Some theorists have proclaimed the current period as the 'age of migration' (Castles and Miller 1998). Temporary and permanent movements are globalizing, accelerating, diversifying and feminizing. The United Nations estimates that there are approximately 125 million migrants in the world today. The number of countries influenced by these migratory movements has also increased, with Europe emerging as an important player in migratory movements. Of the 15–16 million third country nationals living in Europe, about forty-five per cent are women.

The number of migrant women in Europe has been increasing rapidly, especially, in the last two decades. Men formed the majority of immigrants to Europe in the post-war period of reconstruction, in flows dominated by labour migration (Zlotnik 1995), although even during this period there were some groups among whom women predominated. In the past two decades women have migrated to join men now resident in Europe, and family reunification remains the major reason for entry of women into Europe. However, more women are also migrating independently, for economic reasons, as students and refugees. Women also form significant numbers of undocumented workers, as has been shown in legalization programmes in several European countries. Women, for instance, formed 28 per cent of migrants who were legalized in 1987 and 1988 in Italy.

The significance of women in migration to Europe lies not only in these increased numbers, but also through their contributions to economic and social life in receiving countries. Migrant women have always been active in the labour market, although their labour may be invisible where they work as unpaid members in family businesses (Morokvasic 1993) or as home-workers in casualized, poorly
paid jobs in certain sectors such as clothes manufacturing (Phizacklea 1982). Increasingly, women have also found employment in certain skilled specialisms, such as nursing, teaching and computing. They may enter a country for training, for family re-unification, on work-permits, or as refugees and subsequently find employment in highly skilled jobs. However, for many migrant women, the move has also been accompanied by de-skilling. Racial and sexual discrimination in the labour market has led to unemployment, and to poor pay and conditions of work for those who have found employment. Some have set up businesses in their own right to combat some of this discrimination (Phizacklea and Ram 1996; Raghuram and Hardill 1998).

Migrant women also play an important role in welfare, both as providers and as recipients. The gendered nature of welfare provision, which prioritizes women’s role as carers in society, is heightened during migration. They provide welfare through both their paid and unpaid labour. Many of the recent women migrants to Europe have moved to seek jobs in the casualized welfare sector, particularly domestic work and caring of dependent children, elderly and disabled, as state provision of welfare is not keeping pace with the requirements of ageing populations across Europe.

Migration into Europe has become an increasingly politically sensitive subject, with migrants often cast as dependent on welfare, or alternatively as creating unemployment for nationals by providing cheaper labour. Migration policies have come to occupy centre-stage in the agendas of some political parties. At the same time, a number of national and European level non-governmental organizations have formed around migration issues, campaigning for changes to laws governing both the entry and the rights of migrants. The politics of gender in migration has varied sharply between countries. In most countries women have been considered the vectors of integration and their familial role in raising the next generation has been highlighted. They are less often perceived to pose a threat to the employment of nationals, as female migrants are constructed as family-formers rather than labourers. On the other hand, the racialization of migrant women’s experiences in policy debates has been especially marked in some countries, with the primary focus of policies for migrant women being social integration rather than professional integration (Council of Europe 1994).

In recent decades, there has been increasing community and political activity among immigrant groups in European states. With notable exceptions, such as Great Britain and Sweden, immigrants had either limited or no rights of political association and representation until the 1980s. The transformation of immigrants into ethnic minorities has given them greater security and allowed them to engage in trade union and other forms of political activity. State strategies of incorporation have increasingly relied on immigrant association at local and national levels (Soysal 1994). Migrants, as possessors of disproportionately greater capital and skills than those who remain in their home country, have organized themselves to influence the politics of the home country. Some, such as the Kurds, have effectively organized at the Europe-wide level.

Despite this increasing presence of migrant women in Europe, and a recognition of feminization of migration (Castles and Miller 1998), mainstream literature on migration has continued to ignore their presence. Most studies appear to be gender-neutral while utilizing models of migration based on the experiences of men. Women, where their presence is acknowledged, are often treated as dependants, migrating under family reunion, and their contribution to the economies and societies of destination countries ignored (Simon and Bretell 1986). Over the past fifteen years, feminists have highlighted the heterogeneity of women’s position within the migration stream, their presence in the labour market, their contribution to welfare and their increasing political activities. Yet, the migration of women continues to receive little attention in mainstream literature and migration theorists have not adequately taken on board the significance of gender in understanding migration today.

