



Migration and Integration: the role of churches

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Migration and Religion

- Migration is changing the ecclesial landscape of Europe;
- The arrival of migrants has had an impact on the old balances of the churches; and,
- Migration has also given birth to new migrant-led churches.



Religion, community and Integration

- ▶ Safe space where we are never stranger to each other (Bauman, 2001).
- ▶ Community can require unconditional loyalty - renouncing personal freedom is the price to be paid in order to be part of a community (Bauman, 2001)
- ▶ Theory of community construction: a) symbols play a central role in generating a sense of shared belonging; b) community is itself a symbolic construct upon which people draw, rhetorically and strategically; and c) the meaning (and value) of community membership lies in sharing with other members a similar 'sense of things', a common symbolic domain (Jenkins, 2004)
- ▶ Community ties aggregate rather than integrate (Cohen, 1985)
- ▶ Integration as a two way process

MAPPING MIGRATION

MAPPING CHURCHES'
RESPONSES IN EUROPE



REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION

DARRELL JACKSON and ALESSIA PASSARELLI

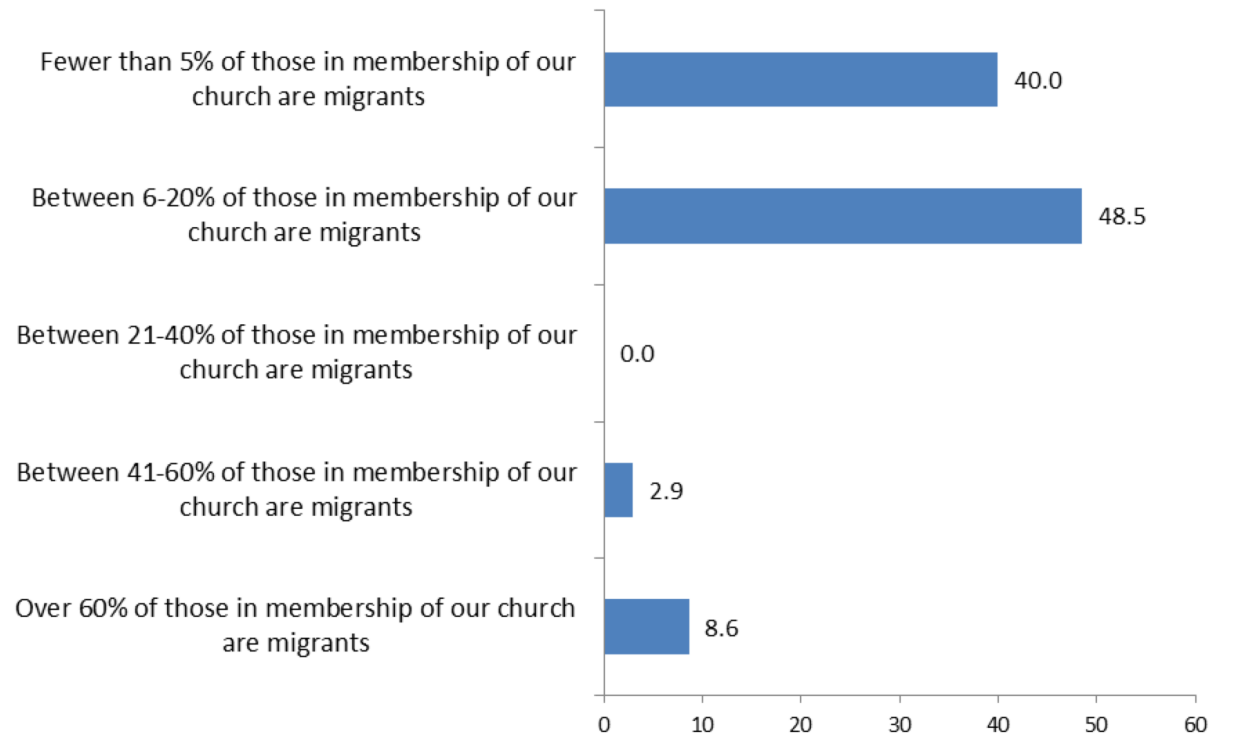
Belonging,
Community and
Integration: the
Witness and
Service of
Churches in
Europe

