

der Regierungsvereinbarungen kaum zu verhindern. Es wird auch künftig mit illegaler Beschäftigung zu rechnen sein.

Der Überblick über Aspekte internationaler und nationaler Reaktionen auf das Phänomen der Illegalität weist auf schwerwiegende wirtschaftliche und soziale Entwicklungen in den Gesellschaften Westeuropas hin. Im Sog von *Pull-* und *Push-*Faktoren internationaler Migrationsbewegungen erhält das Problem eine neue Dimension: Es wird zunehmend deutlich, daß es kaum noch möglich ist, Illegalität überhaupt zu vermeiden. Staatliche Reaktionen darauf markieren Eindämmungsmaßnahmen zum Schutze einheimischer Gesellschaften. Die staatlichen Reaktionen verweisen auf eine tendenzielle Harmonisierung von Instrumenten im europäischen Rahmen: Visapolitik und Flughafenregelungen sind Beispiele für diesen Angleichungsprozeß.

Daß die staatlichen Reaktionen sich zunehmend im europäischen Rahmen internationalisieren, zeigt zugleich die Grenzen staatlicher Abwehrstrategien. Die Festlegung Europas wird nur schwer aufrechtzuerhalten sein. Geht es um globalisierte Modelle zum Abbau von Entwicklungsunterschieden. Auf der Ebene der Nationalstaaten wird es künftig sicher noch mehr Diskussionen über Begründungen für die Aufrechterhaltung weit auseinanderreichender Lebensstandards geben müssen, wenn man ernsthaft Illegalität eindämmen will.

## The Informal Economy as Bastard Sphere of Social Integration: the Case of Amsterdam

By Jan Rath

These days Turkish immigrants and their organisations in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, are gravely concerned about their position in the economy. Their rate of unemployment is exceptionally high compared to that of other social categories, specifically the native Dutch, and moreover, the economic niche they have settled into is seriously threatened. In the 1980s quite a number of Turks found a job and a living in the garment industry, particularly in self-established contracting firms. During the second half of 1994 – curiously enough the same period in which the Dutch industry as a whole underwent unprecedented growth – one firm after the other was forced to close down. Various Turkish umbrella organisations such as the National Advisory Council of Turks (NOF), the Amsterdam Advisory Council of Turks (TADM) and the Committee on the Clothing Contracting Business (*Comité Lomconfactie*) have embarked upon a campaign aiming at the mobilization of political forces to stop and even reverse this dramatic development. They actively lobby politicians, release statements to the press, and organize rallies and marches. On one such occasion, in a church on November 1, 1994, hundreds of Turkish entrepreneurs and workers – both documented and undocumented – urged local and national politicians to implement a series of government interventions on their behalf.

Many people in the Netherlands consider such demands preposterous. It is an open secret that businesses in the garment industry can only hold their own – if they can at all – by perpetrating illegal practices on a large scale. Can one reasonably expect the local or national Government to support such informal practices? If so, should the Government go as far as to declare a moratorium on the controls of the aliens police, the tax service and other agencies of the public service? In Dutch society such a regularization of undocumented workers and informal practices will definitely not be received with applause. However, it is widely held that illegal practices should be counteracted.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this

<sup>1</sup> In their study on the attitude of Dutch trade unions towards immigrant workers De Jongh, Van der Laan and Rath conclude that both leaders and rank-and-file workers are very much in agreement over the policy concerning undocumented immigrant workers: undocumented immigrants constitute a threat to the interests of Dutch workers and therefore their employers deserve severe punishment; Rood De Jongh/Mulder/Van der Laan/Rath, FNVers aan het woord over buitenlandse werknemers (Publication 16, University of Leiden, Centre for the Study of Social Conflicts, COMA), Leiden 1984, pp. 106–109. According to Chris T. Hoes, *Crisis of National Identity as the New Moral Panics: Political Agenda Setting about*

unfavourable political mood, Turkish entrepreneurs and their (self-proclaimed) spokesmen do expect some form of support, simply because – in their words – the employment of thousands of (documented) immigrant workers is at stake.

I do not want to discuss the morality of this issue here. In my view, the assertion that numerous immigrant workers are involved in the business is much more interesting. At this juncture both the development of employment in the lowest segments of the labour market and the process of integration of immigrant ethnic minorities are sources of great concern and are top political priorities. Both processes are doing badly. The self-employment of Turkish entrepreneurs in the garment industry, including their role as providers of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, could be the one ray of hope in an otherwise dark social environment. It is not easy to say whether economic activities on the fringes of society really offer the prospect of a better position in the formal economy and of social integration. After all, the assertion emanates from people who feel the aliens police breathing down their necks and clutch at every straw to uphold their interests. The assertion, strictly speaking, cannot be substantiated. It is just that informal practices take place outside the formal domain and can never be an integrated part of society. However, it can also be maintained that informal practices are always in one way or another linked to the wider social and economic environment. In that case the question of the nature, intensity, causes and consequences of the link is entirely appropriate. Strangely enough, this question has hardly arisen so far in Dutch immigrant minorities policy and academic studies, or even in West European post-migration studies. Perhaps one is betting on the formal economy, thereby ignoring the fact that this economy has delivered little to the bulk of immigrants.

However unappetizing the informal economy might look, it is a reality. As such it is as undeniable as the existence of the ugly brother of the extraordinarily beautiful *Beau Geste* in Marty Feldman's movie of the same name. Although it is Beau Geste who is proudly holding the limelight, there is no getting away from the overshadowed short-sighted bungler: we do desecry his brother lying stretched out on the flaming mud. As the story proceeds the viewer sees how time after time this bastard kid clumsily crosses the path of our hero. Oddly enough, it is not irritating. On the contrary, the complex relationship between the two brothers provides the story with its characteristic features. To a certain extent the same can be said of debates about the economy – or more specifically, work – as an avenue for the social integration of immigrants. Confining the debate to the sphere of the formal economy would do no justice to reality. After all, the formal economy has dark side too. In the so-called shadow economy, a variety of legitimate economic activities take place. Hughes, one of the founders of the Chicago School of sociology, was one of the first scholars pointing to the sociological significance of these activities. He introduced the concept of 'bastard institution', which refers to the illegitimate production and distribution of legitimate and illegitimate goods and

services. Gabriëls and Engbersen, referring to the work of Hughes, have recently argued that bastard spheres are especially relevant in advanced welfare states.<sup>2</sup> In this paper one of those bastard spheres will be explored, namely the bastard sphere of the informal economy.