In this book, we aim to consolidate current work on migration of women in Europe and to highlight the significance of the female presence in European migration streams. We focus on gendered differences in migration trajectories and incorporate a gender dimension into theorizations of contemporary migrations. We argue that the importance of women lies not merely in their increased numbers, but in their specific position in the labour market and welfare systems of Europe and in the forms of political activity and organization, both in Europe and in their countries of origin.

**European context**

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Europe was a continent of emigration. Millions of Europeans moved to the New World and
to the colonies that they established in all the other continents. The most significant permanent migration during this period was that to the settler societies, and towards the end of the century, to South Africa. Shorter-term movements to the colonies were also important. Colonial linkages influenced the stream of migration even among the ex-colonies. For example, Spanish and Portuguese migration to their Latin American colonies continued even after these countries gained their independence in the nineteenth century.

This pattern of emigration continued well into this century. Inter-war labour shortages in northern Europe encouraged labour migration from southern Europe. In 1931, there were more migrants in France than in migration-dominated settler societies such as the USA. Refugee movements also contributed to the migrant population. Refugees from Russia, Poland, and Germany, Jewish refugees from eastern Europe and those fleeing from the Spanish Civil War all moved both to western European and New World countries. On the whole, migration from Europe before World War II was male dominated with more men than women emigrating, although with some variations. Ireland, for instance, has had an overall female majority since the middle of the nineteenth century, and migration to the USA has been female dominated since the 1930s. Refugee movements were largely family migration and women formed a significant and visible part of the migration within Europe. Transitory movements of the elite from the colonies, primarily for education, but also for employment, occurred during these years. The numbers involved were relatively small, but in a number of cases their political impact in their home countries was large, especially as this elite often formed a significant caucus within independence movements in these countries.

In the post-war period, there have been different regimes of migration, with particular forms of entry dominating during certain periods (see Chapter 3). The period immediately after the World War II has been largely characterized by refugee movements. The war created millions of displaced persons in the late 1940s and 1950s. Germans expelled from erstwhile German-controlled areas moved primarily from east to west, Italians moved north, and the refugees expelled from the USSR moved primarily to France, UK, Switzerland and Sweden.

A number of colonies gained their independence during the first post-war decade, most significantly the big Asian countries, India in 1947 and Indonesia in 1948. Decolonization and the attendant dismantling of the colonial administrative services fuelled large-scale return migration of European colonizers. In fact, this return migration continued through the first decades after independence, as the presence of 'old colonials' in professional sectors such as education continued for some time.

For about twenty years from the mid 1950s, Europe went through a period of economic boom, which, along with the effects of the World War II, i.e. labour shortages and reconstruction, led to a great increase in labour migration. Early labour migration, including that from the colonies was male dominated although women without spouses also migrated. Women often used emigration as a way of negotiating difficult marital relations or overcoming gendered hierarchies within their home country (Morokvasic 1993). Most of the labour migration during this period focused on manufacturing and construction industries: industries that primarily employed men. However, female-dominated sectors of the labour market, usually in the caring professions, such as teaching, nursing and in domestic work, also experienced labour shortages. In Italy, female-led migration to meet demands for domestic work was common even in the 1970s.

Colonial linkages continued to fuel significant migratory moves throughout this period. As colonial empires collapsed and many countries received their independence, European nationals living in the colonies returned home. In the 1950s, most of the Dutch who lived in Indonesia decided to return to the Netherlands, accompanied by many Indonesian former civil servants and military personnel. The last big group immigrated in 1962, when former Dutch New-Guinea became a part of Indonesia. Similar moves also occurred within the British colonies. Throughout the 1960s, the UK received migrants from its colonies in Africa, particularly Kenya and Tanzania, but also refugee movements from its ex-colony Uganda in 1978. Most of these movements were family movements, with both men and women migrating.

The economic downturn in Europe following the oil crisis of 1973 altered the nature of migration into Europe. As economic growth slowed, guest-worker systems were shut down. The primary reason for migrants entering Europe now became family reunification and the proportion of women migrating into Europe increased. Towards the end of the decade, the expansion in the economies of the Mediterranean countries altered the migration profile of these
countries from net exporters of labour to net importers of labour. Immigrants into southern Europe also included return migrants from northern Europe. For instance, Spanish migrants returned from Switzerland and Germany, and Yugoslavians from Germany.

