

INSTITUTE FOR FUTURES STUDIES

Research Report

Anna Gavanas

Who cleans the welfare state? Migration, informalization, social exclusion and domestic services in Stockholm

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Anna Gavanoas, Stockholm 2010

1. Introduction

I am waiting at a bus stop in a wealthy suburb of Stockholm to meet Ivan for an interview about his domestic service company. At the bus stop there are several groups of people in workers' clothes waiting for cars to pick them up. I recall the words of Helena, a domestic cleaner who works informally, who explained how it is organized. She said that a contact person calls up the worker the same day and tells her to go to a certain stop, where someone picks her up together with the other workers and brings them to the work site. The people at the bus stop speak languages I cannot identify and I am unsure how to find Ivan. Eventually Ivan picks me up in a car and drives us past luxurious villas to the house where he lives with his mother and runs a domestic service company for cleaning and construction work. After the interview, Ivan points out the houses of various celebrities and the houses where construction workers from Azerbaijan and Tajikistan work for 50 crowns per hour.

This report is a pilot study that explores the organization of the informal economy through the lens of the domestic work sector in Stockholm. The “informal economy” refers to income generating activities outside the state’s regulatory framework, with parallels within that framework (Sassen 1994:1). My purpose in this report is to identify crucial aspects of the consequences of a range of large scale social and economic shifts in the Swedish context. The purpose is also to discuss the strategies, positions and conditions of various actors in the domestic service sector, and particularly migrant workers, in a globalized economy. For instance, I explore processes of formalization and informalization in the domestic service sector as well as the impacts of tax deductions for domestic services. I begin this report by

introducing theoretical issues around social inclusion, social exclusion and in/formalization¹ in the labour market. Subsequently, after a brief introduction into fieldwork and interviewees, I discuss empirical aspects of four interrelated themes.

Firstly, I demonstrate the ways in which the formal and informal domestic service sectors are inseparable and connected through a range of intermediaries.

Secondly, I discuss the ways intermediaries operate in cases where migrant workers lack significant power resources; Swedish language capabilities, social networks and documented migration status.

Thirdly, I highlight the dynamics of sexual harassment and exploitation in terms of aspects of the relations between actors in the in/formal domestic service sector.

Fourthly, I discuss the impact of tax deductions for domestic services to different actors.

As this study will demonstrate, the informal economy is inseparable from the formal economy and interconnected through intermediaries, subcontractors and social networks (Sassen 1997, Slavnic 2007, 2010, Williams and Windebank 1998). Furthermore, actors may operate in formal and informal manners simultaneously or interchangeably (Slavnic 2010). Internationally, domestic service is a main type of employment taken up by migrant women (Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2002, Lodenuis & Wingborg 2008). In recent policy initiatives in the EU as well as in Sweden, formal work in domestic service has been cast as key to the integration and social inclusion of migrants, thought to predominate in the informal economy (Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006). The Swedish market for domestic service is expanding as a result of welfare state cutbacks, as well as privatization of public care, deregulation, internationalization and flexibilization of labour markets (Gavanas 2006, Platzer 2003, de los Reyes 2002). In addition, the formal domestic work sector has expanded as a result of tax deductions introduced in 2007.

¹ In this report I occasionally use the concept “in/formal” to stress simultaneous, inseparable and interrelated formal and informal aspects to the organization of domestic service sectors. I also use interviewees’ emic expressions, the Swedish everyday terminology of the *svart* (“black,” or “illicit”) and *vit* (“white,” or “licit”) markets (and work) interchangeably with “informal” and “formal” aspects of the domestic service sector. This report mainly discusses domestic work paid informally and contexts where informal and formal aspects of domestic services overlap. It does so in relation to theories around processes of social inclusion and exclusion, as well as theoretical discussions of informalization and casualization of labour markets by Saskia Sassen, Zoran Slavnic and other social science scholars.

In this report I primarily discuss factors that impact living and working conditions of (migrant) workers in the in/formal domestic service sector in Stockholm². I highlight areas that are addressed in discussions around social inclusion and exclusion (social rights, labour market conditions, health, living standards, etc.), but specifically focus on key themes that resurfaced in interviews; language, migration status, social networks and exploitative relations. The report is based on 30 interviews³ with three types of actors; managers of small domestic service companies⁴ (7), domestic workers (11) and organizations/ unions/ agencies (12). The two former categories tend to overlap and there were also organization representatives with backgrounds or current involvement as workers/ intermediaries in the in/formal domestic service sector. Interviews primarily focused on the themes of this report; the migration/work trajectories and positions of different actors in the domestic service sector; significant factors and developments that impact the conditions of actors and especially migrant domestic workers, the organization of the formal and informal aspects of the domestic service sector; as well as perspectives on the dynamics of social inclusion and social exclusion (see appendix 1).⁵ Interviewees range between the ages of 20 – 60, and come from a wide range of educational, socio-economic and regional backgrounds; Poland, Eritrea, Russia, Hungary, Uganda, Latvia, Lithuania, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Morocco, Turkey, Bolivia and Ecuador. Among interviewees there are a variety of migration statuses; asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, EU citizens, Swedish citizens since birth and those with residence permit through family relations.