The identification and labelling of two relatively autonomous economical spheres – the formal and the informal sphere – seem to suggest that there is a sharp distinction between both economies. However, I do not hold this view. The relevance lies in the recognition that informal economic activities are sociologically significant. This paper examines the possible significance of informal economic activities for the social integration of immigrants.

Valid data on informal practices are not readily available. This should not be surprising, since those practices are part of a world which is unknown. No individual involved in this world is keen on disclosing information on the evasion of taxes or the employment of undocumented immigrants.<sup>3</sup> In the Netherlands occupational studies have been done but often with a narrow formulation of the problem, i.e. focusing on the most extreme forms of irregularity, and aiming at the production of quick results.<sup>4</sup> Our understanding of the situation is, moreover, blurred by the fact that the image of the garment industry has become tainted. Too many people take it for granted that thousands of undocumented immigrants, if not tens of thousands, are involved in the sector.<sup>5</sup> Some observers even suggest that any Turkish immigrant in the sector is perpetrating illegal practices.<sup>6</sup> As a consequence of the lack of empirical data, this paper can only be limited and impressionistic.<sup>7</sup> In this paper, I firstly discuss the position of immigrants, particularly Turks on the Dutch labour market, then informal practices in post-industrial societies, and finally the involvement of Turkish immigrants in the garment industry as an exam-

2. Godfried Hughes/werkloze Gabriëls (eds.), *Sterven van integratie. Naar een gedifferentieerd al-fachtonnebeeld*, Meppel 1995.

3. See Godfried Engbersen/Jack Burgers, *Gedebatissen. Migratie, and Undocumented Immigrants*, in: *New Community*, 22, 1996, pp. 619-636.

4. Reind van Geuns, *Thuiswerk in de confectie-industrie. Final report*, Commission by the Board for the Garment Industry, Amsterdam 1993, for example conducted a small research project on homeworking in the apparel industry. The response to his survey in Amsterdam – the centre of the Dutch apparel industry – was not higher than 8%. He had no chance to continue his study.

5. See Kees Groenewald/Vania Becker, *Het schatzen van de onschuldigen. Aanpakken illegalen, heel van een categorie of van de schatler?*, in: *Migratiestudies*, Special Issue 'Illegalie' (edited by Jan Rath and John Schuster), 11, 1995, pp. 117-128; compare Roger Waldinger/Althea Ulan, *Back to the Sweatshop or Ahead to the Informal Sector?*, in: *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 1, 1993, pp. 6-29.

6. For instance: *Regionale confectie-archieven. Een getuigenverhaal* (Vakbond voor de confectie-industrie), Houtveldorp 1992.

7. The Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) of the University of Amsterdam has recently set up a research programme on the (Turkish) garment industry in Amsterdam. A team of six researchers from various disciplines has embarked on this project. The central research questions cover such topics as: 1) changes in the institutional division of labour and their impact on the location of production sites; 2) the economic management of entrepreneurs; 3) labour relations in clothing subcontracting firms; 4) the recruiting of labour; 5) the political regulation; and 6) inter-national comparison. The project is to be completed by the end of 1999.

ple of activities on the fringes of the formal economy. Special attention will be paid to the question of whether both the labour market position of immigrants and their social integration in the wider society is fostered by their involvement in informal practices.

### The Labour Market Position of Immigrants

The position of immigrants in the Dutch labour market, in particular that of immigrants from Mediterranean countries like Turkey and Morocco, is generally considered very problematic. These immigrants were recruited in the 1960s and early 1970s under a guest workers' scheme to fill the vacancies in declining industrial sectors such as textiles and shipbuilding and in other sectors with an abundance of dirty, dangerous and low paid jobs. Their inferior position in the labour market deteriorated in the mid 1970s when the economic recession set in and many workers were made redundant. Around 1980 their rate of unemployment surpassed that of native Dutch workers and this has been the case ever since.<sup>8</sup> By the end of the 1980s when the economy expanded again, the employment of Turks and Moroccans did grow, though not as rapidly or to the same level as that of the native Dutch. The situation has tempted researchers and politicians to sketch gloomy scenarios about the possible formation of an 'underclass'. By 1976, Penning and van Velzen warned of the imminent formation of a 'layer in our democratic society with a cast-like appearance'.<sup>9</sup> Today, the echoes of their warning reverberate more loudly.<sup>10</sup> In the Dutch welfare state, the government has intervened to prevent such an 'underclass' developing, by means of job creation, among other programmes. However, structural improvements to the labour market position of immigrant minorities have not yet materialized.<sup>11</sup>

Experts have put forward all sorts of explanations for this situation. They point to continuing immigration, to immigrants' poor proficiency in the Dutch language, to their low level of education, to their inefficient job-seeking methods, to their welfare dependency and resultant inertia, or to the occurrence of racism. However,

<sup>8</sup> Rick WolffRinus Penninx, *De ontwikkeling van de positie van minderheden op de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt, 1979-1992*. A study commissioned by the Interim Scientific Committee Minderhedenbeleid, Preliminary Study 1, Amsterdam 1993; Justus Veerman, *Participatie in perspectief. Ontwikkelingen in de sociaal-economische positie van zes allochtone groepen in Nederland*, Houten/Zaandam 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Rinus Penninx/Alex van Velzen, *Kaste-voorn in Nederland? Buitenlandse arbeiders in de Nederlandse economie, ontwikkelingen en beleid (NUPH/CINAWOO) remlp'd project*, The Hague 1976, pp. 35f.

<sup>10</sup> Theo J.A. Koolander, *Verscheidenheid in omgeefheid. Een studie naar etnische stratificatie en onderklasse-voorn in de Nederlandse samenleving*, Amsterdam 1994, p. 216, for instance, asserted recently that immigrant ethnic minorities constitute a potential underclass.

<sup>11</sup> Veerman, *Participatie in perspectief*, p. 98, argues plainly that the government programmes concerned have failed. Furthermore Frank Bovenkerk/M.J.J. GraaD, *Ramsoedh. Discriminatie tegen Migrant Workers and Ethnic Minorities in Access to Employment in the Netherlands*, International Labour Office (ILO), *International Migration Papers* 4, Geneva 1995, found that the affirmative action programmes do not result in preferential treatment of immigrants on the labour market, but at best counterbalance practices of discrimination.

none of these explanations fully takes account of the structure and development of the economy.