Immigration from the colonies continued, although it took several forms. The Netherlands continued to receive migrants from its dependencies, principally Surinam, which gained its independence in 1975 from the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Surinamese concerns about the political and economic prospects in their country just prior to their independence in 1975, led to migration peaks in 1974, 1975 and 1980. The usual type of immigration was that of complete households, so that subsequent family reunification immigration was small in this group. Skilled migration also continued throughout this period, and once again the direction of migration followed established migration routes. Resettlement programmes for Chilean and Vietnamese refugees contributed significantly to refugee movements during this period.

The nature of international migration in Europe has undergone further changes in the past two decades. Geopolitical and economic changes have led to shifts in the definition and meaning of the ‘international’. One major transformation has been the re-drawing of national boundaries, most notably the dissolution of some states such as the old Soviet Union, the Baltic states and Czechoslovakia, and the reunification of East and West Germany. Internal movements have become international migration for the post-Soviet nations, whereas the movement across what was one of the most highly policed borders, that between East and West Germany, has now become an internal movement. The re-drawing of boundaries has been accompanied by considerable ethnic conflict, leading to large flows of refugees. Eastern European countries, such as Hungary and Romania, have become transit points for countries of former USSR.

During the same period, boundaries between the fifteen states, which now form the European Union, have been opened up to the movement of capital, commodities and people, and this has influenced the way in which national boundaries are experienced by people. These changes will also affect the six other states that are preparing for admission and whose citizens will also acquire rights to free movement within the EU seven years after the country joins the Union. Internal border controls have eased for citizens of the member states and the implications of border crossings and migration have altered. Two per cent of EU workers, who are employed, work in a member state other than that in which they have citizenship. At the same time, controls over the movement of non-citizens have been strengthened and the term ‘fortress Europe’ has been used to reflect these shifts (Kofman and Sales 1992).

To summarize, despite the variations in numbers, the differential viability and the politicization of certain migrant categories, during particular periods, a broad spectrum of migrant movements has occurred throughout the century. Even during the period that was dominated by labour migration, other forms of migration, such as family reunification and refugee movements, occurred.

Contemporary migration in Europe is also influenced by the major trends in recent migration: acceleration, diversification, feminization, and globalization (Castles and Miller 1998). The numbers of migrants throughout the world have increased. This is partly caused by the shifting nature of employment patterns, particularly an increase in the number of those working on short-term contracts and a consequent growth in short-term movements. Technological changes have led to greater mobility of both jobs as well as people. Another major source of migration is tourism. The numbers of tourists to Europe have increased and some of those entering on tourist visas have extended their stay through marriage, employment, or in order to study. More recently, the number of refugees and asylum-seekers has increased rapidly and they now form the largest group of migrants into Europe.

The nature of movements has also diversified in the 1990s. Migration is still influenced by labour shortages, although these shortages manifest as specific sectoral imbalances leading to niche markets for labour. The primary shift in labour demand through most of the industrialized world has been from industrial to service sector. These service sector jobs occur in gendered niches, where labour recruitment is influenced by the sexual division of labour. Women dominate some of these shortage sectors where local populations are unable to meet labour requirements such as domestic work, nursing and teaching. Thus, there has been an increase in women migrants in particular sectors of the labour market.

As the extent of connections between places have expanded and deepened, the directions of migration have become more differentiated and diverse. One major trend has been the increasing concentration of migrants in cities, particularly the financial capitals.
of the world: New York, London, and to a lesser extent Tokyo. These cities have become receivers of heterogeneous flows of population, disproportionately young, and, as in the case of London, with a number of national flows dominated by women (Kofman 1998).

Definitions and sources

So who is a migrant? There is no uniform criterion for defining a migrant, either across countries or across time. The two primary elements in defining the category have been the criteria of mobility, i.e. the period of entry and stay in a receiving country, and that of citizenship. In this section, we outline some of the differences in categorization arising out of the mobility criteria. The conditions for and rates of take up of citizenship across Europe are discussed in Chapter 4. While citizenship and migration policies are usually left to national legislation, the strengthening of the European Union has created a new category of citizenship with variable rights in EU member countries. For instance, full members of EU have rights of mobility and some political rights across EU, whereas citizens of countries that are not members of EU, but have signed up to the Schengen agreement, have rights of mobility and may be considered quasi-citizens of the new Europe. A significant category to emerge recently has been that of ‘third country nationals’, i.e. those who are citizens of non-EU countries, whose rights of mobility have not matched those of EU citizens.