2 This is a small scale empirical study focusing on Stockholm in terms of a “Global City” (Sassen 1998). Sweden and Stockholm are part of a post industrial development where an expanding service sector is offering low cost goods and services within an in/formal economy partly underpinned by the labour of (undocumented) migrants. Therefore, Stockholm can be discussed in terms of Saskia Sassen’s theoretical approach to “global cities,” informalization, deregulation and (undocumented) migration (Khosravi 2006:296). Unfortunately, the resources for this report have not enabled a large scale or comparative study encompassing neither other cities in Sweden, nor small towns/ rural areas in Sweden.

3 Some of the interviews were conducted with more than one interviewee, and there were also some additional informal interviews and fieldwork in addition to the 30 interviews (see appendix 2).

4 Companies with less than ten part time and/or full time employees.

5 In this report I do not get into issues around the outlooks and agendas of various organizations, agencies and unions in relation to the domestic service sector. Although relevant such issues are outside the thematic scope of this report, and its focus on (migrant) domestic workers.

2. Social exclusion, inclusion and the in/formal domestic service sector in Stockholm

The relationship between the formal and the informal [economy] is far more complex than a division, according to which one can substitute or complement the other. /.../ They do neither oppose each other /.../, nor are they separable, as one is meaningless without the other /.../.
(Björklund Larsen 2010:14)

In Sweden, domestic service (i.e. house work and care) has traditionally been carried out either by unpaid (female) family members or by publicly funded care providers. However, since the 1980s and 1990s, care sectors in the EU as well as in Sweden have been increasingly marketized, privatized and governed by values of consumer choice (Szebehely 2004, Lister et al 2007, Ungerson 2004). In an international perspective, privatization, commodification, so called “cash for care” policies and tax deductions for domestic services tend to encourage consumers to find cheaper and more flexible services on informal markets and among the most exploitable (often undocumented) migrant workers (Gavanas 2010, Gavanas and Williams 2008, Williams 2009:18). When the market provides care, costs are dependent on wage levels, which means that workers’ wages are being forced down by strategies like employing those with least bargaining power. Migrants and asylum seekers from low income regions are discussed in terms of an expanding exploitable pool of “flexible” labour in a growing informal economy and at particular risk for racialized and ethnified social

exclusion (Schierup 2006). In research on informalization and social exclusion, migrants are often considered at-risk groups in EU policy in terms of exclusion from formal labour markets, welfare and health care (Schierup 2006). “*Social exclusion*” has been an increasingly central term in EU politics since the end of the 1980s, addressing widening social and economic gaps in the wake of globalization, migration and neoliberalization (Alm et al 2010, Edgren-Schori 2000:99). As a political concept, social exclusion encompasses dimensions beyond financial and material resources; it also concerns social integration, rights, political participation and living standard (O’Brien and Penna 2008:85, Sen 2000). Social exclusion has been loosely defined in EU policy as a process where groups or individuals are completely or partly excluded from full participation in the society in which they live. Most definitions of social exclusion refer to a multiple lack of resources and conditions considered necessary for acceptable living standards. Theoretical definitions of social exclusion are *multidimensional*, *dynamic* and *cumulative* (Atkinson 1998, Burchart et al 1999, Gallie and Paugham 2004, Moisiu 2002) listing a number of risk factors such as labour market attachment, material resources, health, political participation, education and living standards.

Politics to combat “social exclusion” and promote “social inclusion” are at the forefront of the EU social agenda (Berghman 1995, Vlemnickx and Berghman 2001). The concept of social exclusion was formulated as an attempt to address the “new poverty” that followed the deregulation, informalization and flexibilization of labour markets, as well as neoliberal welfare state restructuring in the EU (Edgren-Schori 2000, Gore 1995, Munck 2005). The centrality of social inclusion politics in the EU is inextricably intertwined with increasing competition in the global economy (Bhalla and Lapeyre 1999) as well as increasing socio-economic polarization in terms of living standards, health and consumption (Munck 2005). Because social cohesion within and between EU member states are considered crucial to Europe’s economic success in global markets, EU social inclusion politics is inseparable from the larger goal of competitiveness in the global economy (O’Brien and Penna 2008). Since the 1990s, EU policies for tackling social exclusion have been subordinated to economic imperatives to improve competitiveness and reduce burdens on social protection systems (Atkinson and Davoudi 2000:9, Room 1995:8). In EU social inclusion policy, there has thus been a shift from a focus on

social rights to a focus on *employability* (Mayes et al 2001, Schierup 2006). This shift is also reflected in recent Swedish policies on “*utanförskap*” (Alm et al 2010, Schierup 2006), which can be roughly translated to “outsiderhood.”