An interesting explanation to be found in the international literature relates to the continuing high unemployment in disadvantaged categories of the population to structural changes in the economic and demographic position of big cities. Such an explanation is put forward by Kasarda, Friedrichs and Ehlers, among others, and is interesting because it contains elements which are also to be found in theories on the informalization of the economy.<sup>12</sup> Kasarda et al. argue that over the years cities in Germany and the United States have been transformed from centres of goods processing into centres of information processing. This industrial transformation has reduced 'the role these cities were once able to play as employment opportunity ladders for disadvantaged persons'. The demand for blue-collar jobs has declined and to some extent been replaced by a demand for knowledge-intensive jobs in administration, finance, the professions, and other white-collar services. This *mismatch* has been reinforced by demographic developments such as the immigration of less-educated persons who end up in lower class positions and the emigration of more highly educated persons from the middle and upper classes, and by public policies that tend to encourage displaced labour to remain in localities of severe blue-collar job decline. Kloosterman applied this approach to Amsterdam and roughly confirmed the findings of Kasarda et al.<sup>13</sup> Yet, he also pointed to the specificity of the Amsterdam case, which made him strike a note of warning against a mechanical and deterministic application of the approach.

The various descriptions and explanations in this field – no matter how well thought-out they may be – are often incomplete in the sense that they hardly pay any attention – if they do at all – to informal practices. For instance, in a recent study of the development of the socio-economic position of six groups of immigrants (including Turks), Veerman uses the word 'informal' only once, in the context of deficiencies: immigrants have not yet reached the stage where they belong to the informal networks of employers and so they do not stand a chance when it comes to hiring personnel.<sup>14</sup> Researchers like Veerman apparently envisage a labour market that exists within a formal economy only. Although they may have valid reasons for limiting themselves in this way,<sup>15</sup> they narrow their focus to one aspect of everyday reality. When Kloosterman, in his otherwise well-written paper on the demographic employment-opportunity mismatch in Amsterdam, argues

<sup>12</sup> John D. Kasarda/Jürgen Friedrichs/Key Ehlers, *Urban Industrial Restructuring and Minority Problems in the US and West Germany*, in: Malcolm Cross (ed.), *Ethnic Minorities and Economic Change in Europe and North America*, Cambridge 1992, pp. 250-275. For a critical comment, see among others: Norman Fainstein, *The Urban Underclass and Mismatch Theory*, Re-examined, in: Cross, *Ethnic Minorities and Economic Change*, pp. 276-312.

<sup>13</sup> Robert C. Kloosterman, *Amsterdamd. The Rise of Unemployment in Amsterdam in the 1980s*, in: *Urban Studies*, 31, 1994, pp. 1325-1344.

<sup>14</sup> Veerman, *Participatie in perspectief*, p. 98.

<sup>15</sup> The availability of data may be such a reason – data mostly concern the formal economy. However, it is not unlikely that narrative opinions about the labour market interfere with their work as well.

that in the period 1979–1983 »no job openings were created for the lesser-educated members of ethnic minorities at the lower end of the occupational ladder«, he refers exclusively to the formal economy.<sup>16</sup> If so happened that in the same period the Turkish business community expanded at a great pace, but at the fringes of the formal economy. The »mushrooming« of Turkish businesses was particularly striking in the garment industry. In 1983 Tap published a report in which he described the informal practices of approximately 80 firms that provided jobs – both illegal and legal – to an estimated 960 persons.<sup>17</sup> In comparison, in 1982 the Regional Labour Exchange (GAB) in the district of Amsterdam registered 998 Turkish workers as unemployed.<sup>18</sup> Such findings shed a completely different light on the mismatch found. It actualizes the question whether our view of the socio-economic reality is truly unbiased and whether the political answers to the problem of long-term unemployment is correspondingly adequate.<sup>19</sup>

### Boundaries of the Informal Economy

Concepts such as informal labour, informal practices, informal sector, informal economy, twilight economy, black economy, underground economy etc. were initially used to describe the situation in cities in Third World countries. Only later have the concepts been applied to practices in more economically advanced countries. The informal sector encompasses: a) *the domestic sector*, i.e. unpaid work for relatives, friends or acquaintances, and also voluntary work; b) *the communal sector*, i.e. mutual services and payment in kind by anonymous parties in economic transactions; and finally c) *the black market sector*, i.e. every productive activity which does not comply with the rules and regulations for economic transactions.<sup>20</sup> This typology does not always hold. Sometimes the sectors overlap significantly. One example is a confectioner who borrows interest-free a couple of thousand

from a relative or a fellow-villager in order to rent a workshop or sewing machines. These practices are quite common among Turks.<sup>21</sup>

Many authors focus on what I have called here the black market sector.<sup>22</sup> They systematically emphasize that this economy is above all characterized by activities aimed at increasing income, without meeting the standards required by applicable legislation and regulations. Portes and Sassen-Koob define the sector tentatively as »the sum total of income-earning activities with the exclusion of those that involve contractual and legally regulated employment. Although this definition encompasses criminal activities, the term is customarily reserved for such activities as those in the food, clothing, and housing industries that are not intrinsically illegal but in which the production and exchange escape legal regulation...<sup>23</sup>

Portes and Sassen-Koob rightly remark that this definition has been the subject of much debate.<sup>24</sup> The exclusion of criminal activities is particularly problematic, because it is idiosyncratic.<sup>25</sup> In the United States and various other countries, prostitution and dealing soft drugs are considered illegal. Consequently are these activities defined out of the informal economy.<sup>26</sup> In the Netherlands, however, the attitude towards these activities is more liberal, and so are laws and regulations and their enforcement. Such activities are *de facto* hardly considered illegal. The distinction between what is intrinsically legal and illegal is not always clear or useful, particularly not for the process of social integration of immigrants. American history clearly shows that informal activities in sweatshops both contributed to the upward social mobility of immigrants and to the emergence of organized crime.<sup>27</sup> In present day Amsterdam there are rumours that Turkish criminal organizations have penetrated the garment industry.<sup>28</sup> Conclusive proof of these rumours has not yet been established. Yet they raise questions as to the theoretical relevance of the legal/illegal distinction.

