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Priljeno: 20. 10. 1986.

## OPTIONS OF UNEMPLOYED IMMIGRANTS IN THE 1980'S — A comparative study of unemployment among Turkish and Yugoslav immigrants in Sweden and Denmark\*

### SUMMARY

Since the mid-1970's the unemployment of immigrants in Scandinavia has constantly been double that of indigenous Scandinavians.

The purpose of the research project »Options of Unemployed Immigrants« is to elucidate *structural causes and institutionalized practices* in relation to the high rates of immigrant unemployment in *Denmark* and *Sweden*, and to investigate the *alternative options* of the unemployed immigrants on the labour markets of the two Scandinavian countries. The project investigates the situation of unemployed immigrants from *Yugoslavia* and *Turkey*, two of the largest immigrant groups in both Sweden and Denmark. A comparative study of conditions in Sweden and Denmark is especially valuable on account of the two neighbouring Scandinavian countries' markedly different labour market and unemployment policies.

Research is conducted from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining the theories and methods of social anthropology with those of sociological labour market studies. Empirical research combines a limited number of local level case studies with statistical investigations on regional and national levels.

### INTRODUCTION

For the Western European governments the »oil crisis« in 1973 came as a convenient excuse for initiating an already conceived policy of stabilization of the international migratory system. The developments after 1973 had made the halt to new immigration fairly permanent in most countries<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, the halt to immigration initiated wholly new conditions for the functioning of the migratory system in Europe and for the relations between the countries of emigration and those of immigration. These conditions have been defined by far-reaching structural changes in the capitalist system and the labour markets in the immigration countries. One significant effect of these changes has been a steadily growing unemployment among migrant workers. Unemployment rates among migrants are gene-

\* Paper for the Seminar on Migration Research (3-5th February 1986), organised by the Immigration Initiative of the Danish Social Science Research Council at the Rungstedgaard College of Insurance, Rungsted Kyst, Denmark.

<sup>1</sup> The *import of labour* (labour migration) is referred to here in the classical sense, not including the unification of migrant families, new refugee movements etc.

rally considerably higher than among nationals and are reaching exorbitant proportions<sup>2</sup> in certain countries and among certain groups of immigrants.

This unemployment is of a much more fundamental character than the minor employment fluctuations experienced during the post-war recessions. Present unemployment, its forms and consequences are conditioned by accelerated internationalization of capital in combination with the qualitative jump in the *automation* of industry and services, which is often referred to as the »third industrial revolution«.<sup>3</sup> An adequate framework for understanding the causes and consequences of unemployment and the future perspectives of unemployed must be anchored in the conceptions of the global restructuring, of capitalism and the crisis which this has created for established Keynesian »welfare« politics.<sup>4</sup>

Employment and unemployment problems are not an economic or labour market issue alone, hence of fundamental importance for the character of political, social, educational and cultural integration of immigrants in Western Europe. In spite of this, European research on immigrants has since 1973 mainly concentrated on these latter aspects of integration<sup>5</sup>, while immigrants' position in the production system and on the labour markets has been a relatively neglected issue.

In Scandinavia comprehensive studies dealing with immigrants' position on the labour markets and the perspectives of unemployed immigrants are acutely necessary. In 1982 this became the background for the formulation of the long-term research project »*Options of Unemployed Immigrants in the 1980's*«.

The aim of the project is to undertake a complex investigation of the situation of unemployed immigrants and to shed light on their present alternatives of employment in two Scandinavian immigration countries, Denmark and Sweden. The value of this comparative perspective stems especially from the markedly different political strategies and institutional practices in dealing with the problems of unemployment which have become established in these two countries during the postwar period. Hence, Sweden and Denmark demonstrate two different model examples among developed state unemployment relief policies in Europe. While Sweden has the most developed system of retraining, requalification and special employment provisions for unemployed in the OECD area, Denmark probably has a most developed and pervasive system for cash monetary wage compensation.

The investigation focuses mainly on the situation of unemployed among two major groups of immigrants in both of the two countries: Yugoslavs and immigrants from Turkey.<sup>6</sup> The investigation takes place partly as a general exploration of immigrant unemployment in the two countries and partly as in-depth case studies within two chosen local contexts: one in Stockholm and one in Copenhagen. Research is conducted from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining the theories and methods of social anthropology with those of sociological

<sup>2</sup> For data about unemployment among immigrants in different European countries see, for example, Grammenos 1982. For note pertaining to a theoretical analysis see Schierup 1985a.