CCME study: “Mapping Migration, Mapping Churches’ Responses”

- ▶ Since 2008
- ▶ 2016 edition has included the analyses of churches responses across Europe to migration:
 - 35 responses from 19 countries
 - 13 came only from Ireland
 - The majority of the responses from Western countries
 - For Austria, Italy and Switzerland the questionnaire was completed by the Federation of Protestant Churches
- ▶ Three main areas of analyses:
 - Migrants in the life of the churches
 - Work among migrant youth
 - Advocacy and assistance

1. Migration has increased the religious diversity of European Churches

Answers to the question 'What is the (estimated) percentage of migrants belonging to your Church?'

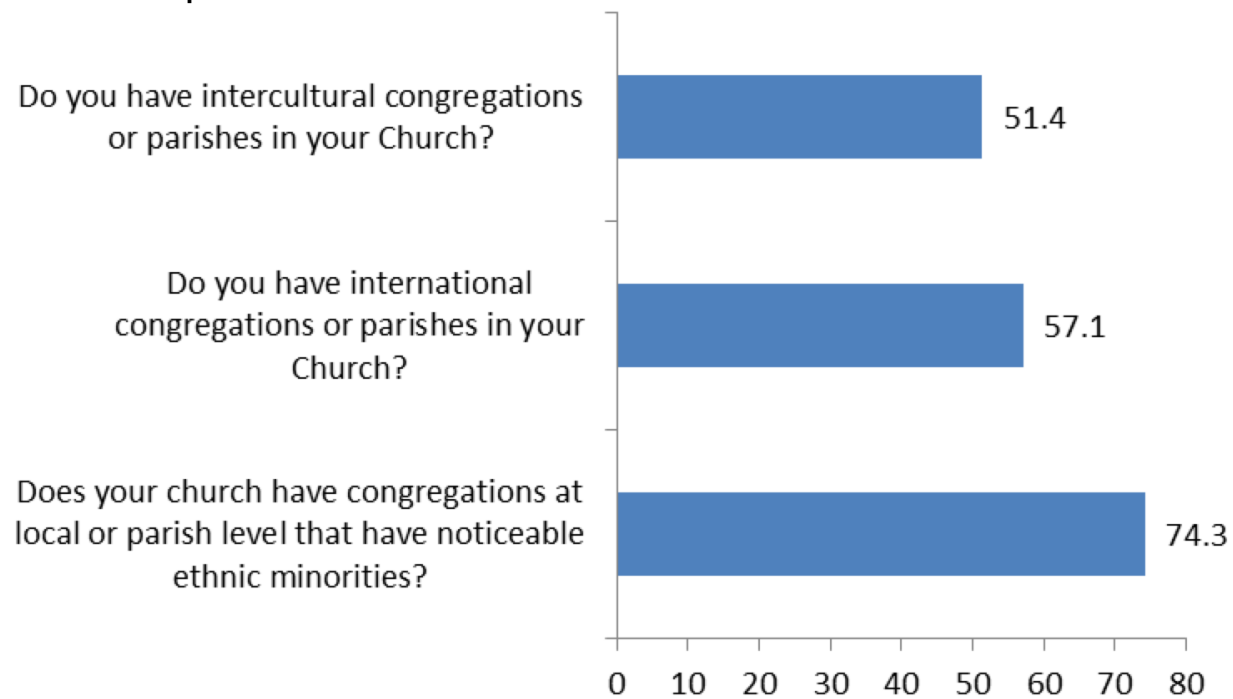


Countries in which church membership includes considerably more than a 5% membership of migrants