EU social inclusion politics has been criticized for being vague and for obscuring issues around inequality and poverty. Critics have underlined the importance of interrogating what *preconditions* are presumed for “social inclusion” (Fischer 2008:13, Gore and Figueiredo 1997). One may be included in the formal labour market under exploitative conditions, for instance, regarding unfavourable working hours, salary level, rights, etc. Policies focusing on individual responsibility and employability at all cost may pressure workers to accept exploitative conditions in the labour market (Schierup 2006). Insecure, precarious, low wage and irregular work (even if organized formally) may reinforce social exclusion (Atkinson 1998:15). In addition, critics point out that social exclusion policy tends to avoid questions around the *excluders* (Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006). As Neergaard (2006) points out, discussions on “the excluded” in dichotomous relation to the “included” rarely address power relations *between* and *within* social groups. While the social exclusion concept may be useful to address multidimensional and global aspects of widening social divisions, this report argues with Gough and others that it is crucial for conceptions of social exclusion to focus on exploitative social relations (Gough et al 2006:49).

Processes of social inclusion and exclusion, and survival strategies in competitive, post-industrial and global labour markets, are intertwined with processes of in/formalization. There is a growing consensus that the informal economy in developed countries has been expanding since the late 1980s (see Slavnic 2010:5). In the post-industrial society, the decline of mass production/consumption as well as the rise of the service sector have coincided with the weakening of workers’ positions in the labour market. Deregulation, widening wage divisions, an increasing share of precarious low wage jobs and weakening unions all contribute to socio-economic polarization and an increased casualization of employment conditions and working relations (Sassen 1994:2294). Today, as compared to the pre-1980s, there is an increasing share of part-time and temporary jobs as well as fewer protections and benefits for growing proportions of the work force. This combined with an increasing demand for low cost services and

products in “global cities” has resulted in an increase in subcontracting, outsourcing and demands for worker flexibility (Sassen 2006). In expanding low wage in/formal sectors, migrant workers are over represented, absorbing economic risks in volatile competitive markets (Schierup 2007). Migrants are at particular risk for “hyper casualization” in the informal economy, i.e. insecure labour market conditions and shrinking welfare state support (Schierup, Hansen & Castles 2006:206).

In this report, simultaneous processes of formalization and informalization prove to be crucial to the dynamics of social inclusion and social exclusion. Moreover, interviewees illustrate the symbiotic inseparability in the formal and informal domestic service sector in Stockholm. Sociologist Zoran Slavnic (2010) problematizes the view of the informal economy as separate from the formal economy and highlights the ways all economic actors adopt informal economic strategies for economic survival. He discusses two types of informalization processes; *informalization from above* (by corporations, governments and subcontractors) and *informalization from below* (by marginalized actors such as low-income earners, small business owners and migrant workers). As I will demonstrate, both informalization strategies are prevalent and significant among actors in the domestic service sectors of Stockholm.

Empirical issues

This is a qualitative, semi-structured interview study based on the accounts and experiences of a strategically sampled selection of actors in the in/formal domestic cleaning sector in Stockholm. It has been my aim to find interviewees from a wide range of national backgrounds, ages, migration statuses and educational backgrounds. The purpose of this qualitative and interpretative pilot study is to approach developments in the in/formal domestic cleaning sector from the experiences and perspectives of actors in the field and to identify crucial research questions for further studies. In order to cover the two areas of migration and domestic service I approached interviewees from two angles; firstly through contact zones for domestic work and secondly through contact zones for recently arrived migrants looking for work in low wage sectors. Although the

two groups may overlap, interviewees who turned up through the one approach might not necessarily turn up through the other. 12 interviewees were selected randomly from lists of domestic service providers (the yellow pages for formal companies, private advertisement websites for “private”/self employed services and Internet forums for job seekers). In addition, six interviewees were located through fieldwork in churches, homeless centres, advertisement posted in public spaces as well as other researchers in the field. In addition, 12 expert interviews were conducted with organizations, unions and agencies dealing with migration, homelessness and labour market issues. Each interviewee was approached independently from others and in order to secure a wider range of samples (in other words I did not use snowball sampling). This study makes no claims for representation or generalization. In fact, this study seeks to get at actors who cannot be statistically sampled and accessed through public registers or databases. Some interviewees are undocumented migrants, and/or do not have a residential address, or access to internet.

Needless to say, it proves to be difficult for a researcher and outsider to the in/formal domestic service sector to gain access to actors and information. As I will illustrate below, those who work informally tend *not* to speak Swedish and subsequently there were language barriers to making contact with potential interviewees. While I speak Swedish, English and some Spanish, most potential interviewees spoke none of these languages. Thus, since I do not possess matching language skills with all potential interviewees, fieldwork would ideally require an interpreter at hand for basically every language in the world (Russian, Arabic, Polish, Hungarian, Mongolian, etc.) since the languages of potential interviewees were rarely apparent before making contact. I handled language limitations in the field in three ways; either by conducting interviews in a common language (in some cases me or the interviewee was not completely fluent); conducting the interview with the assistance of interviewees’ friends as interpreters; or with the assistance of paid professional interpreters. Approximately every 20th attempt at contact through Internet, phone or fieldwork resulted in an interview. Due to contextual as well as communicational and trust issues, the quality, reliability and extent of the infor-

mation vary between the interviews⁶. Among the 30 interviewees for the present study, 14 were active as cleaners (as opposed to for instance solely managing/representing an organization or business). Of these, ten were women and four were men. All of the female interviewees worked as domestic cleaners, except for two who also worked as office cleaners, and one worked as a hotel cleaner. The four men worked as office- and hotel cleaners, or did domestic maintenance work or final cleaning in combination with domestic cleaning services.⁷