Defining migrants is a contested process, involving processes of inclusion and exclusion. By defining migrants as non-nationals, they are categorized as not belonging, and this is used as a mechanism for restricting or denying rights to employment, welfare and political activity. Exclusion and inclusion are not only imposed, but also perceived. Hence, migrants who are accepted and even have citizenship in the host country may still perceive themselves as migrants, particularly in collective settings where shared ethnic grouping can become the definitive criteria for belonging, and differences between the groups and host populations become highlighted. Such perceptions are further sharpened by attitudes towards migration and migrant issues within the host population.

These process of exclusion are also ideological in that they conflate migrancy with racial ‘otherness’, so that the major criteria used to label migrants becomes that of the visible marker of ‘race’.

But relatively ‘invisible’ communities, such as east Europeans in western Europe, may also be racialized, not through differences in colour but by public perceptions, particularly of their dependence on the welfare state. Racialization also operates as a legacy of colonialism, especially in countries such as the UK where the migrant populations are largely drawn from the ex-colonies of the host country. In France, the history of colonialism in Africa, particularly the Algerian problem, has been markedly different from that in the French Caribbean, and this difference is played out in attitudes towards migrants from these two regions. Here, ‘race’ as a marker is subervient to issues of religion. Islam becomes the primary axis of difference and the basis for denoting migrants.

Although there are no easy answers to the question of who is defined as migrant, academics have used the United Nations recommendations as a starting point. The United Nations recommends that a migrant is defined as a person who has moved to a country other than that of their usual residence and has been living in that country for more than one year. The country of destination effectively becomes their new country of usual residence (Eurostat 1994, 1997). However, varying definitions have been employed by different organizations in different countries and at different times and so migration data are always considered notoriously unreliable.

Each country has formulated its definitions in relation to the specificities of its own migration history, the demographic data collection systems that it has in place and the aims of its migration policy. Some of the criteria used within the European Union are an intention to stay (Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain), a minimum period of stay in the country (Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Netherlands) and the nature of housing occupied (Germany). Countries vary in the minimum period of time that a resident is required to stay in a country before they are registered as immigrants, varying from just one month (Netherlands) to one year (Portugal, Sweden, Finland) (Eurostat 1995). These regulations vary between nationals and non-nationals. Criteria for defining emigration and immigration also differ. Furthermore, migration data are not collected by some countries, most notably France, while Spain does not provide emigration data for emigration of non-nationals. Another major gap in the migration data occurs where nationals from certain countries are not categorized as immigrants, for example, the Irish in the UK and members of...
certain African countries in France; consequently the reliability of these statistical data are further undermined. The degree and nature of inclusion of asylum-seekers in immigration data also varies between countries. Diversity in national regulations in registration of refugees between date of physical entry and official recognition affect the comparability of data on refugees. Besides, the increasing number of undocumented migrants in Europe further limits the validity of migration statistics.

The nature of data collected by each country also alters through time. In Portugal, for instance, between 1941–1988, the source for emigration data collated by the Portuguese National Statistical Institute (INE) was the record of the emigrant passport. Since 1989, these passports have been abolished and the primary data collection source is now an Emigration Survey, the sample for which is obtained from the Employment Survey. Such data have the shortcomings inherent in their source. Comparability between any two data sets is therefore limited.

Even where countries utilize the same definition of migration, the data collection systems used may lead to wide variations in the nature of data collected. All secondary sources of data are influenced by the purposes for which they have been produced, in that they are skewed by the assumptions of those who produce the data. However, as migration has received more and more attention from the international community, the collection of information on migration has received priority. At an international level, both the European Union, in the shape of its Statistical Service (Eurostat), and the United Nations have established programmes for the harmonization of migration statistics. Such harmonization of data has been prioritized within Europe in order to achieve comparability of data.

Migrants vary in the distances they move, the reasons for movement, the nature of incorporation within the political system of the new country and in their degree of permanence. On these bases, we may distinguish those who move within Europe, from those who have moved from outside Europe, those who have travelled short distances from those who have travelled long distances. Migrants also differ in the extent and nature of their recognition and the attendant rights in the new country. Illegal migrants have very few rights, while the rights of legal migrants vary between countries and across different statuses. The rights to stay, the right to work, the right to move, the rights to welfare and the rights to partake in political activity, are all differently constructed and may not necessarily be coterminous.