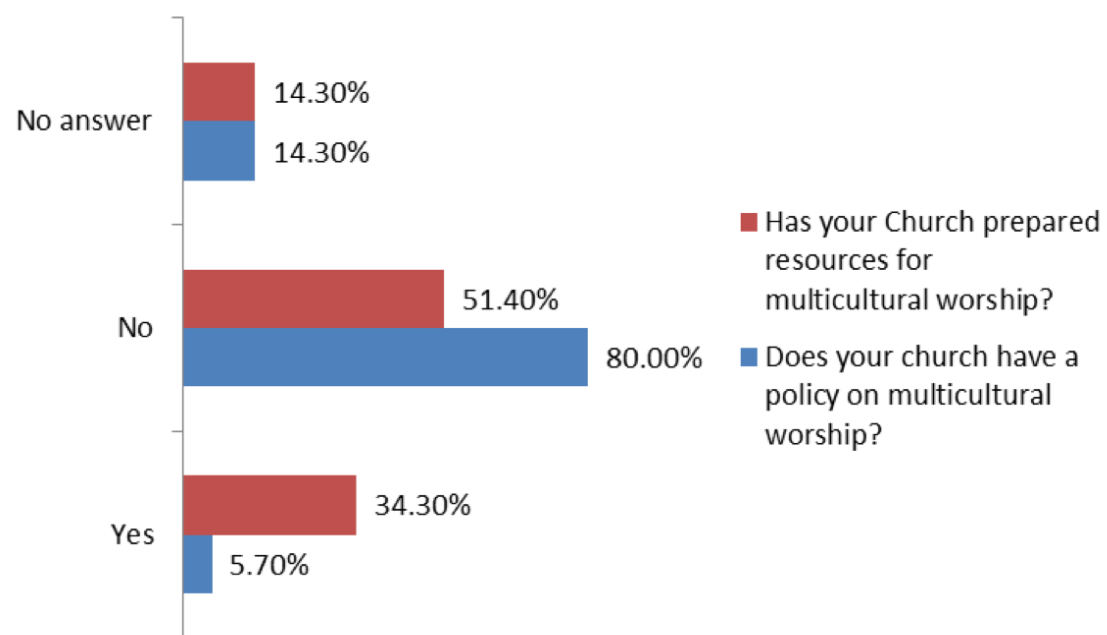


2. Data show a trend of growing communities as a result of migration and the creation of both intercultural and international churches

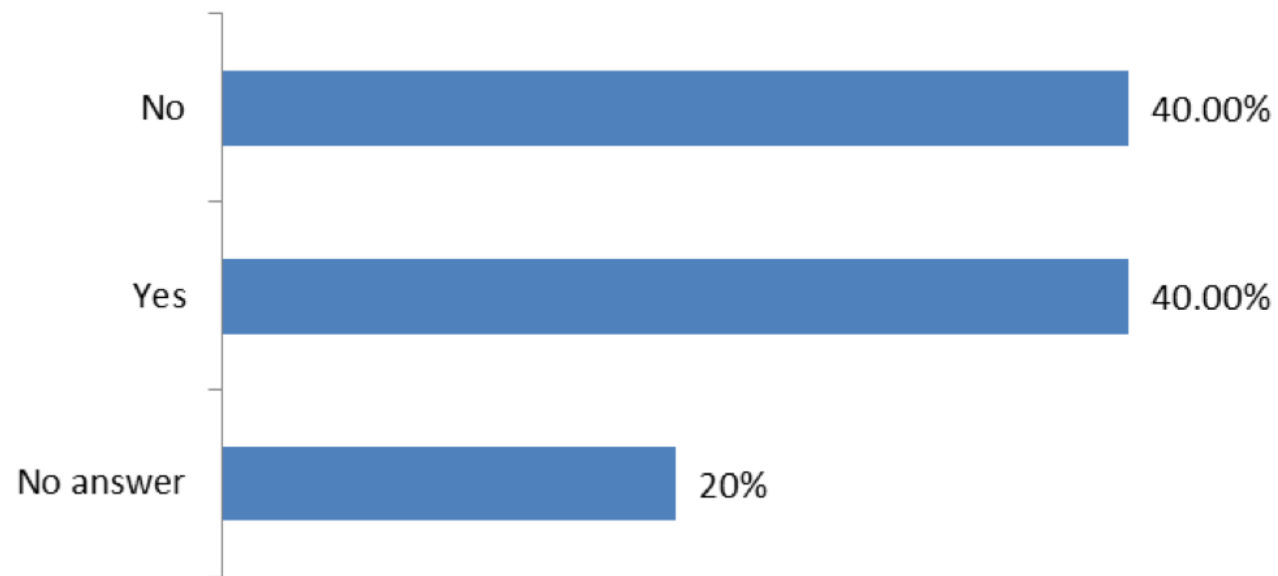
Churches answering 'yes' to questions about ethnic minority, international and intercultural parishes