In this particular field, where some interviewees were considered “illegal” migrants by the authorities and/ or thought to be involved in “illegal” activities in the informal economy from the perspective of the Tax Agency, I also needed to bear in mind that sharing certain information may entail hazardous consequences to interviewees (risk of deportation for interviewees and their families/ friends, risk of repercussions from other actors, risk of attention from authorities). It was therefore (along with language difficulties) very difficult to find appropriate situations to approach interviewees. For instance, when I visited centres and events for undocumented migrants I did *not* approach attendees in order not to intimidate or cause discomfort to anyone.

I also encountered certain contact persons or “gate keepers” in the field who were difficult to get past. Such intermediaries (i.e. entrepreneurs and employers) had various reasons to “protect” workers from interrogation by outsiders. One manager I contacted at a domestic service company in November spelled out the reasons in an e-mail why she did not want to put me in touch with her employees:

6 In ethnographic research the context as well as the position and characteristics of the researcher influence access to the field under study as well as the information received. For instance, the gender, age, nationality, education and socio-economic background of interviewer and interviewee may influence the outcome of the study. In addition, the context where the interview takes place may influence the content of the interview.

Unsurprisingly, actors in in/formal sectors, and especially those whose migration status is undocumented, tend to be very suspicious of strangers who try to contact them and to ask questions. In addition, many actors are working extremely long hours, commute long distances and have limited time or interest to volunteer for a research interview. Of those who did volunteer for interviews, there were some who were hoping that maybe, possibly because I seemingly represented the Swedish middle class to them, I might be able to provide information and contacts for work. As I will explain further in the report below, it also proved to be difficult to initially estimate what type of actor one is actually talking to, since intermediaries and entrepreneurs sometimes pose as workers (who turn out to be inaccessible for various reasons). It was not uncommon for actors to decline interviews, make themselves unavailable or to agree to make an appointment only to disappear out of contact.

7 In some cases, migrant workers involved in hotel and office cleaning were also doing domestic cleaning and vice versa. Most interviewees were getting by on any work that they could find and were thus not exclusively focused on domestic cleaning as their main profession or area of expertise. For further studies it will be crucial to also include the hotel- and office cleaning business and study these sectors systematically in order to get at subcontracting and informal economy in these sectors.

You could not have chosen a more inappropriate time to speak to our staff. Christmas is our most stressful time [of the year] and furthermore we have many sick leaves now so it is out of the question [for our domestic workers to do interviews] daytime. I am not so sure that they want to do this on their free time? It is advisable for you to wait until after Christmas, but I am still not willing to pay them to do this during working hours.

It was often obvious that employers generally did not feel that their workers had the time or willingness to participate in research interviews off work.

Migration and work trajectories

People from a wide variety of backgrounds end up in Stockholm's in/formal domestic service sectors. Among interviewees there was a wide variety of educational backgrounds; PhD, secretary, pastor, lawyer, day care teacher, nurse, mechanic, printer, seamstress, business owner, etc. Some interviewees were born and raised in Sweden, others migrated to Sweden for economic purposes, others are seeking asylum. There were also those who migrated to reunite with family and those who migrated out of a general interest in travel, culture and personal development. Before getting into the thematic discussions of this report I here introduce some interviewees to illustrate the diversity of migrant workers in the domestic service sectors of Stockholm (for a full list of interviewees, see appendix 2).

Some interviewees ended up in Sweden with no initial interests or ties to their destination. Rather, they were primarily motivated by economic purposes to support themselves and their family. Susanna⁸, aged 37, came to Sweden five years ago from Mongolia through Hungary, where her sister has a residence permit. Susanna ended up in Sweden because she had contacts here but did not choose Sweden as her destination in particular. Susanna's main purpose was to go wherever there was a chance to make enough money to support her children back in Mongolia. This goes for her friend and colleague Maria as well, who is 45 years old and came to Sweden from Mongolia about a year ago.

⁸ Because of anonymity concerns, all names in this report are pseudonyms. In addition, in some cases, details about the backgrounds and work places of interviewees have been altered in order to prevent identification by participants in the field.

Susanna: She [Maria] has two children; a girl and a boy. /.../ They are not here [in Sweden]. That is the hardest; [when the children are] in Mongolia, and I think it is a total disaster. You leave your children and your family and come and work, and then for two-three years minimum you need to be separated from each other. /.../ I was away from my son for four years. /.../ I sent him money [and] /.../ called every day.