<sup>3</sup> Tractored by information and computer technology, pervasive reorganization of labour processes and forms of management.

<sup>4</sup> For a general analysis of the crisis of the »welfare state« see Keyne 1985.

<sup>5</sup> For a critique of dominant notions of »integration« see Schierup 1984, Schierup 1986 or Schierup & Alund 1986.

<sup>6</sup> In Denmark immigrants from Turkey are the largest single immigrant group in the country with nearly 20,000 Yugoslavs as the second with about 7,000. In Sweden, Yugoslavs are the second (after the Finns) largest immigrant group with about 40,000 plus 10,000 naturalized Swedish citizens of Yugoslav descent. With slightly over 20,000, immigrants from Turkey are the second largest non-Nordic group.

labour market studies. Empirical research combines a limited number of local level case-studies with statistical investigations on regional and national levels.<sup>7</sup> We operate with a broad operational definition of the notion of «unemployed», including both open unemployment, young school-leavers seeking work, people under requalification sponsored by state labour market institutions, persons involved in special state sponsored employment programs etc.<sup>8</sup>

Empirical research started in 1984. The project is financed by the Danish Social Science Research Council in cooperation with the Research Council for the Humanities and the Social and Political Sciences in Sweden. Research activities are based on the Department of Sociology, University of Umea, Sweden. Cooperation has been established with Sydjysk Universitetscenter in Denmark, which is also responsible for a part of the empirical research activities.

## MAIN PROBLEMS OF RESEARCH

We investigate immigrants' unemployment from two complementary angles. On the one hand we *record* the scope of immigrant unemployment and map its concrete forms and the categories of people involved. We work to shed light upon the *structural causes* behind this unemployment seen in relation to major political-economic changes, new technology and labour processes, new qualification demands etc., and to see such «ground causes» in conjunction with particular political and institutional practices in Sweden and Denmark.

Second, given the background of structural analysis, we explore possible *options of work and education* for unemployed immigrants. How far are different system-immanent options accessible to immigrants? How are they conceived and used by various immigrant groups, seen in relation to their particular social and cultural preconditions, resources and forms of organization?

In the following, we shall discuss in more detail each of these two broad thematic research problems.

<sup>7</sup> We try to combine a statistical overview of the national situation and major regions (Stockholm, Copenhagen) in the two countries with deep studies of delimited local areas. For local case studies we have chosen one employment service district in Sweden (Botkyrka) and one in Denmark (Tastrup) with a comparable history of settlement (e.g. many new «concrete» housing block areas), social and ethnic composition of the population, economic situation and general labour market conditions. There are, moreover, major groups of immigrants living in both of these districts who have their origin in the same local *emigration* communities in Turkey and Yugoslavia, respectively.

In our local studies we work together with local administrations and employment services to produce detailed statistical documentation. This provides background material, which is combined with material from a number of other techniques of data collection. By the combination of methods as different as the analysis of public statistics, anthropologically oriented «participant» observation and deep interviews we collect a differentiated documentation on the basis of which to make a current progressing analysis and form still more inclusive hypotheses. We do interviews with employed as well as unemployed immigrants and with people who have engaged in private small-scale business. We also interview a large number of key-informants both in the institutional structure of the two Scandinavian societies (trade union activists, political party activists, teachers, social assistants, assistants in the employment services, employers etc) and in the immigrant communities (e.g. activists in associations). On the basis of data from these various sources we formulate a questionnaire for a survey, preferably to be carried out in cooperation with both immigrant associations and local administrations.

We are of the opinion that deep studies of local contexts with a variety of methods can often shed more light on general processes than more extensive, but also more superficial studies of wider contexts.

<sup>8</sup> Here we shall not discuss the intricate problems involved in a comparison of Swedish and Danish unemployment rates and trends, which stem partly from different labour market policies and institutional practices, and partly from different conceptions of unemployment statistics. Swedish average unemployment rates have since 1975 oscillated between 2 and 4 per cent with approximately the double for immigrants. In Denmark average unemployment rates among nationals oscillate between 10 and 12 per cent and between 20 and 30 per cent for immigrants, which places Denmark in the «heavy» end of unemployment, and especially *immigrant* unemployment among Western European countries. However, if we include not only «openly unemployed», but all persons involved in requalification programs and other state sponsored special employment schemes outside the so-called «regular labour market», the difference between the two countries' unemployment rates — «open» and «hidden» together — is considerably reduced. This is especially pronounced concerning immigrants. For a discussion of rates of «open» and «hidden» unemployment among immigrants on the basis of Swedish labour market statistics see Ekberg 1984 and Schierup 1985b.