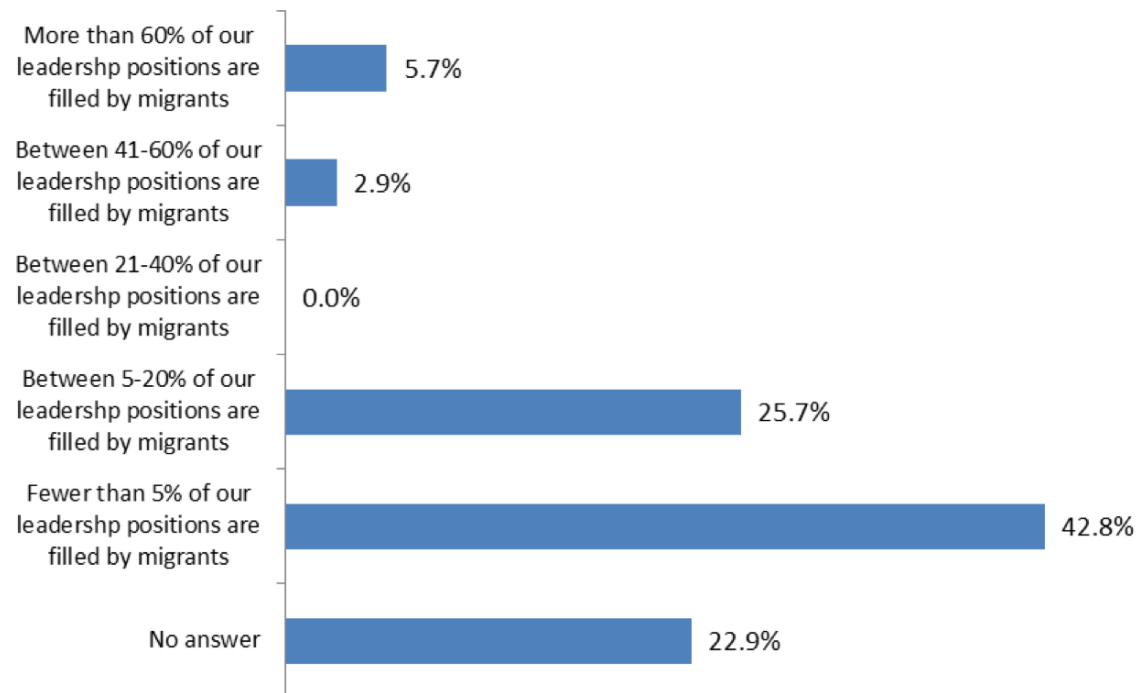
Responses to questions about multicultural policies and resources



‘Does your church have policies that encourage the active participation of migrants in the organisation and leadership of your churches?’