Like other forms of categorization, the degree of permanence is difficult to use as a criterion as data for this is difficult to obtain. While it may be assumed that significant numbers will shift from temporary to permanent stay, there is increasing evidence that more and more migrants are transient, and may move, while return migration is also important among certain migrant streams. Reason for entry is the most widely used criterion in defining migrants. On the whole, migration legislation and policy utilise the reason for entry as the basis for granting other rights. However, as different categories of migrants have dominated in certain periods the relationship between rights, categories and their historical place must be scrutinized, rather than assumed (see Chapter 3).

Labour migration was for long considered the primary form of migration in Europe. Labour migrants are those who enter to seek work, and usually waged work. Although the migration discourse has until recently revolved largely around unskilled migrants, numbers of skilled people have also entered, especially on work permits. Family reunion migration pertains to those who enter as spouses or children of the primary migrant. When the children of migrant workers marry someone from the country of origin of the parent(s) this often leads to so-called family formation immigration. This type of immigration frequently occurred during the 1980s and had very specific impacts on men and women. Student migration has increased throughout this period, although there have been shifts in country of origin of student migrants. The rights to work in this category are limited and it is difficult to switch from a student visa to a work permit. Tourists who overstay or switch categories through marriage, by obtaining jobs and legalizing their stay are another important category of migrants. In recent years, the largest increase in migration to Europe has occurred under the category of asylum-seekers and refugees. Those who apply for asylum at the port of entry in Europe are termed asylum-seekers. Asylum-seekers have to obtain refugee status from the country that they entered, a long legal process.

Although data collected are based on criteria for entry, migrants often switch categories. One primary switching mechanism is marriage, but length of relationship, and period of stay together before and after migration are used as criteria to curtail switching. Thus, students may marry residents and gain rights to stay, but in
the UK they have to remain with their spouse for at least one year after marriage. In most countries in Europe, where marriage between homosexuals is not recognized, this avenue will only be available to heterosexual couples.

Another question that arises is when do migrants stop being migrants? Do we include the children of migrants who have obtained citizenship but remain in visible minorities within the receiving state? The children of migrants, often called the ‘second generation’ form ethnic minorities in these states. Although these children may have access to citizenship, they often face forms of discrimination similar to that of migrants. In this book we have adopted the most inclusive definition of migrants and have incorporated some of the issues faced by ‘ethnic minority’ women, but the main focus is on migrants. However, ethnic minority itself carries with it many of the problems inherited from its migrant parents. It often denotes a cohesiveness, cultural and historical, collapsing for instance, the very divergent experiences of migrants, for example from rural Punjab to Nottingham in the UK with that of the double migrated east African Asians of Gujarati origin moving from Kenya to Leicester, UK. Furthermore, an ethnic community carries with it little of pejorative nature of being a minority. Hence, Americans in Germany may not be considered ‘real’ migrants, whereas Turks form a minority.

The official terminology used is related to the primary preoccupations of each nation state. For instance, in Britain, the dominance of the race relations paradigm has collapsed the issue of migration with that of ‘race’ (Miles 1989), whereas in France, the primary distinction remains that between immigrants (immigrés) and French nationals (Neveu 1994). French principles of universalism guarantee equal rights to all citizens so that citizenship becomes the primary criterion for difference whereas, in the UK, the historical legacy of the Commonwealth whose members all had access to British citizenship but whose conceptions of national identity are highly racialized. In Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands the term minorities is used for all migrants, as they assumed that all migrants were likely to settle. On the other hand, Germany has assumed all migration to be temporary, referring to migrant-workers as gastarbeiter (guest workers).

The Migrants Forum, launched by the European Communities Commission to give voice to migrants has used both status and discrimination as criteria, although selectively, in defining its membership. It includes those who do not have voting rights in Europe, primarily third country nationals so that associations representing Italians in Germany are not included. However, Black organizations in the UK, whose members have UK and hence EU citizenship, are admitted to the Forum (Neveu 1994). Hence, migrant in this context is subtly predicated on the racial category non-White, and in opposition to the imaginary White Europe.

Thus, migrant is a contested term. The contents of the category alter across space and time, in different contexts, involve self-definition and exclusion, and a denial of access to rights.