The informal practices of immigrants are not set in a social vacuum. On the contrary, they take place in an environment in which black marketing, moon-

- 16 Kloosterman, Amsterdam, p. 1338; idem, Mixed Experiences, Post-Industrial Transition and Ethnic Minorities on the Amsterdam Labour Market, in: *New Communities*, 22, 1986, pp. 637–654. In this paper, Kloosterman did refer briefly to the informal sector; see also Robert Kloosterman/Johannes van der Leun/Jan Rath, Over grenzen, immigranten en de informele economie, An Interim Study Commissioned by the Internationaal Scientific Committee Multinationality (IWCMI), Amsterdam 1986.
- 17 Kees Tap, Het Turkse Bedrijfsleven in Amsterdam, MA-Thesis, University of Groningen, Interfacultair Business Administratie, Groningen 1993.
- 18 Lucie Bloemkoekland C. van Geuns, Ongeregeld ondernemen, Een onderzoek naar informele bedrijvigheid, The Hague 1987, p. 116.
- 19 E.L. Feige, Quasi-labour sector in macro-economy, in: *Economisch Statistische Berichten*, 3328, 7, 10, 1981, pp. 980–984, suggested that the »prevalence of the quasi-labour sector produces too pessimistic a picture of economic developments. The gravity of economic problems is then systematically overestimated. The political solutions in the form of economic incentive programmes produce a higher tax burden, which according to Feige only serves to encourage the flight to the black market sector.
- 20 Jonathan J. Cershan, After Industrial Society, The Emerging Self-Service Industry, London 1978; J.W.M. Mousen, War is informal economy, in: J.J. van Thooft/W.M. Meertsema/H. Renouy (red.), *Informele economie, Randverschijnsel of alternatieve realiteit?* (Series 1a-hour and Organization 5), Heeren/Deventer 1990, pp. 11–21.

- 21 Anita Becker, Turkse immigranten en sociale zekerheid, Van onderlinge zorg naar overheidzorg, Amsterdam 1994.
- 22 Alejandro Portes, The Informal Economy and its Paradoxes, in: Noel Snickens/Richard Svedberg (eds.), *Handbook of Economic Sociology*, Princeton, N.J. 1994, pp. 426–449.
- 23 Alejandro Portes/Saskia Sassen-Koob, Making it Underground, Comparative Material on the Informal Sector in Western Market Economies, in: *American Journal of Sociology*, 93, 1987, pp. 30–61, here p. 31.
- 24 See for instance: Alejandro Portes/Manuel Castells/aren A. Benton, The Informal Economy, Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries, Baltimore 1989; or Piet H. Keegan, *The Informal Economy, Meaning, Measurement and Social Significance* (Netherlands Geographical Studies, vol. 115), Amsterdam 1990.
- 25 For a more elaborate discussion, see Kloosterman/van der Leun/Rath, Over grenzen.
- 26 In instance: Saskia Sassen, *The Mobility of Labour and Capital, A Study in International Labour Flow*, Cambridge/New York 1988.
- 27 Albert Fried, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Gangster in America*, rev. ed. New York 1993.
- 28 Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America, A History*, New York 1981.
- 29 Cyril Eignart, *Georganiseerde misdaad en de beschrijvende erfenis*, De situatie in de Lage Landen vanuit Europees perspectief, in: Jürgen Radl/Marie Frey (eds.), *Hier vermenig Europa van de Mafia*, Amsterdam/Leuven 1994, pp. 370–372.

lighting, tax evading and fraud are common practices. In the mid 1980s Fasse calculated the extent of the informal economy in the Netherlands at between 6.3 and 17.5% of the GNP (Gross National Product).<sup>29</sup> The Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Abuse and Improper Use (ISMO) estimated the total extent of the black economy at 16 to 21 billion guilders.<sup>30</sup> This amount refers to both tax evasion and abuse and improper use of social benefits and subventions (13.7 to 14.2 billion), and to criminal activities (3.5 to 5 billion). Lambooy and Remooij assume that this is an underestimation of the total black economy and point among other things, to the circuit of moonlighters.<sup>31</sup> According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) more than one million handyman, cleaners and other odd jobbers participate in this circuit. Van Eek and Kazemier ascertained that 12% of the population 16 years and older is involved in moonlighting, which equals 100,000 man-years or 2% of the total manpower.<sup>32</sup> Alhaart and De Voogd-Hamelinck calculate that 23 to 26% of the labour force is or has been involved in moonlighting, while Koopmans even sets this percentage at 39%.<sup>33</sup> Engberson concludes from these and other data: «[...] that there exists a rather considerable degree of abuse and improper use; that people *perceive* a high degree of abuse and improper use; and that large groups of people have sympathy for abuse and improper use.»<sup>34</sup> Notwithstanding the unfavourable political rhetoric, the informal economy is evidently a well-established phenomenon in Dutch society.

It should be noted that these studies primarily concern the population in general. As already stated, little is known about the involvement of specific categories of the population in the informal economy. The information available on the involvement of immigrants principally concerns the catering sector, the agricultural sector (including greenhouses), the cleaning sector and the garment sector, all of which have a questionable standing with regard to compliance with the law.<sup>35</sup> Whether immigrants are more or less involved in the informal economy than the native Dutch (in similar class positions), is yet unknown.

- 29 M. Fasse, *Informele economie en geldwasplooi*, in: Arnold Heerrie (ed.), *De informele economie*, Londen 1984, p. 83.
- 30 Hoofdlidelen van het Rapport van de Interdepartementale Stuurgroep Misbruik en Onrechtmatig Gebruik (S1), Interdepartmental Steering Committee on Abuse and Improper Use, ISMO) n.p., 1985, p. 5. (Hft. 1,00 equals approximately US \$ 0,60).
- 31 Jan G. Lambooy/Piet H. Remooij, *Informele Economie*, in: SMO-Information 85:2, Foundation for Society and Business (SMO), The Hague 1985, p. 42.
- 32 R. van Eek/B. Kazemier, *Zwarte Arbeid. Een empirische en methodologische studie*, PhD-Thesis Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam 1989, pp. 126f.
- 33 P.C. Alhaart/M. de Voogd-Hamelinck, *Wie werkt zwart?* (OSA-Preliminary Study V.30. Organization for Strategic Labour Market Research), The Hague 1989, pp. 8f.; C. Koopmans, *Informele arbeid. Vaag, ramboel, participatie, profeten*, Diss. Amsterdam 1989.
- 34 Godfried Engberson, *Het circuit van de misbruik tussen overheid en burger*, in: *Kees Schuyfrouwe van der Veen* (red.), *De verdedelde samenleving. Een inleiding in de ontwikkeling van de Nederlandse verzorgingsstaat*, Londen 1986, pp. 225-241, here p. 229.
- 35 Kloosterman/van der Leun/Rath, *Over grenzen*.