## IMMIGRANT UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS CAUSES

From the statistical sources available it is evident that everywhere immigrant unemployment is markedly higher than among the indigenous population, even within the same realms of the economy and similar production processes. It is also evident that this discrepancy occurs together with the marked crises of the national economies' restructuring. Finally the disproportion between immigrant unemployment and total unemployment has been shown to possess a general and a long term character for both sexes, and all ages. This holds true for immigration countries with different forms of immigrant policies, labour market policies and different measures for relieving unemployment. Hence, a number of *general structural conditions* can be supposed to be at play in Western European industrial countries, independent of their specific ethnic composition, social, political or economic systems. These deeper-seated general structural conditions can be defined as a discrepancy between new forms of organization of the capitalist labour process, and the immigrant labour force's use value under the present conditions of the economy's restructuring. Among other things this »use value« is defined by immigrants' social and educational background, and (linguistic-cultural) communicative competence in changing arenas of work. Hence, a large part of today's immigrants are treated as »faux frais« of the »Third Industrial Revolution«. However, it should not be forgotten that the deterioration of the »use value« of immigrant labour is to a large degree due to its previous and present deprived position in an ethnically stratified division of labour.<sup>9</sup> Western European capitalism has contributed to a large scale (active) *deskilling*<sup>10</sup> of imported labour, and monotonous, specialized and backbreaking production processes in »occupational ghettos«<sup>11</sup> to the erosion or destruction of creativity, adaptability and professional mobility in the immigrant work force. These processes of destruction of potentialities tend to continue among »the second generation« of immigrants exposed to segregative and selective processes in an ethnically stratified class society.

However, to reach a relevant understanding of the character of immigrant unemployment the *general discrepancy* between the production system and the specific use value of immigrant labour should be analysed in conjunction with a range of *particular factors* in each country: immigrant — and labour market policies, institutionalized as well as informal forms of discrimination etc.

In the following we shall further discuss these *general* and *particular* aspects of immigrant employment and unemployment.

## GENERAL ASPECTS

The selective effects of economic restructuring on European labour markets should be seen against the background of *two major underlying processes*. One is the extensive allocation of labour intensive industrial branches and processes of production from highly industrialized capitalist national economies to NIC's or LDC's; that is, the tendencies towards a new global division of labour which has dominated later capitalist development, especially since the beginning of

<sup>9</sup> See Alund 1985 for a comparative discussion of plural society and ethnic division of labour in the United States and in Sweden.

<sup>10</sup> See the discussion of »deskilling« among Yugoslav immigrants in Scandinavia in Schierup and Alund 1986.

<sup>11</sup> See the discussion of the notion of »occupational ghetto« in Feuchtwang 1982.

the 1970's.<sup>12</sup> The other is the pervasive and fast changes in technological systems and socio-professional hierarchies taking place in Western Europe and other capitalist core areas during the 1970's and 1980's. These two processes are interconnected and both related to a growing centralization and monopolization of capital.

Both types of structural change reshape economy and society as a whole, but their effects — in the shape of decreasing employment and rapid changes in the composition of the labour force — hit the hardest in production areas and labour processes, where immigrants were and are most numerous. This has created a rapidly increasing unemployment among immigrants employed in traditional production realms. Simultaneously, new technology, rationalization and new demands of rapid and deep-going socio-professional requalification create strong barriers for compensatory employment in the new types of labour — and production processes. This also hits immigrants hardest. Once ejected from industrial employment, a majority of immigrants seem to be referred either to menial and irregular employment in the service sector, to continuous circulation in the institutional system for unemployment, or to social welfare benefits. This is partly due to a *generally*<sup>13</sup> lower level of education, and to specific handicaps of language, codes of communication etc. This tends to create higher marginal costs for employers to requalify immigrants than in the case of domestic workers. However, this is coupled with factors of *discrimination* of an institutionalized as well as a more informal character. This will be discussed in the following.

## PARTICULAR ASPECTS

In the preceding section we have shortly discussed the general background in relation to which we investigate a number of specific factors for employment/unemployment of immigrants in Sweden and Denmark. For analytical reasons we divide such specific factors in two main groups:

— Factors located among enterprises/employers and in the working class (i. e. on the »labour market proper«).

— Factors connected with institutionalized practices springing from state policies and planning (i.e. education, employment services, unemployment relief systems, institutions for requalification of unemployed, special employment schemes etc.) and their function and effects on the labour market.