Maria: Of course I want to have the children [here] with me, but it is really, really hard; I do not think that will be possible. I send money every month. /.../ I am divorced since a long time ago. /.../ He [the ex husband] lives in Mongolia and he gives child support to his children every month, but that is not sufficient at all. /.../ He is not the one who takes care of the children. Those who take care of them are my parents; grandmother and grandfather. But now [the children] have grown up; [they are past] 20 years old. /.../ The children have become grown ups and are students; they study at the University. In Mongolia, if one wants to study, then one needs to pay for the University, and that is why it is hard for single mothers. /.../ I was only thinking about the children's future, so that is why I came here to work as a cleaner. /.../ I had a relative here [that is why I ended up in Sweden], otherwise I do not know anyone anywhere else, so I cannot go anywhere else.

Similarly, Esperanza, 38 years old, came to Sweden from Ecuador in 2004 in order to support her children back home. Esperanza's migration status could be labelled as "undocumented," since she has no residence permit and tries to apply for a work permit, but this has proved to be difficult:

In order to apply for residency I had to get an employment contract from my boss for the immigration authorities, but they did not want to give me a contract. So it is a problem for me /.../. The problem is that they [the cleaning companies] are not willing to pay benefits and payroll tax; they do not want to take on that responsibility /.../. In the future I would like to sort out my situation here and make sure that my children get an education, for example studying languages, and get better possibilities for a different life than I had. To provide them with the opportunity for another life and profession. But I do not know how it will work out.

Like Esperanza and Susanna, Emmanuel migrated with the purpose to make money to support his family back in Bangladesh. Emmanuel, aged 43, came to Sweden about a year ago through a contractor in

India, who arranged for his visa at the cost of \$15,000. It was not part of the deal to choose destination country. Emmanuel is now seeking asylum and tries to get by on any type of in/formal work he can find – in restaurants, as an office cleaner and in domestic maintenance – since it has not been possible to get employment in the formal labour market.

Emmanuel, Esperanza and Susanna migrated for family reasons by initially leaving their family in the country of origin but hoping to eventually reunite with their transnational family somehow. There were also interviewees who came to Sweden to accompany a family member. Ivan, 27 years old, came to Sweden from Russia in 2008 with his mother and they both have residency through Swedish spouses. Eva, 50 years old, migrated to Sweden from Hungary following her adult son two years ago. Eva's son already moved with his wife and daughter to Sweden three – four years ago. They were considering which country would enable the better school for the (grand) daughter, and the better life chances for the family. Eva initially commuted to Sweden three months at a time. She eventually moved permanently in order to help out taking care of her granddaughter and to look for work, since unemployment and labour market prospects are grim back in Hungary.

There were also interviewees who migrated to Sweden to reunite with their partners. Paula, 35 years old, came to Sweden from Poland in 2007 and brought her children to reunite with her husband, who left one year earlier. Since then, her pursuit for making a living has passed a series of intermediate stations:

When I first came here I definitely wanted to work! To do anything! I started off by working legally for a Greek [person], I was helped by a friend that I had gotten to know on the Internet, whom I am still seeing. I travelled for an hour to work every day just to work for an hour and a half and then travel back home for another hour. I was cleaning at a shop. I had a child who was sick and I ran to work with my sick child. It was terribly important for me [to work]. I was earning very little but I wanted to make my own money. One year earlier my husband had come here to work; both the work and the living arrangements were terrible. But I knew that all this [moving to Sweden] would give us the opportunity for a decent life. A better life for our children. My husband brought us over here when he was working here, but [it was only possible] because I had sold all the furniture in our home in Poland and the place was

completely empty. I really wanted to move here because I knew that if I ever ended up alone with my children here I would always get by. Here life is not as hard [as in Poland]. I don't know how I knew all that, I just felt it. He had no choice so he brought us over. We've had a very tough time, but I know today that I managed everything on my own without knowing the language, without any help. I went everywhere and arranged everything on my own.

Another interviewee, Anna aged 41, came to Sweden from Poland in 2002 to reunite with her Polish husband. She initially came over for a couple of months at a time and worked informally as a domestic cleaner. In 2004 Anna moved to Sweden permanently and started her own domestic cleaning company. Anna describes her family as relatively well off in Poland, so she is not sending remittances and (unlike Paula) did not move to Sweden for economic necessities but rather because living and working in Sweden is the more interesting option to her.

3. The organization of the in/formal economy.

The role of entrepreneurs, subcontractors and social networks in Stockholm's domestic service sector

Increasingly, migrant women (and men) are meeting the demand for domestic service in the EU. Globalization in the form of migrant labour is discussed by EU and Swedish policymakers as a primary solution to the labor shortages of "ageing Europe" expected to solve upcoming deficits (Holzmann & Münz 2004, Lundborg 2003, SOU 2010:40). In the symbiotic interrelations between formal and informal economies, informal work may both contribute to migrant workers' inclusion as well as to exclusion in relation to the dominant welfare society (Vasta 2004). Because of limited access to formal institutions and labour markets and limited fluency in Swedish, recently arrived migrants may turn to informal social networks as one of the few options for finding work. Social networks are crucial to migration processes as well as strategies for work, welfare and resistance (Vasta 2004). Social networks are also crucial to the organization of the in/formal economy. While social networks may contribute to participation in formal labour markets, there are also exploitative relations organized through social networks in the in/formal economy (Hansson 2008, Khosravi 2010, Vasta 2004:7).

