Abstract. Migration and age have become key topics of the contemporary world. The situation of older migrants is of particular interest in many European countries. Only few studies have, however, focused on the relationship quality between adult children and their ageing parents in host national compared to immigrant families. Ageing parents in migrant families may experience a special need for intergenerational support and solidarity and therefore develop specific expectations about support exchange. However, due to an acculturative gap between older migrant parents (1st generation) and their adult children (2nd generation), born or grown up in the "new" country, mutual expectations and ideas about family obligations might differ between both generations. In the present study, we will focus on similarities and differences in key issues regarding intergenerational family relations between parents and their adult children in host national and immigrant families.

RESULTS

We aim to analyze:
• the similarities and differences in family values and mutual expectations (with respect to family obligations; received and given support; felt ambivalences) between first and second generations in national and immigrant families living in Luxembourg.
• the effects and relations between all the family values and rated issues as mentioned previously, the similarities and differences between members of migrant and non-migrant families.

SAMPLE

The current study is part of the FNR-funded project on “Intergenerational Relations in the Light of Migration and Ageing – IRMA” (PI: Dr. Isabelle Alberti). A cross-cultural comparison between Luxembourg (LUX) and Portuguese (PT) family triads living in Luxembourg with N = 120 family triads (older mothers and fathers and one of their adult children, born resp. grown up in Luxembourg; see Table 1) is being conducted. The focus is specifically put on Portuguese immigrant families, as this is the most represented immigrant group living in Luxembourg (over 16% of Luxembourg’s inhabitants have the Portuguese nationality; Statec, 2011).

The preliminary sample comprises n = 34 LUX and n = 30 PT family triads.

MEASUREMENTS

Participants had to fill out a standardized questionnaire available in three languages – namely German, French and Portuguese (the different language versions were translated and cross-checked by a group of multilingual psychologists).

Reliabilities of the scales and the different subsamples were satisfactory, ranging between .66 < α < .83 (except for the cohesion scale for PT Mothers → .45).

Obligations toward family (see e.g., Menc et al., 2006, 12 items, e.g., “I feel obliged to behave in line with our family rules”; 6-point Likert scale from 1 = do not agree at all to 6 = fully agree).

Given and received intergenerational support (see Alberti et al., 2013, 12 items each, e.g., “My mother/father/child hand us many things for me that I cannot do on my own”; “I handle many things for my parents/child”, 6-point Likert scale from 1 = do not agree at all to 6 = fully agree).

Family Cohesion (see e.g., Michels & al., 2006, 4 items, e.g., “We all help and support one another”; 6-point Likert scale from 1 = do not agree at all to 6 = fully agree).

Psychological Ambivalence (see e.g., Michels & al., 2011, 9 items, e.g., “I like to sit down with my N/F but then there are often disputes”; 6-point Likert scale from 1 = do not agree at all to 6 = fully agree).

The full sample will comprise N = 360 participants.

CONCLUSION

• No differences between LUX and PT families were found regarding family cohesion. However, PT families rated their family obligations and mutual intergenerational (IG) support slightly higher than LUX participants.

• Parents and adult children did not differ with regard to family cohesion and obligations but parents communicate a higher provided support to / lower received support from their adult children than the other way around (Pillemer & al., 2007; Morrison & James, 2009). Adult children from both cultures acknowledged receiving more support than they give to their parents.

• PT children also reported to receive as much support from their parents as they give to them, whereas LUX children reported the opposite, they admit receiving more support than they give (see also Albert & al., 2013).

• Regarding psychological ambivalence, PT families differed significantly from LUX families. PT participants rated their psychological felt ambivalence towards their family members (child/mother/father) higher than did parents and children of the LUX families, which may be due to the acculturative context of the immigrant families.

• No significant differences were found between parents and children regarding the psychological ambivalence. Nonetheless, an interesting pattern was revealed at the mean level for PT children. In deed, a marginal significance (H26 = 1.91, p = .06) was found between their felt ambivalence towards their mother and their father. They admit having more ambivalent feelings towards their mothers than towards their fathers while LUX adult children reported similar levels of mixed feelings towards both parents.

Further analyses regarding IG relations and SWB in light of migration and ageing will be done to supplement the results reported here.