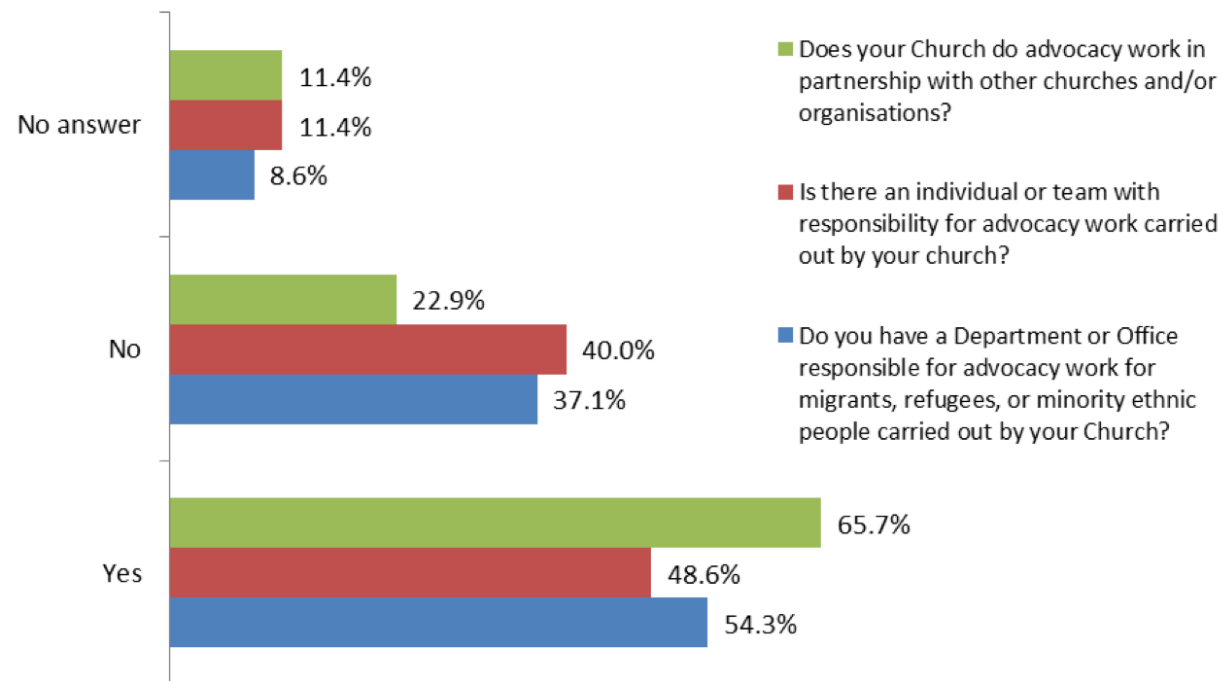


‘What percentage of leadership positions in your Church is held by migrants?’