### The Informal Economy in the Post-industrial Society

How are we to understand and explain the emergence and development of the informal economy in economically advanced societies? In the neo-liberal and Marxist literature on industrial development much attention is paid to small informal enterprises. Within that literature Portes and Sassen-Koob have identified three central assumptions concerning the functions of informal activities: a) informal activities are «essentially transitory, being a consequence of the imperfect penetration of modern capitalism into the less developed regions and are thus destined to disappear with the advance of industrialization and industry-led growth»; b) the informal economy exists «to keep a redundant segment of the labour force alive through jobs invented to fit in the interstices of the modern economy»; c) the informal economy is «primarily a feature of peripheral economies such as those of Latin America, Africa, and most of Asia, being, in essence, another manifestation of their underdevelopment».<sup>36</sup>

These kinds of assumptions can also be found in the Dutch literature. Godschalk, for example, claimed that the informal economy in post-industrial societies: «can no longer be seen as a last resort to survival of social grouping who are located at the bottom of the social ladder. In the welfare state nobody is thrown back on himself to keep body and soul together. The society takes care for a number of basic provisions that guarantee a decent existence to any human being».<sup>37</sup>

Clearly this reasoning does not mesh with social developments in the 1990s. The welfare state can no longer guarantee full employment. A number of persons, especially lesser educated immigrants, do not succeed in finding a job. Moreover, the state refuses any care in the form of social benefits or livelihood for undocumented immigrants.

Portes and Sassen-Koob refute the afore-mentioned assumptions. They make a number of claims: a) The informal economy does not disappear with the advance of capitalist industrialization. b) It is not necessarily a refuge from poverty. The average income levels among the informally employed is not significantly lower than among workers in the formal economy. There is, moreover, a fairly fluid exchange between formal and informal economies and a voluntary movement in both directions. c) Participants in the informal economy do not constitute a monolithic 'reserve army' of labour. On the contrary, they occupy various class positions, informal workers and entrepreneurs representing two of these. d) Finally, the informal economy is not a typical 'Third World' phenomenon, but can also be found in advanced economies.

In the latter, the informal economy even seems to be on the rise. Some suggest that this is related to the arrival of immigrants from 'Third World' countries. After all: «Immigrant communities have provided much of the labour for these activities,

36 Portes/Sassen-Koob, *Making it Underground*, p. 32.

37 Jan P. Godschalk, *De informele economie*, Amsterdam 1985, p. 6.

have frequently supplied sites for their development, and have furnished the entrepreneurial drive to imitate them.<sup>38</sup>

In the Netherlands such a view is recurrent in discussions about ethnic entrepreneurship. Bovenkerk, for one, asserts that business activities of ethnic entrepreneurs have typical pre-industrial features.<sup>39</sup> This should not be surprising. Bovenkerk contends, since immigrant entrepreneurs originate from agricultural societies in which they have familiarized with informal practices. When they arrive in the country of residence they find themselves in an unfamiliar environment. In order to acquire money or workers for their businesses they use their cultural capital. The longer they stay in the country, and the more familiarized they become with the prevailing rules and regulations, the more formalized their business activities will be. According to this theoretical view, informal economic activities of immigrants are merely a stage in an inevitable process of assimilation or integration. The very fact that informal practices still occur indicates that their integration is not yet complete.

An objection that can be raised against this view is that informal practices are primarily located in the cultural domain, with immigrants as its only participants. No account is given of the fact that informal practices are widespread in post-industrial society, including those economic sectors in which immigrants have not (yet) penetrated. Nevertheless this view should not be entirely rejected. Established immigrant entrepreneurs make a stand against newcomers who participate in informal practices in their market. Such interventions seem to indicate that a process of adaptation to the prevailing customs and regulations is actually occurring. Cultural explanations may, moreover, help us to understand why some categories of the population more than others are involved in the informal economy. The fact that Turks rather than Moroccans or other social categories are active in the Amsterdam garment industry may be related to cultural characteristics, though this must always be demonstrated than assumed to be the case.<sup>40</sup>

Another theoretical view is presented by authors such as Sassen, who focuses on the process of post-industrial restructuring.<sup>41</sup> This process which occurs in global cities encompasses a cluster of changes. The globalization of the economy provokes, paradoxically, a need for central co-ordination. The headquarters of inter-

national businesses tend to settle in places with a qualitatively high infrastructure, i.e., with financial companies, marketing bureaus, legal consultancies, cultural agencies etc. The concentration of such businesses strengthens and speeds up the development of a high-quality service economy. The rise of a service industry is coupled with a decline of the 'old' labour-intensive manufacturing industries. Those industries have moved into computerized manufacturing and into outward processing to subcontractors in low wage countries or to domestic subcontractors, particularly if they prefer greater flexibility and quick responses. According to Sassen, such an economy generates a demand for relatively low-quality activities: a) directly, by contracting out specific tasks such as cleaning, catering, security, and transport; and b) indirectly, when highly qualified and highly paid white-collar workers hire personnel for cleaning and day care of children. It is exactly these processes that produce a growth of the informal economy. With this line of reasoning, Sassen argues that informal activities are an 'organic' feature of present day post-industrial urban economies. In such economies sweatshops and homework are central forms of economic activity providing mainly dead-end jobs to people with a disadvantaged position in the labour market, i.e. immigrants. A strong polarization of privileged and deprived urban dwellers is another feature of the transformation towards a post-industrial economy.

This theoretical view takes a central place in today's debate about post-industrial societies. Sassen presents an interesting argument, although various details are open to criticism.<sup>42</sup> For example, the empirical basis is not undisputed. Waldinger and Lapp, i.e., claim that the rise of sweatshops in New York's garment industry is not the result of changes in the basic structure of the industry. Instead, they posit that "... old positions and functions were vacated and in this way entry-level opportunities for immigrant workers were created."<sup>43</sup> In their view, it is just a process of ethnic succession that creates opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs.

At issue now is the question of to what extent the view of the global city can be applied to the Dutch case. This is not a matter of course. A minor point is whether the Dutch capital deserves the label of global city: one tends to have in mind satellites like New York or Los Angeles, and not a relatively small place like Amsterdam.<sup>44</sup> More essential is the critique that the theory is very much based on rather specific cases, particularly that of New York and to a lesser extent London

38. Porres/Sassen-Koob, *Making it Underground*, p. 48.

39. Frank Bovenkerk, *Op eigen kracht omhoog*; *Etnisch ondernemerschap en de oegkleppen van het multiculturele milieu*, in: *Intermediair*, 18, 1982, no. 8, 26.2.1982, pp. 1-11; Frank Bovenkerk/Anne Eikelen/Wesje Bovenkerk-Teinik, *Italiaans J.s. De openbare historische van de Italiaanse IJsbereiders in Nederland*, Mappel/Amsterdam 1983.

40. Such a view is supported by White's study of female labour and small enterprises in Turkey; Jenny B. White, *Money Makes us Relatives*, *Women's Labor in Urban Turkey*, Austin, Tex. 1994. Recently the ambassador of the European Union in Ankara claimed that Turkey has an exceptionally large informal economy. The Turkish economy would be 50% larger than official figures indicate (NRCC Handelsblad, 2.3.1995). Yet, the involvement of Turks in the Dutch apparel industry may also be related with the simple fact that Turkey has always had a large garment industry.