Concerning the first group of factors a major problem is to draw a dividing line between the above mentioned *general factors* for immigrant employment/unemployment (i. e. the contradiction »systemic demands/labour use value«) and various forms of more or less institutionalized discrimination.

One recent trend which contains inbuilt elements of discrimination is the formation of »internal labour markets«. By »internal labour markets«, we mean *labour markets within enterprises* in opposition to the external labour market, that is the general or »regular« labour market »outside« the enterprises.<sup>14</sup> The tendencies towards a growing importance of »internal labour markets« seem to go hand in hand with the demands of the »Third Industrial Revolution« and with a sort of »neo-feudalization« of relationships within enterprises. If the theories of »internal labour markets« are correct enterprises tend increasingly to restrict recruitment to new positions to the core groups of workers already

<sup>12</sup> See Schierup 1981.

<sup>13</sup> We emphasize that this is only true in a general sense. Many immigrants have carried high education as well as high work qualifications with them from their countries of origin.

<sup>14</sup> See further the definitions and the discussion in Åberg 1985.

within the enterprises. Hence, the trend seems to go towards continuous internal (within the firms) retraining and requalification of one's »own« people rather than recruitment of new persons from the external labour market, who might possess equal or even higher *formal* qualifications. In turn, the stable, »privileged« part of the enterprise's labour force, which enjoys security of employment and perspectives for advance, tends to identify more closely with the interests of the enterprise and management. This core group of workers and white-collar workers thus tends to be »protected« from competition with »outsiders« (the external labour market). New conflicts of interest grow forth between privileged workers on the stable »internal labour markets« and a more or less deprived and irregularly employed labour force circulating between different enterprises and unemployment relief institutions.

We hope, by means of detailed statistics in combination with case studies of individual enterprises, to be able to form initial hypotheses about how far tendencies towards internal labour markets in Copenhagen and Stockholm hit immigrants harder than other workers with a similar socio-professional background? How far does such more »institutionalized« discrimination combine with, for example, discriminatory union practices or more diffuse forms of discrimination? Here we think, for example, of informal pressure from indigenous workers in the cases of dismissals and new employment.

Second, we investigate how immigrants' employment and unemployment problems are perceived at the level of state institutions and how far institutional practices interfere with and influence the dealing of general and specific factors on the labour market. We are especially interested in the important differences between immigrant and labour market policies in Sweden and Denmark and in comparing institutional practices within the fields of employment service, education and professional requalification. Do these differences express themselves in different types of long-sighted alternatives and strategies among the same immigrant groups within the two countries?

## ALTERNATIVES TO UNEMPLOYMENT

Against the background of general and specific determinants on the labour markets of the two Scandinavian countries we strive to elucidate the interconnections between immigrants' general living conditions, their situation of work and education and their *actual alternatives* to unemployment. We investigate how such alternatives are regarded and exploited seen in relation to the background, immigrant experiences, resources, strategies and forms of organization of particular groups (esp. from Turkey and Yugoslavia). We divide these alternatives into *three main groups*, which we have called 1) *reliance on the institutional framework*, 2) *engagement in the »second economy«* and 3) *retreat to the hinterland*.

## RELIANCE ON THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

By the »institutional framework« we mean institutions and practices of unemployment relief, requalification of unemployed and other forms of education, special job-schemes etc.

By the help of statistics from central and local registers we do a detailed mapping of the morphology of unemployment, its distribution according to social and ethnic background, sex and age, and record the participation of immigrants in requalification and job schemes, educational programs etc. We follow

samples of these immigrants through surveys and deep interviewing, recording their subsequent experience. We want to see how far the actual effects of different policies and practices correspond with the ideologies and intentions laid down in these practices. We also try to elucidate how far these ideologies, intentions and practices and their actual effects correspond with immigrants' actual situation, expectations and aspirations. Thus the question is how far we can speak of *two-way* communication and of cooperation in the realization of provisions and schemes.

So far, one important observation, which might be valid in Stockholm as well as in Copenhagen, is that immigrants' *own social networks* seem to be more effective, concerning the looking up of new opportunities of employment than the employment bureaus, at least the way in which these function today.

## ENGAGEMENT IN THE SECOND ECONOMY

By the label »second economy« we refer to the (more or less »formal« or »informal«) sector of small scale enterprising and family-owned workshops and stores, which expands among a number of immigrant groups.