**Definitional issues, sources and gender**

These definitional issues often have specific impacts on women migrants. Data collected focuses on the head of the household, who is implicitly assumed to be male. Female-headed households are often neglected. Gender disaggregated migration data is now collected by all countries within Europe, but although they have been collected for some years, they often remain unpublished. Even where published data have been available it has not prompted much interest and has often not resulted in a gendered analysis of migration. One reason for this is that conceptualizations of migration were driven by the labour migration model where labour was assumed to be male, and women were thought to be economically inactive. Migrants were assumed to be single men in search of employment, although throughout the labour migration period, women both migrated and participated in the economy (see Chapter 3). However, among certain categories of migrants, such as skilled labour migrants and asylum-seekers, there is still little gender-disaggregated data available. Feminists have argued that the categories used to define migration are also not necessarily appropriate to the experience of female migrants. The limitations of the collection and categorization influence the forms of analysis that can be undertaken. Thus, what is required is gender-disaggregated data collection, gender-sensitive categorization and gendered analysis.

One way in which the limitations of quantitative data sources have been circumvented is through the use of interviews and oral histories of migrants. While quantitative data can be useful for assessing the numerical significance of women in migration streams, the nature of the migrant experience and the variations between
different women migrants is better understood through the use of qualitative data. Qualitative data often provide a holistic view of women’s experiences. These sources have been better able to reveal the different spatio-temporal dimensions of female migration, the multiplicity of causes for their moves and the often overlapping strategies used by women migrants. It provides a flavour of the heterogeneity of migration, the range of ages at which people migrate, the varying skills they bring with them, the different reasons for moving, and for staying or moving again, the social relations that facilitate migration and the regimes that influence migrant trajectories. They also highlight the significance of gender as a key variable in the experience of migration.

A number of other sources also provide detailed and graphic portrayals of the migration experience, even though such sources may not have been created explicitly in order to provide this information. The cinema, autobiography, photography, ethnographic pieces, to mention just a few, have increasingly been used as sources of information. Recently, a number of films have focused on aspects of migrant lives, emphasizing themes such as familial conflict across gender and generation, but also challenging stereotypical images of migrant groups. In France, for example, most of these films depict the lives of more ‘settled’ migrant communities such as those of north Africans by Malik Chibane in Hexagone (1994) and La Douce France (1995; Tarr 1999). Far fewer films have examined issues concerning the process of migration and the exploitation of undocumented migrants, an exception being the Belgian film La Promesse (1998). There has also been a growth of interest in literature written by migrants (King et al. 1995; Brinkler-Gabler and Smith 1997), which connects conditions in the homeland with the movement to the destination countries, and describes migratory experiences and relationships with the dominant society. It has usually been the largest and long-established migrant groups that have dominated cinematic and literary production, for example Asian and Caribbean in the UK, North African in France and Turkish in Germany.

Autobiographical accounts of women across different generations could be used to understand the changing class and gender experiences (Gabaccia 1995; Chamberlain 1994) used oral histories to demonstrate familial networks and the movements between the homeland and receiving countries. Commemorative historiography has also come of age, as for instance, with the literature and documentaries that have traced and explored the history of Caribbean migration to the UK since the late 1940s.

**Feminist contributions to the analysis of European immigration**

The first studies to incorporate women were written in the early 1970s by women of immigrant origin. Early feminist research on migration aimed to increase the visibility of women within migratory streams. In France, Morokvasic’s work on Yugoslav women, which was the theme of her PhD thesis, pioneered discussions on the role of gender in migration, while Leonetti-Taboada, herself the daughter of Spanish Civil War refugees, worked on Iberian women. Since 1975, a number of conferences have focused on migrant women and International Labour Organization (ILO) provisions have been extended to migrant women. However, Morokvasic (1983, 1984) argued that despite a proliferation of studies, many have perpetuated the stereotype of women as wife and mother. What quickly became apparent was the diversity in women’s experiences, and that women were migrating for employment, as parts of households or to join family members who had already migrated.

The first stocktaking occurred in the early 1980s in the shape of the UNESCO publication Women on the Move (1980), with chapters by Abadan-Untar and Morokvasic on Europe. Around the same time, Phizacklea offered a structuralist analysis of labour migration in One Way Ticket (1983a,b). Morokvasic (1984) also focused on labour migration but argued that access to employment does not necessarily emancipate women. Simon and Breitell (1986) subsequently produced an edited volume on migrant women where they also emphasized cultural elements influencing migration, family life and reproduction, and recognized a greater variety of migrant categories, including refugees. Taravella (1984) produced an early bibliography.