41. See among others: Sassen, *The Mobility of Labour and Capital*, idem, *The Global City*, New York/Londen/Tokyo/Trinceton, N.J. 1991; Kloosterman/van der Leun/Rath, *Over grenzen*.

42. See for instance: Jan Rath (ed.), *Immigrant Businesses on the Urban Economic Fringe: A Case for Interdisciplinary Analysis*, *Roosendijk/Businessak/Hampshire* 1998.

43. Waldinger/Lapp, *Back to the Sweatshop*, p. 21. Their critique is not sufficiently convincing. Their suggestion that native workers dropped out of effective labour supply in reaction to that this is unrelated to changes in the basic structure of the economy. This does not necessarily mean that their critique is unjustified.

44. A. Shkarin, *Kandstad Holland. A World City*, in: *Urban Studies*, 31, 1994, no. 3, Special Issue: 'Globalisation, World Cities and the Randstad', pp. 381-400, suggests that the Randstad - comprising a number of relative big cities such as Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht - should be labelled 'global city'.

and Tokyo, and therefore contains idiosyncrasies.<sup>45</sup> The Amsterdam economy is certainly transforming from goods processing to information processing. However, the labour market changes that are assumed to be characteristic of post-industrial service economies – particularly the mismatch between knowledge-intensive jobs and blue collar jobs – appear to follow a rather specific path. The feminization of the workforce due to the entry of women into the labour market interferes with the position of immigrant minorities.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Kloosterman emphasizes the labour is relatively small compared to New York. Kloosterman emphasizes the specific and more dominating role of the state. In the Dutch corporatist welfare state the government strongly regulates access to the labour market. This is achieved, among other methods, by lightening immigration controls and by setting up social arrangements for various categories of less qualified workers such as the disabled, the elderly etc.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore social relations in the Netherlands are not as polarized as in the United States.

The few studies of the informal economy in Amsterdam do not indisputably show that the rise of this economy is directly related to the rise of the post-industrial service economy. Take the situation in the south-east side, i.e. the centre of Amsterdam's new service economy. One would expect the international companies settled there to produce a boom in small-scale, low-quality and partly informal economic activities, especially in the adjacent Bijlmer district with its numerous unemployed (immigrants). The Registry of Companies suggests that small-scale entrepreneurship hardly exists, but it covers only one part of all economic activities. The truth is that there is a substantial and dynamic circuit of non-official entrepreneurship.<sup>48</sup> There is indeed a flourishing informal economy, comprising *circa* 100 illegal taxi drivers, 200 ( Afro-hair) hairdressers, 150 car mechanics, 20 handymen, 35 caterers, an unknown number of contract clothing workers and other odd-jobbers. This evidence seems to confirm that the post-industrial service economy provokes informal activities. In practice, however, these activities are *not* directly related to the international companies in the neighbourhood, if not completely isolated from them. In so far as the headquarters of the international companies in Amsterdam generate any informal activity, they do not do so in the Bijlmer.

Having said this, Amsterdam comprises more neighbourhoods than the Bijlmer and also more economic sectors. Occasional studies of the garment industry suggest that the rise of sweatshops do relate to changes in the international division of labour, changes to the basic structure of the economy, changes in the domestic labour market, changes in consumer behaviour, etc.

- 45 Chris Hammett, *Social Polarisation in Global Cities: Theory and Evidence*, in: *Urban Studies*, 31, 1994, no. 3, pp. 401–424; Kloosterman, *Aansluitingsstudie*, *idem*, *Mixed Experiences*, 46 Kloosterman, *Amsterdam*, *idem*, *Mixed Experiences*.  
47 *Idem*, *Mixed Experiences*, referring to the work of Esping-Andersen. According to Kloosterman, the Dutch welfare state is not a purely corporatist one. It has features of the social-democratic welfare state, too.  
48 Van de Bunt, *Bijlmer bedrijvigheid*. *Huishoudelijkonderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van het kleinbedrijf in de Bijlmermeer*. Uitgeverij in opdracht van sonar ten behoeve van de Stuurgroep Vernieuwing Bijlmermeer, Amsterdam 1992.

### The Garment Industry

For a long time the garment industry was considered an economic sector in which competition was largely based on the price of products. Manufacturers improved their competitive position and their market share by reducing the relative costs of production. They did so by switching over to mass production and curtailling expenditure on salaries for the workforce. The availability of cheap non-union workers was one of the factors that determined the location of production. In the Netherlands the garment industry used to be concentrated in Amsterdam, among other reasons because of the fact that in an earlier historical period, especially in the 19th century, Catholic and Jewish immigrants from Germany and East European countries settled there in order to set up businesses in the manufacturing and trading of garment.<sup>49</sup> After World War II, and particularly during the 1960s and 1970s when the labour costs rose sharply, an increasingly large part of production in the Dutch garment industry was processed elsewhere. Initially the industry moved into the Dutch countryside and into Belgian Flanders, later to Mediterranean countries such as Portugal and Tunisia, and later again to Asian countries. This is particularly true for the assembly of clothing, i.e. the sewing of fabrics into clothing.<sup>50</sup> Low wage countries welcomed these industries as an instrument both to increase employment and to foster industrial growth. The conditions for labour-intensive industries were especially favourable in the so-called industrial free zones. The decline of the garment industry in the Netherlands was dramatic. Between 1972 and 1981 production fell at an average of 7.7% a year, and between 1963 and 1989 employment decreased from 77,000 to approximately 10,000 jobs.<sup>51</sup> These developments hardly affected the market position of firms involved in the design and marketing of products. They mostly stayed in the Netherlands and made profits by contracting out parts of the production process. It was not until the 1980s that productive capacity, volume of production and employment were back on the increase. This was especially the case in Amsterdam. Numerous factors contributed to that development, for example: (in)national laws and regulations (for instance the Multi-Fibre Agreements which give importing countries the right to impose quantity restrictions on clothing imports from developing countries), more technical developments (for instance the introduction of computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing), and the emergence of new logistic systems), and changes in the market.<sup>52</sup> In regard to the latter, retailers of

49 R.L. Meller, *Immigratie van katholieke Westalers en de modernisering van de Nederlandse detailhandel*, in: *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 100, 1987, pp. 374–393.