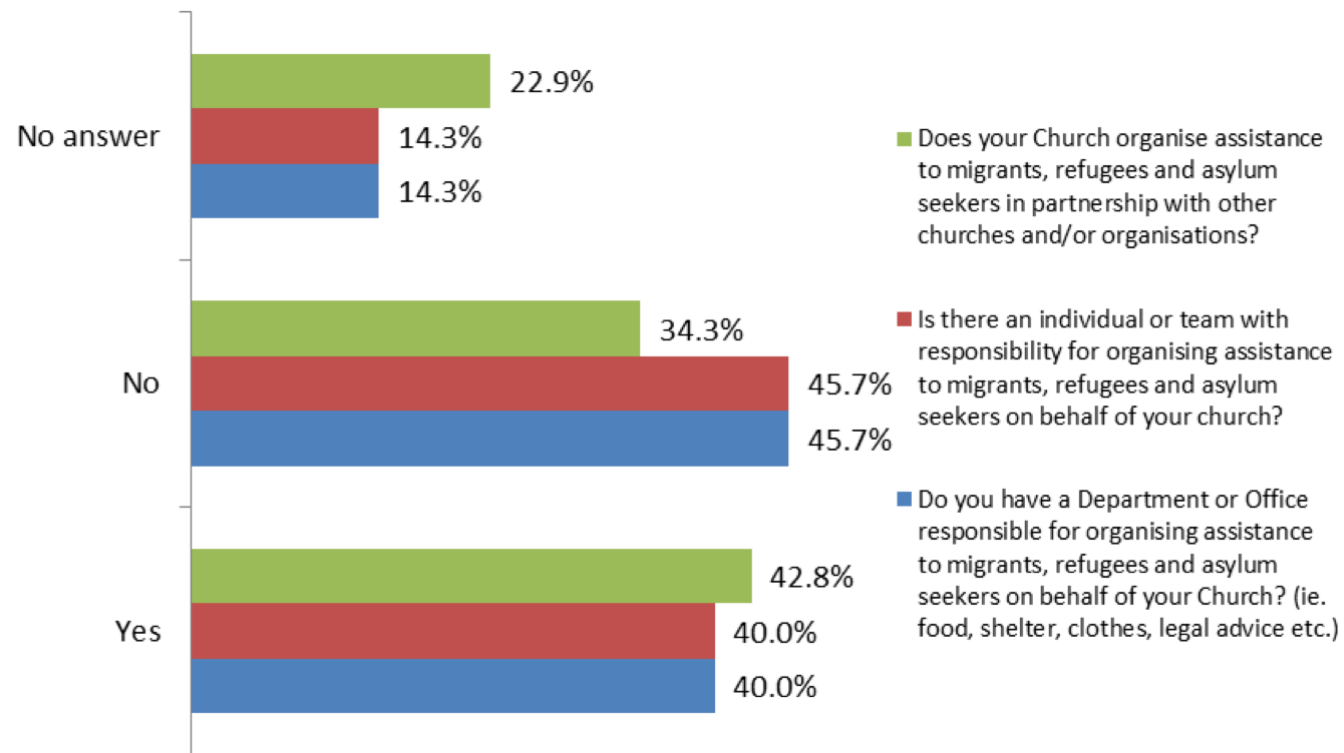


3. Consolidated work on advocacy and assistance

Church responses to questions concerning advocacy and advocacy partnerships



Responses regarding the provision of practical assistance to migrants, refugees or asylum seekers



Church typology		Composition	Language used	Worship style
Indigenous – historical churches	Mono-cultural churches	Mainly indigenous	Mainly indigenous language	Traditional
	Multicultural churches	Migrants and Indigenous	Mix of languages where the indigenous language is prevalent	Traditional with adjustments and input from other cultures
	Intercultural churches	Migrants and indigenous	Mix of languages	Integrated
	‘Ethnic’ churches	Migrants belonging to the same ‘ethnic’ churches.	‘Ethnic’ languages	Traditional
New churches	‘Ethnic’ churches	Migrants belonging to the same ‘ethnic’ churches.	‘Ethnic’ languages	Traditional
	Multicultural churches	Mainly migrants	European language spoken by migrants from different countries: i.e. English, French, Spanish.	Traditional with adjustments and input from other cultures

The role of churches in the process of integration

- Acting as bridge-builders for migrants;
- Providing migrants with spiritual as well as material stability;
- Maintaining religious as well as cultural ties with the migrants' country of origin.



Experiencing integration

- ▶ Experiences are diverse;
- ▶ Experiences are influenced by both migrants' attitudes as well as by the cultural and political context in the receiving societies;
- ▶ Receiving a warm welcome plays a key role in migrants' participation;
- ▶ The warm welcome has to be followed by migrants' involvement in church activities;
- ▶ Risk of dependency.



Conclusive reflections and challenges

- Churches are agents and places of integration but both migrants and churchgoers need to have a common understanding of what integration is
- Denominational shifts and multiple-belongings
- Belonging to the same denomination is not a guarantee of “sharing the same sense of things”, the same religious habitus. The religious habitus needs to be renegotiated.

The background features abstract green geometric shapes. On the left, a solid green triangle points downwards. On the right, a complex arrangement of overlapping translucent green triangles in various shades of green and yellow-green creates a layered effect. A thin, light gray line extends from the bottom left towards the right, passing behind the text.

Thank you very much
for your attention!

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