Since then studies of female migration have almost exclusively been based on case studies and biographical material. By the 1990s a large number of case studies had accumulated, some of which provided a more European-wide perspective (Campani 1993a,b; Morokvasic 1993; Wihtol de Wenden 1996). To some extent this occurred because of European integration and the impact of stress Europe on migrant women (Kofman and Sales 1992; Lutz
The new fields of interest and the accumulation of studies, including those that are European-wide, have yet to make any substantial impact on theorizations of migration or European studies of migration. A selection of key texts confirms this silence and the assumption that the only migrant who counts is male (Collinson 1993; King 1993; Miles and Thranhardt 1995; Uçarer and Puchala 1997). It also reveals a continuing inability to incorporate into European research the recent meso level of analysis in migration research (Boyd 1989; Goss and Lindquist 1995; Lee 1996; Matthei Miller 1996; Bjerenc 1997), which emphasizes the role of households and wider social networks in migration decisions. The genderless interpretation of migratory movements also takes no account of wider economic, social and cultural changes that have affected women and men, both migrant and indigenous. Feminist work has especially emphasized the significance of household strategies and power relations within it in deciding how and where to move, but this work has not been taken up in research on migration in Europe.

Many of these texts examine new forms of migration and processes of citizenship and exclusion. Wrench and Solomos (1993), though not incorporating female migration into a general framework, include chapters on migrant women (Lutz 1993; Brah 1993b). The one major exception is the volume on new migrations in Europe where one of the editors, Helma Lutz, is a leading researcher on female migrations in Europe. Morokvasic (1997) in rethinking the implications of mobility from eastern Europe for emigration and immigration has incorporated female and male protagonists. Ackers (1998) has explored for the first time the experiences of migrant women moving within Europe, adding a significant new perspective to the existing literature.

What has emerged has been a diversity of categories of migration, new and traditional: labour (legal and undocumented), family reunification and formation, marriage, prostitution, asylum seekers and refugees. The effects of immigration policy on the status and exclusion of women from the labour market and social rights is also generating attention (see Simon and Bretell 1986; Kofman and Sales 1997, 1998).

While there has been an increasing recognition of the rapidity and the significance of changes in migratory experiences in recent decades within Europe, and complex theorizations of these processes, there has been little attempt to acknowledge the explicitly
gendered nature of these experiences in mainstream analysis (Kofman 1999). On the whole, gender has rarely been considered a significant analytical category within European literature on migration, which has remained gender blind. Migrants have been treated as asexual categories and feminists researching women have often focused on nationals rather than immigrant women.

Family reunion migration, despite its numerical significance in Europe, has tended in general to be neglected (Lahav 1996), reflecting the lack of interest in a migration of dependants whose labour market participation is supposedly of secondary consequence (Kofman 1999). Whilst allowing family reunion in principle, many states have made it more difficult to comply with the requirements of housing, income and no recourse to public support. The fastest growing category has been asylum seekers, which is dominated by men, though a sizeable female presence indicates the need to study this group. In addition, the absence of gender guidelines in the refugee determination process and the restrictive interpretation of the application of the Geneva Convention have negative consequences for female asylum seekers (Crawley 1997; special issue of Refuge 1997).

New societies of origin and destination as well as flows have become far more important, yet the ways in which such streams are gendered have so far received little attention. Migration into southern Europe has increased, often with high female flows in domestic labour from the Philippines, Cape Verde, South America and from eastern Europe (Albanians, Polish). Women in eastern Europe who have borne the brunt in the transition to market economy in the east and are often highly qualified, but forced to work in the domestic sector in Germany (Friese 1995), have moved west, sometimes adopting a rotational character to their migration (Morokvasic 1991a).

Crises of national identity and conflicting laws concerning personal status have pushed women to the fore in political debates around issues of the wearing of the headscarf, polygamy and exclusion. This has been especially charged in a country such as France where women have turned into the ‘vectors of integration’. Wichers de Wenden (1996) sees the social and cultural dimensions of female immigration posing acute dilemmas between principles of universality, equality of rights, encouragement of individualism, tolerance and respect for other cultures and religious pluralism and identities. Campani (1995) suggests that women are becoming increasingly active subjects in the process of migration. She comments that research on the networks, groups and sociability of migrant women is still rare, although in recent years in France the growth in local migrant women’s groups has also led to more attention being paid to them (Quiminial 1997). Sudbury (1998) has examined migrant women’s organizations in the UK, focusing largely on Black (African, Caribbean, Chinese, south Asian) women’s organizations. She takes up the issue of emancipation as a strategy. She argues that such emancipation is not merely achieved through access to the world of work. It is necessary to understand the different migrant trajectories, the contexts of the choices made, the emancipatory motivation, the impact of migration on familial structures and the role and status of women. Women migrants have constructed different subject positions within key debates, organizing themselves to campaign on local issues, but it is unevenly acknowledged in academic research across Europe. Besides, although women have campaigned locally to achieve similar aims, there has been little attempt to bring them together or to use European political space to achieve their ends.