50 Bloemevan Geuns, *Ongeregeld ondernemen*, p. 97; Koelnd van Geuns, *An Aspect of Informal Sector of Women's Work in a High-tech Age: Turkish Sweatshops in the Netherlands*, in: *Swaier Mitter* (ed.), *Computer-aided Manufacturing and Women's Employment*. The Clothing Industry in Four EC Countries, *Londondructon* 1992, pp. 125–137.

51 Bloemevan Geuns, *Ongeregeld ondernemen*, pp. 95f.; M.K. Schaffer, *Trading Places*, *Fashion, Retailers and the Changing Geography of Clothing Production* (Netherlands Geographical Studies, vol. 130), Utrecht 1992.

52 See amongst others: Gerd Jume, *Teng naar de regio? Kansen voor een regionale herenigrade van productie en consumptie ten gevolge van de ontwikkeling van nieuwe technologie*.

clothing ordered smaller and smaller runs geared to the consumers' interest in dressing according to the latest fashion, and to be delivered within the shortest possible time. It was no coincidence that the growth in domestic production chiefly concerned fashionable women's outerwear and was located in small and flexible contracting firms. In this segment of production Turkish immigrants have been active both as entrepreneurs and workers. In 1981 Turkish entrepreneurs owned 25% of the registered contracting firms in Amsterdam; in 1986 their share had risen to 72%.<sup>53</sup> Their relations with the wider industry have been asymmetric. Competition is ruthless and commissioners seize the opportunity to squeeze out the subcontractors. This has substantially contributed to the informalization of the sector and the emergence of sweatshops.<sup>54</sup>

The size of the garment industry, specifically the informal part, has been estimated in many ways. It is publicly known that numerous illegal immigrants have found employment in the garment industry. What exactly is meant by the term 'illegal' is often unclear: the term is used inaccurately and in reference to diverse situations.<sup>55</sup> So, illegality sometimes refers to the Aliens Act – the Anglo-Saxon term then would probably be 'undocumented' – but at other times to the Nuisance Act to the Factories Act, or to the tax legislation, social legislation, or employment legislation. Some observers even go so far as treating the terms 'illegal' and 'Turk' as synonyms. In a report commissioned by the Board for the Garment Industry – an interest group in which both the industries and the unions are represented – it was suggested that the entire Turkish business community in the garment industry, thus any Turkish entrepreneur or worker, would be illegal.<sup>56</sup> According to this report, the total turnover of the illegal garment industry amounts to many hundreds of millions of Dutch guilders, whereas the number of (mainly) Turkish workers and homeworkers would come to approximately 8,000. In a bill on the garment industry which was brought before Parliament in 1992 it was argued that about 1,000 illegal sweatshops<sup>57</sup> Jonkman-Te Winkel suggested employment for approximately 12,000 workers.<sup>58</sup> Jonkman-Te Winkel suggested that in periods of extreme activity the number of persons in the sector would be even greater than 14,000, with an average of 20 workers per sweatshop.<sup>58</sup> Zand-

- in: *Tijdschrift voor Politieke Economie*, 8, 1985, no. 4, pp. 58–67. Mitter (ed.), *Computerized Manufacturing*.
- 53 Tap, *Het Turkse bedrijfsleven in Amsterdam*, p. 29. Bloemhof van Gaans, *Omgewerd en veranderend*, p. 99.
- 54 Maarte van Putten/N. Lucas, *Made in Heaven. Vrouwen en de veranderende internationale arbeidsverdeling*. Amsterdam 1985; Marika Smid, *Jonkvrouw, CKA, de stille pijler. Van kledingindustrie tot thuiswerkster. 2e gewijzigde druk*, Amsterdam 1989.
- 55 Cf. Lilian Clewens/Joséph van der Marck/Caroline Terweijen, *Hilgaten komen niet. Gebruik van collectieve voorzieningen door vreemdelingen zonder verblijfsrecht*, Nijmegen 1990.
- 56 *Illegale contracte-aedfers. Een getuigenverhaal* (Vakraad voor de contracte-industrie, Hoofddorp 1992, pp. 12–14).
- 57 *Witrijge van de Coördinatiewet Sociale Verzekering in de Invorderingswet 1990 in Verband met de Toepassing van de Keuringswet*, 1992, p. 13.
- 58 M.J. Jonkman-Te Winkel, *Illegalen aan het werk. Over ontmoeiding en salarisrecht*, SMO-Information 94-6, Foundation for Society and Business (SMO), The Hague 1994, p. 34.

viet and Gravesteijn-Lighelein estimated that the number of undocumented workers in the contracting firms, at least in the ones registered at the Chamber of Commerce, was anything between 200 and 1,300.<sup>59</sup> This means that the contribution of undocumented labour to the total workforce in the garment industry was between 7 and 43%. According to these authors between 6 and 46% of the firms had hired undocumented workers.

In Amsterdam, centre of the (informal) garment industry, the number of sweatshop firms amounted to 600 or 700. Most recent estimates, however, differ greatly:

Estimated Number of Informal Sweatshops and Workers Involved in Amsterdam, Early 1994

Source	Sweatshops	Workers
Tax authorities (estimation early 1994)	300	6,000
Tax authorities (number of VAT declarations)	approx. 600	unknown
Inspectorate Labour Relations (DIA)	500 to 600	5 to 10,000
Chamber of Commerce (business code 2321)	230	unknown

Source: Jonkman-Te Winkel, *Illegalen aan het Werk*, p. 33.

The garment industry – both formal and informal – is currently in crisis. By the end of 1994 only 188 Turkish contracting firms were still registered at the Chamber of Commerce. In Spring 1996 the local authorities estimated the number of firms at some 200. Our own estimations (Autumn 1996) suggest that the number of existing firms is approximately 50, although 40 to 60 is also possible. Given the extreme dynamics in the sector (firms operating today can be closed tomorrow, and vice versa) precise calculations are not possible.

The Turkish businessmen and their self-proclaimed spokesmen have attributed this negative development to the tight controls of agencies of the public service and to the fierce competition with businesses from East European countries such as Poland. Competition is fierce indeed, but this is not a recent phenomenon. Some observers even ask whether the Dutch garment industry had really recovered from the decline of the 1960s and 1970s. Scheffer argues that the growth in the 1980s was only the result of coincidental factors.<sup>60</sup> It is hard to determine to what extent Scheffer is right. There is no denying the fact that in the 1990s the clothing trade in the Netherlands is going through a deep crisis. This is probably partly due to the economic recession of the early 1990s, but also to the fact that Dutch consumers spend increasingly less money on clothing, especially compared to consum-

59 Gees Th. Zandvliet/J.H. Gravesteijn-Lighelein, *Hilgaten arbeid. Omvang en effecten*, Jan Haag 1994, pp. 46f. This estimation refers to illegal immigrants within the meaning of the Law on Employment of Foreign Workers (*Wet afield buitenlandse werknemers*).