The growth of small-scale enterprising could be described as the rise of a new »petty bourgeoisie« among immigrants, but we can also ask how far this sector becomes an *alternative to unemployment* and in which ways. Our experience from field work so far is that the »second economy« is of large and growing importance to several immigrant groups. As new employers from within an immigrant group establish themselves, an alternative »internal« ethnically-specific labour market tends to grow forth. An »ethnic« labour market might be organized locally, regionally or even at a national level through more or less elaborate intraethnic social networks, which tend to crosscut social class. In the Stockholm region such labour markets have, as a matter of fact, in several cases grown far beyond the level of a »second economy«. Here we find immigrated owners of larger enterprises, which are favoured employment spots for fellow countrymen. Neither is immigrant small-scale business necessarily of a »traditional« or »service« character, even if it is often so. Thus, for example among the Yugoslavs of Stockholm, we find many owners of small metal-working workshops, each with a few employed (mostly Yugoslavs), which do technologically advanced subcontracting for larger Swedish firms. It is important to understate the *ethnic plurality* of the new labour market coming into being and to see this »plurality« as a totality or a system. Within this system of an interconnected opportunity structure a variety of ethnic groups tend to conquer or develop specific niches, which they jealously guard through their networks and mutual-help organizations.

One thing which is important to clarify in the context of the present project is the recruitment base of what we have provisionally called »the second economy«. Does this sector recruit immigrants, who would otherwise be unemployed? What are the »push« and »pull« factors for recruitment? Do people engage here because of ambitions and »free choice«? How are the actual working conditions? Is the expanding »second economy« just another symptom of »marginalization« of immigrants in relation to dominant economic structures and alternatives or is it a viable and satisfactory long term alternative for both small employers and those whom they employ?

## RETREAT TO THE HINTERLAND

With a label borrowed from British colonial anthropology, we refer to the immigrants' countries and communities of origin as their social »hinterland«.<sup>15</sup> For groups of *labour migrants*, who came to Scandinavia during the sixties and the early seventies this hinterland has long remained an alternative to integration in the immigration countries. For a large part of the first generation immigrants and even for many of the »second generation« this is still so.<sup>16</sup> Even among many refugees the »hinterland« remains an option to be reckoned with. The reasons for this are mixed and must partly be looked for in the immigrant societies *per se*, and partly in Scandinavian immigrant policies, institutional practices and living conditions in the immigration countries.

We followed a group of Kurdish immigrants from a few emigration villages in Central Anatolia as immigrants in Copenhagen and Stockholm alternatively.<sup>17</sup> Whereas the group in Copenhagen has remained strongly tied to the Anatolian hinterland and their villages of origin, the »Swedish« group has largely given up plans of return and are developing strategies of integration in Sweden.

Obviously one of the reasons behind the plans for »retreat to the hinterland« which one can still find among most members of this immigrant group in Copenhagen should be located in the Danish immigrant policy, which has conserved vestiges of a »guest worker policy«, although the legal security of immigrants has recently been much improved. Conversely, the orientation towards integration among the »Swedish« immigrants can partly be located in the greater security which has been offered by Swedish immigration and immigrant policy.

Also concerning institutional practices on the labour market there are larger differences between the conditions in the two countries. While open mass unemployment<sup>18</sup> prevails among immigrants from Turkey in Copenhagen and the unemployed are taken care of almost exclusively through the provision of cash unemployment benefits, unemployed Kurds in Stockholm have quickly been absorbed by special institutional provisions like long-term language courses followed by labour market oriented »retraining courses«.

Even concerning patterns of settlement there are important differences between the two groups though they largely live in the same type of newer concrete apartment blocks in similar suburbs to the two capitals. While the Kurds in Stockholm tend to be gathered within a few very located and concentrated ethnic »ghettos« the Kurds of Copenhagen are distributed in smaller groupings over larger parts of the capital. Probably the concentrated settlement patterns and tightly woven intraethnic networks in combination with a greater degree of experienced long-term security are a reason why problems of a psychosomatic nature seem to be less common among the Stockholm Kurds than among those in Copenhagen.

However, the case is not so simple that one could speak of a positive or »successful« pattern of integration in Sweden and a negative or »unsuccessful« one in Denmark. What has been accomplished through adaptive institutional practices in Sweden seem for this particular group so far to have resulted largely, in an »adaptation« to unpleasant working conditions in the lowest, most fluctuating, irregular and least remunerated »niches« in the service sector of the »regular labour market« (e.g. cleaning). This is combined with the spatial and social

<sup>15</sup> See Mayer 1962.