**This book**

In this chapter we have set the context for European migration this century. We have highlighted the significance of women migrants in Europe and existing feminist work in this field. In Chapter 2 we outline some of the key theoretical debates to which this book contributes. Chapter 3 details European migratory regimes and examines the position of women migrants in these flows. It aims to challenge conceptualization of male labour migration models to Europe and restore a more accurate historical picture of gendered migration. Chapter 4 examines notions of citizenship and cultural variations in models of collective incorporation of migrants. It explores the degree to which international conventions may provide additional rights and argues that citizenship continues to be a key objective for migrants and a primary modus for acquiring rights and combating social exclusion.

The next three chapters examine different aspects of migrant women in relation to employment, welfare and politics. In Chapter 5 we follow changes in the past few decades in a selected number of states of migrant women’s position in and contribution to the labour market. In Chapter 6 we examine different welfare
regimes in Europe and the role of migrant women as providers, mediators and clients of welfare. In Chapter 7 we outline the range of political activities in which migrant women participate and the ways they attempt to negotiate and challenge power relationships at different levels ranging from the home and the private sphere, to the national level and the European sphere.

This book is not the product of a series of research projects designed specifically to elucidate key questions regarding migratory histories, employment, welfare, citizenship and politics. That would constitute a mammoth task. Hence, inevitably, the partial coverage of certain areas has been one of the major problems we have confronted in seeking to provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the situation prevailing in different European states. The book is also, to varying degrees, disproportionately dependent on British material. This arises for several reasons. Firstly, the interest in gender and migration in the social sciences and the development of migrant women’s groups has a longer history in the UK than in many other European countries. As we have seen, the major reviews of literature on women and international migration are found in English-language journals and books. Secondly, much of the available material in European states tends to be produced in the form of unpublished reports or small-scale publications. This makes it extremely difficult to access material uniformly throughout European states. In each state there may be particular preoccupations or an emphasis on certain groups, and often those who are considered problematic in terms of traditional customs by official organizations.

The authors have brought to bear their own expertise. Eleonore Kofman has undertaken research on the development of policies towards migrant women in France and is particularly interested in counteracting a truncated history of female migration in European Rosemary Sales has been involved in projects concerning the settlement of refugees and the role of migrant women as advocates in the UK. Eleonore and Rosemary have worked together for almost a decade in researching issues of exclusion and citizenship facing migrant women in the European Union. Annie Phizacklea has a long-standing interest in specific sectors of employment involving migrant women across a number of European countries. Parth Raghuram has been involved in researching migration issues in India, gender and ethnic minority enterprise in the UK, and is currently interested in issues of skilled migration to Europe.

Gender and migration theory

While there has been a dramatic speeding up of contemporary processes of feminization of migration, our conceptualization of these developments has not moved as far. Perhaps some of this glacial movement in theory is because of the long-standing stalemate between models based on classical economics and those that draw on a neo-Marxist political economy tradition. Both of these claimed to be gender-neutral, but were in fact based on a model of gender relations that assumed female dependence. As Truong has argued:

At best these two paradigms can incorporate women as a normative category in migration flows, and explain their migration in terms of individual rational decision based on wage differentials (neo-classical), or collective rational decisions of households and states based on the interest in remittances (neo-Marxian).

(Truong 1996: 31)

Women migrate for a whole range of reasons such as poverty, debt, and many other external factors over which they have little control. These problems are not limited to them, though their impact is always gendered. The decision to migrate is influenced by wage differentials in sender areas receiving areas, but this is only one element in the decision to migrate. Some non-economic factors are especially important for women. Social constraints facing women (or lack) also influence sex selectivity patterns in migration.

Marital discord and physical violence, unhappy and broken relationships and the impossibility of divorce often influence women’s decisions to migrate. Migration also offers women and men the