In Sweden, 60 – 85 percent of formal employment is organized through informal recruitment, i.e. social networks (Tovatt 2006:245). Especially when it comes to recent migrants with limited access to formal labour markets and institutions (due to limited access to information, communication and legal/ social rights), social networks are

key to strategies for work and subsistence (Vasta 2004, Jenkins 1984, Hansson 2008, Tovatt 2006). Simultaneously, social networks contribute to segregation and ethnic segmentation (Behtoui 2006, Tovatt 2006:247). International research demonstrates that social networks directly and indirectly impact the income levels of migrants in particular as well as providing a resource for survival strategies, solidarity and belonging. Simultaneously social networks may organize exploitative relations (Aguilera and Masey 2003, Epstein 2003:30, Hansson 2008). Thus, social networks may contribute to advancement towards work/life goals and social inclusion as well as to dead ends and social exclusion.

As mentioned earlier, the formal and informal economies are not separate but in symbiotic relationship (Sassen 1998, Slavnic 2010) where intermediaries connect formally registered companies with informal workers. I came across three types of intermediaries during fieldwork: entrepreneurs, social networks (friends, family, internet forums, etc.) and subcontractors⁹. These intermediaries organize the in/formal economy and put workers, clients and employers in touch with each other. Sociologist Zoran Slavnic (2006, 2010) argues that social networks' "informalization from below" constitutes migrant survival strategies to compensate for exclusion from the formal labour market. In her Candidate Thesis, Louise Frisk (2009) found that entrepreneurs operate in two manners in Stockholm's informal domestic service sector; either by "contract" or by "percentage." In her interview study with Polish domestic workers in Stockholm's informal economy, Frisk encountered workers who either pay a lump sum for a "contract" where an entrepreneur finds clients – or pay a percentage of their payment from clients located through the entrepreneur.

The latter case can be demonstrated in the present report by Helena from Russia, who is working in/formally as a domestic cleaner. According to Helena, one can pay someone a broker's fee to get connected to an intermediary called Ursula, who will organize work. Ursula is an entrepreneur who has contacts with both clients and workers. Other than through Ursula, Helena also finds work through a number of formal and informal companies and entrepreneurs, and also through an Internet forum, as well as her network of friends. Like

⁹ I did not come across formal recruitment agencies based in Sweden or abroad that organize temporary or seasonal work in domestic services. However, for a future project and in an international and comparative perspective, these types of entrepreneurs/subcontractors will be crucial to investigate.

Helena, Olga from Poland also works informally as a domestic cleaner. Olga too has experiences with entrepreneurs who charge a percentage of workers' payment. In exchange, the entrepreneurs manage contacts and communication with clients for workers who do not speak any common languages with clients. When Olga first started working in Stockholm two and a half years ago she was put in touch with clients by an entrepreneur who charged clients 100 crowns per hour and gave Olga 60. This entrepreneur had 20 women working for her from Latvia, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

Oleg from Russia is an intermediary who manages contacts between workers and clients in the informal domestic service sector in addition to working informally in domestic and maintenance service. According to Oleg there is a certain order to social networks that organize in/formal work along lines of language and ethnicity:

There are two groups who work in the cleaning sector. The first group consists of academics who were not able to get work doing their professional expertise, in their area [of education]. And they want to survive, so they are looking for work where the jobs are. And cleaning work, there are a lot of those jobs. So that is one part. The other [group is] those who can not do anything else. [It is] a group who cannot..., they have no education, they cannot learn much or they do not know the language, and they need to survive as well. And if they have contacts in the former group, through people from their country of origin for example, then you can work in this sector. /.../ If one has a company, academics who have a company, he gets labour from, often from those people who know the same language. So if you come from an Arab country, for example, then one can use people who come from Arab countries and know Arabic. And someone who knows Russian, for example, can use people from the former Soviet Union. /.../ If there is a leader who knows Swedish and knows their language, then you explain to them [the workers] how to work in their language, so they do not have to know Swedish. And many of them [migrant workers] come and work in the cleaning sector; it is easy and one can learn how to do the job.

Throughout the course of my fieldwork there were similar cases where a Swedish speaking friend or partner acted as an intermediary for a non-Swedish speaking worker. In her interview study among Polish domestic workers in Stockholm, Louise Frisk describes very complex situations where social networks in the domestic work sector may

partly consist of friends and/or friends of relatives and therefore it becomes difficult for actors and observers to discern power relations in these networks (2009:38). In relations such as the one between Oleg and his girlfriend, and the others who work with/for them, it is difficult for an outsider to investigate the dynamics of solidarity, control, exchange and dependency.¹⁰ I interviewed another intermediary, John from Turkey, who helps fellow migrants without charging for his services. He describes his services as an act of solidarity in line with his struggles for the rights of fellow undocumented migrants:

Anna (me): Have you come in contact with any organized way of sending people out to different jobs?