<sup>16</sup> See further the discussion in Schierup 1984, Schierup 1986 or Schierup and Alund 1986.

<sup>17</sup> Research results are forthcoming in Hjørnø 1986.

<sup>18</sup> 30 to 40% of all immigrants from Turkey in Denmark are currently unemployed.

exile to a remote »power vacuum« in an immigrant residential ghetto on the outskirts of Stockholm. Informal networks are in this case prevailingly of an »intragroup« character, but they seem to convey few links to the power structure of the larger society, to sources of influence or to channels of socio-professional advance.

The »Danish« Kurds, on the other hand, seem to have developed a widely ramified and effective social network reaching all over Copenhagen, and embracing a varied opportunity structure. As a matter of fact this network is still largely directed towards investments and social mobility in the *hinterland* and not in Denmark. However, simultaneously an effective expansion into »the second economy« in Danish society has started, backed up by the group's social network. This network also bears up new alternative forms and strategies of political organization and new claims directed towards the institutional practices of Danish society; among other things acting to put immigrants' social, cultural, political and employment situation into the focus of the public.

## THE THREAT OF MARGINALIZATION

All over Europe we witness a »marginalization« of growing groups of immigrants in relation both to the »regular labour market« and to the political power structure of society. Seen from the perspective of the labour market this marginalization takes place as an interplay between both »general« and »specific« factors, which we have discussed in the preceding sections. Another factor for marginalization of the most deprived groups with the least resources, the least effective strategies or the less well established social networks is the character of the emerging hierarchic ethnic division of labour, where every group defends its individual »niches«.<sup>19</sup>

Also in Scandinavia we see an increasing marginalization taking place; probably more so in Denmark than in Sweden, but still to a minor extent than in several other European immigration countries, like for example England, Germany and France. The main reasons for this is probably the still well-developed welfare system, including the unemployment relief systems. However, when discussing options of unemployed immigrants in the 1980's and the coming 1990's we must take into consideration the growing dismanteling and disintegration of the welfare state which also affects Scandinavia. Denmark and Sweden demonstrate in different ways advanced institutional practices in their welfare systems, not least concerning problems of unemployment. Nevertheless, in both countries, and in a number of ways, current practices directed to reduce unemployment or to relieve its negative economic and social effects are threatened.<sup>20</sup>

However, it does not seem likely that in the nineties we shall come to see what occurs in Britain today: a radicalization of larger sections of the immigrant population where uncompromising militancy has remained the only alternative option.

<sup>19</sup> The situation of groups of »newcomers«, like several of the new groups of refugees in Scandinavia is often especially difficult.

<sup>20</sup> In Denmark recent laws have meant a dramatic deterioration of the long-term social and economic security embodied in the developed system of unemployment insurance. In Sweden an increasingly felt lack of staff and funds threatens the work of the employment services and institutions for labour market requalification. This can come to mean that fresh »experimental« projects will be undertaken more seldom and that »adaptation« of immigrants to reentry on the labour market will take on cruder and more unsatisfactory forms.

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MOGUĆNOSTI NEZAPOSLENIH IMIGRANATA 80-ih GODINA — Komparativna studija nezaposlenosti među turskim i jugoslavenskim imigranata u Švedskoj i Danskoj

## SAŽETAK

Od sredine 70-ih godina nezaposlenost među imigranata u Skandinaviji bila je dvostruko viša nego među indigenim Skandinavcima.

Istraživački zadatak »Mogućnosti nezaposlenih imigranata« ima cilj rasvijetliti *strukturne razloge* i *institucionalnu praksu* s obzirom na visok stupanj nezaposlenosti imigranata u Danskoj i Švedskoj i istražiti *alternativne mogućnosti* za nezaposlene imigrante na tržištima radne snage u ove dvije zemlje. Projekt istražuje položaj nezaposlenih imigranata iz Jugoslavije i Turske, dvije najveće imigrantske skupine u Švedskoj i Danskoj. Komparativna studija o uvjetima u Švedskoj i Danskoj posebno je vrijedna pažnje, jer se ove susjedne skandinavske zemlje osjetno razlikuju po tržištu radne snage i politici prema nezaposlenima.

Istraživanje polazi od interdisciplinarnе perspektive, povezujući teorije i metode socijalne antropologije s onima kojima se služe sociološka istraživanja tržišta radne snage. U empirijskom istraživanju povezuje se stanoviti broj studija lokalnih primjera sa statističkom analizom na regionalnoj i nacionalnoj razini.