60 Scheffer, *Trading Places*, p. 245.



As argued previously, the personnel in the sweatshops are recruited mainly from the most marginalized categories of the population. In the recent past, various attempts were made to support the recruitment of legal workers (including native Dutch), so that the entrepreneurs would no longer be compelled to resort to illegal/undocumented workers. The Regional Labour Exchange (RBA) set up a programme fostering that process, but dropped it shortly thereafter because – in its view – the sweatshops would not be viable if forced to work under lawful conditions. It is not clear whether entrepreneurs or workers in the contracting business have managed to occupy a better position in the formal labour market, although in theory such an improvement seems likely. It may be true for a couple of undocumented immigrants who managed to receive a residence permit under an extremely small-scale regularization scheme. Undocumented immigrants involved in the garment industry still nurse hopes that the government will sooner or later decide to embark on a large-scale regularization scheme. In the present political mood these are vain hopes.

### Conclusions

The answer to the question of whether the informal economy constitutes a route for immigrants to integrate into the larger society and, if so, in what way, depends on one's theoretical position. It could be argued that the informal economy functions as a sort of 'stitch' or 'school' for activities in the formal economy. Maintaining informal practices would then merely be a matter of unfamiliarity with the rules and regulations of economic life in the receiving society. It would indicate people's lack of cultural adaptation and incomplete integration in society. Informal practices would exist temporarily and would cease as soon as the stage of integration is reached. However, it could also be argued that the informal economy is part and parcel of the post-industrial economy, in which declining manufacturing is transferred to small-scale flexible enterprises at the fringes of the formal economy. In so far as the present literature allows such a conclusion, and without totally rejecting more cultural explanations, the garment industry in the Netherlands is presently undergoing such a development. Seen in this way, entrepreneurs and workers in the Turkish sweatshops are fairly integrated in the Dutch economy and social life. It is a fact that during the past decades the informal entrepreneurs have produced a huge number of orders, a series of activities in which hundreds of millions of Dutch guilders have been involved. To be sure, this occurred with the knowledge, and sometimes also the support, of the government and formal businesses.

The informal economy has provided jobs and incomes for individual entrepreneurs and workers for short or long periods.<sup>69</sup> The extent to which immigrants have worked their way up to become rich capitalists in the Dutch garment industry,

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Pina Wehner, *From Rags to Riches. Manchester Pakistanis in the Textile Trade, in New Community*, 8, 1980, nos. 1-2, pp. 84-95; Sowell, *Ethnic America*.

try, is hard to say given the lack of the data currently available. It is clear, however, that some Turks have.

There is also the spin off of informal activities. Businesses giving cheap orders to sweatshops have made enormous profits and the same holds for the dealers in sewing-machines, cotton and wool, and textiles. Also coffee-houses, bakeries, grocery shops, and restaurants have reaped profits from the Turkish sweatshops. Today, their owners are complaining bitterly: the decline of the garment industry has hit their enterprises as well, with all the associated losses of jobs.

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# Migration und Illegalität

herausgegeben von  
Eberhard Eichenhofer

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## Gelittwort

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Illegalität ist kein Randthema, sondern ein Zentralproblem im europäischen Wandlungsgeschehen der Gegenwart. Die Autoren dieses Bandes zeigen, daß die *sans-papiers* nach Europa kommen oder gerufen werden, um in den hochqualifizierten Dienstleistungswirtschaften und Wohlfahrtsstaaten schlecht bezahlte, schwere, physisch und psychisch belastende Arbeiten zu verrichten. Das Wohlfahrtsgefälle zwischen Europa und den Nachbarländern läßt solche Arbeiten attraktiv erscheinen für unternehmungsfreudige und risikobereite Frauen und Männer aus den ärmsten und ärmsten Regionen der Welt. Vor allem in einigen süd europäischen Ländern ist der Aufenthalt von illegalen Zuwanderern längst eine fest etablierte Erscheinungsform der Migration.

Die Freudenberg Stiftung interessiert sich für das Thema Migration und Illegalität unter einem spezifischen Gesichtspunkt. In allen europäischen Gesellschaften etablieren sich Migrantengruppen durch Unterschichtung der ethnischen Bevölkerung als besondere, sowohl ethnisch wie sozial definierte Unter- oder Außenseiterklasse. Die *sans-papiers* stehen vor der besonderen Gefahr, zu einer solchen *ethic class* zu werden. Sie nehmen die untersten Positionen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt ein. Der Zugang zu Leistungen des Wohlfahrtsstaates bleibt ihnen in den meisten Fällen versperrt. Sie sind den Risiken von Krankheit, Invalidität, schlechten Wohnverhältnissen und Einkommensverlust ausgesetzt. Sie können sich auch nicht gegen rassistisch motivierte Diskriminierung wehren, weil sie Angst haben müssen, als illegale identifiziert zu werden. Maßnahmen zur sozialen Integration sind ihnen ebenfalls verschlossen. Die Chancen, auf legalem Weg sozial aufzusteigen, sind geringe. Eine Familiengründung oder zumindest ein geringes Familieneinkommen ist ihnen verwehrt.

Kann man einer durch illegale Zuwanderung und irreguläre Beschäftigungsverhältnisse verstärkten ethnischen Klassenbildung entgegenwirken? Von staatlicher Seite aus kann man eine kohärente Einwanderungsstrategie schaffen, die gewisse Möglichkeiten der legalen Einwanderung vorsieht und vor allem die Erwartungssicherheit für Migranten erhöht. Der informelle Sektor kann die Integration der *sans-papiers* fördern, indem er Gruppen aus der Zivilgesellschaft dazu ermuntert, Gesundheitszentren, Sprachkurse, Rechts- und Wohnungsberatung für diese Migranten einzurichten oder bestehende Angebote auf diese Zielgruppe auszuweiten. Viele *sans-papiers* sind Persönlichkeiten mit Eigeninitiative und Unternehmungsgeist, die sich ohne staatliche Leistungen und Schutz in einer fremden Umgebung ihren Unterhalt selbst verdienen. Viele arbeiten auch harnackig an ihrem sozialen Aufstieg, sei es durch Rückkehr in ihr Heimatland oder durch den Versuch, ihren Status im Aufnahmeland zu legalisieren. Unterstützung von seiten der Zivilgesellschaft trifft daher auf Seiten der Unterstützten auf gute Voraussetzungen.