John: It is not an organized operation. For example, I have an office here in my mobile phone. There are many who call and want /.../ extra people. So it is only about when, where, we get instructions and send people.

Anna (me): So you are some kind of intermediary then?

John: Yes.

Anna (me): But do they pay for your services, for you to intermediate then?

John: No, never. I do not charge, and I do not want to charge. /.../ I think one has to [help out]. I received help from many, and I want to help others as well, if I can. I do not think it is reasonable to charge from those who are already paid little. /.../ If someone pays [for someone else's work] and I get a few percent, I think that would be a really bad thing to do.

Anna (me): And how much are these jobs paying?

John: 50 – 60 crowns per hour. Sometimes a lump sum, for example “you will get a thousand crowns for this job.” So it varies, it could be 10 crowns per hour, it could be 80 – 90 crowns per hour, but in average one would say 40 – 45.

Anna (me): And the people who require people to work for them, are they just about anybody; are they Swedes, and...?

John: Yes, one could not classify people who hire *svart* [i.e. informally] as a certain group; nothing like that...

Anna (me): And what about this thing I have heard of sometimes that there are chains of companies who hire through several links...?

John: That is right; subcontractors.

Social networks of friends and acquaintances may thus act as inter-

¹⁰ In an interview situation it might also be inappropriate to ask about these matters. Assuming or suggesting the presence of financial exchange in family/friend-like relations could be perceived as insulting.

mediaries and connect workers and clients/employers with or without compensation. Occasionally there seemed to be an overlap between the categories of friends, intermediaries and entrepreneurs. For example, Olga spoke of the entrepreneur mentioned above as a friend of a friend. Another interviewee from Poland, Paula, also mentioned that she found work and training through a friend who managed a cleaning company. It is worth noting here that all information from interviewees should not necessarily be taken at face value. In interviews, the information received is contingent on what the interviewee chooses to present and it is not feasible to expect interviewees to declare every detail of these types of in/formal exchange relations.

Formal and informal aspects of the domestic service sector interperse as workers are hired informally by formally registered companies. Several interviewees told me that a cleaning company may charge a client for a certain amount of hours' cleaning but in fact the work is being done in much less time by an (undocumented) (migrant) worker who gets paid off the books. According to Helena, formally registered domestic service companies charge and invoice clients 300 crowns per hour "*vitt*" (i.e. formally) while paying 50 – 60 crowns per hour informally to unregistered workers. The company may make an invoice for seven hours of cleaning, but only give the worker four hours to carry out the job. This way the company may register a few workers as formal employees but simultaneously hire additional workers informally. Michael from a migrants' organization spoke of a similar pattern:

Employers /.../ they call [and say] go to that address and fix that, and the employer may bring the paperless [migrant] there and give him a bucket and something... And /.../ an apartment, for example, you may clean it in six hours, [but] he [the paperless migrant] has to clean it in two hours in order to make four hours; the employer needs to make four hours, and so he [the paperless migrant worker] gets paid 50 – 55 crowns per hour. /.../ The employer makes four hours in his pocket [i.e. informally]. /.../ You can see how the employer, I think he is like a monster /.../.

A company may thus officially file formal work carried out by named employees, but in fact the person who is doing the work is not the same person as the person listed. The person who is doing the work informally in less time than invoiced (and for less cost to the company)

might be an undocumented migrant. John from Turkey explains how one can get “extra work” and get paid formally through someone else’s identity:

John: When it comes to these kinds of jobs [cleaning jobs], one only gets to work extra; one does not get a regular job. They are looking for people to work temporarily. [It could be the case that] someone [of their regular workers] has not come in, or will not come in next week, and they did not find other [regular replacement] cleaners as usually, then they try to find workers through this network. If someone has contacts among different managers, different companies, different individuals or offices. One tries to get people and then they make a bit of money. /.../ There are no contracts [involved].

Anna (me): And they do not check for work permits?

John: No, as a matter of fact, with these jobs, you do them in someone else’s name. Like I have done when I was paperless; I had no bank account, so I was paid through someone else. When I [reported] the hours [I had worked], I sent this bank account number to the employer; then they paid into that account, to the person who had not done the job.

Anna (me): So they [the employer] can pay taxes and all that?

John: One does, using the other name. But as far as I know, the companies, they pay *vitt*. /.../ But individuals, they do not invoice; they pay cash. /.../

Anna (me): And those people whose name you borrow; do you pay them to be able to use their name?

John: It depends. If this man says “no, you have got to pay me something,” you have to do that. But it is different; there are those who are kind and say “OK, go ahead, I have no problem with that,” but others may say “yes I do have a problem; I am on social benefits and if you deposit money in my account it may have consequences.”

