power structures that may significantly impact on the integration, inclusion and empowerment of individuals - and how these were being overcome. A diversity perspective additionally helped to identify the intersectionality of issues such as legal status, gender, country of birth, employment status, duration in the neighbourhood etc. on shaping processes of inclusion and empowerment.

In particular, the EMPOWER project highlighted the importance of structural inequalities and the discriminatory practices of housing landlords with reference to rents, housing conditions,

insecure tenancies and housing access, and which reinforce and perpetuate socio-spatial segregation. Hence the need for new participatory research approaches to address such issues and to directly involve individuals from different backgrounds in policy making.

Through the application of 'Digital Participatory Spatial Analysis' techniques to new contexts of diversity, EMPOWER also linked local residents' perceptions and experiences to policy interventions. This helped to shape the new 'Theory of Change' framework to identify how integration and empowerment may become a reality in superdiverse neighbourhood settings. This - as far as we are aware - is the first time that the Indicators of Integration framework has been operationalised at a local level, and certainly within superdiverse settings. Thus within the context of this framework, a range of activities - and associated outputs and outcomes - were set out. A number of these particularly focused on experiential aspects of place-making. Enhancing such experiences through specific activities focused around facilitating individuals' sense of belonging, networks and relations; identities and perceptions of safety will thus help to support inclusion, integration and participation, as well as subsequent possibilities for empowerment. They may also help to facilitate processes of spatial justice - both in terms of access to neighbourhood level resources as well as involvement in decision-making processes ('procedural' spatial justice). In this respect, there was some evidence of the need for providers to generate more trust with local residents through highlighting how resident participation will make a positive difference; by providing support for the basic necessities of living to encourage subsequent participation; through the creation of new types of engagement structures; through the adequate provision of childcare; through the provision of information provided in a range of appropriate languages; by providing new meeting spaces; and through efforts to diversify their own workforce to reflect the populations that they are serving.

Finally, EMPOWER provided new insights into the ways in which civil society organisations help to secure integration and empowerment in more vulnerable areas. Such organisations have received less attention to date yet play a crucial role in i) providing 'trusted' meeting places for individuals from different backgrounds to meet and build connections between each other, as well as providing a range of welfare support services; ii) offering work experience opportunities which allow individuals to utilise existing skills or to develop new ones; and iii) acting as an 'anchor' and 'bridging' institution for engaging with residents. Further consideration of such issues, as well as other aspects of place-making, mobilisation and community-led infrastructures are therefore required moving forward and provide the basis for future programmes of gender aware research and empowerment activity in a range of different neighbourhood settings.

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