Intermediaries are sometimes part of larger chains which ultimately lead to big companies in the formal sector. As one interviewee from an organization for “paperless” migrants says: “it is always subcontractors /.../ who hire people *svart*. /.../ I do not know of any Swedish company who hire *svart* labour directly; /.../ only indirectly.” Juan from Bolivia works informally for a smaller cleaning company cleaning the stairs of apartment buildings. He explains that the owners of the buildings hire big companies for cleaning, and these companies pass on the job to mid-size companies, whom in their turn pass it on to small companies who hire workers informally. According to Juan, the small companies are seeking out migrant workers, preferably undocu-

mented, in order to maximize profit and avoid paying for payroll taxes and benefits. Michael (an interviewee from a migrants' organization) confirms Juan's observations that entrepreneurs and migrant workers with a common language are connected through a chain with a Swedish formal employer at the one end and an undocumented migrant at the other.

In other words, social networks, subcontractors and entrepreneurs fill the gap between (recently arrived) migrants and the in/formal labour market. Moreover, two interviewees (one with Hungarian and one with Swedish background) spoke of entrepreneurs who sell contacts to companies in the domestic cleaning sector. These entrepreneurs offer lists of potential clients together with other business services like setting up web sites, etc. The two interviewees who mentioned these types of entrepreneurs were very critical because the lists they had paid thousands of crowns for had not generated any actual jobs. For instance, Jessica, a manager and domestic worker from Sweden says that these actors purposely scam domestic service companies where contact persons do not speak Swedish: "If I get scammed speaking fluent Swedish, others are even more scammed." Likewise, Petra, a domestic worker from Hungary, asserts that workers who end up as domestic cleaners usually do not know Swedish, and therefore these entrepreneurs seek out these non-Swedish speakers because they cannot fend for themselves as readily.

Although recent migrants with no previous professional or social contacts are likely to learn Swedish and find labour market inroads with time there does not seem to be a predictable process where domestic workers are destined to move from the informal market as a stepping stone into regulated and full benefits of full time employment in the formal labour market. The "*vit*" and the "*svart*" sectors coexist, integrate and intersperse and a migrant worker may partake in both simultaneously or on and off. This can be illustrated by the work trajectory of Johanna from Latvia. When she came to Sweden four years ago, Johanna started out working informally for a Latvian domestic service company. The Latvian company charged 50 crowns out of the 100 crown hourly rate Johanna was paid by the client. After some time, Johanna started working for a Swedish domestic service company but only gets part time work about two – three hours per day. She combines this formally paid work with informally paid extra (unmediated) domestic work "on the side." The practice of "working

on the side” here refers to a worker who is employed by a formal/registered company while also taking on extra work for clients informally and off the books. For instance, one interviewed Swedish manager of a domestic service company said that clients use her employees for child care services informally “on the side.”

To some interviewees however, social networks have provided a path from the informal labour market into the full benefits and protections of the formal labour market. Sandra from Uganda started a domestic cleaning company in order to help her sister, who wanted to get out of informal domestic work. Subsequently, Sandra has helped out other acquaintances from Uganda:

Well I come from Africa, or Uganda, so I have a good bond with those who do not have work. /.../ I know those who do not have work. So via contacts and those you know... they are looking for [work] and I really would like to give them work. /.../ It is also [because] the clients want to feel safe. /.../ I do not mean that the others, from other countries, are different, but for me, I can explain in a simple way that this person, I know her through contacts. /.../ And I also check police records too. /.../ I would like the clients to feel safe when they let a stranger in [to their house]. /.../ But now it has become more trendy, if you put it that way, to hire domestic services. Because in the beginning it was a bit tense.

Similarly (as mentioned above), Anna came to Sweden from Poland in 2002 and started a domestic service company after some years working informally in the domestic service sector. Like Sandra and her Ugandan network, Anna hires Polish workers who want to get out of informal domestic work.

In sum, processes of social inclusion and exclusion in relation to the formal labour market are entangled in social networks where intermediaries condition (migrant) workers’ access to work opportunities. In other words, access to social networks is one of many cumulative and mutually reinforcing resources that may contribute to inclusion processes in the formal labour market. However, as we will see further below, the dynamics of social networks are not unilinear. While the help of intermediaries may lead towards inclusion in the benefits and protections of the formal labour market, they can also lead to further exclusion from the formal labour market and to getting stuck in exploitative relations in the in/formal domestic service sector.

4. “Städsvenska,” “paperlessness” and other barriers to the formal labour market.

Language and migration status as significant resources in negotiating workers’ labour market conditions

Fluency in Swedish as well as migration/social rights are crucial resources to migrants’ processes of inclusion into the formal labour market. Conversely, migrant workers’ lack of Swedish fluency and/or lack of documentation (work/residence permit) can be exploited by actors in the domestic service sector, such as employers, entrepreneurs, clients and intermediaries. Regardless of educational background, domestic cleaning (along with for instance maintenance/construction and restaurant work) has proved to be one of the few available work options to some interviewees. One main reason is the lower requirements for fluency in Swedish language in cleaning sectors as compared to other professions. However, according to many interviewees, low language requirements also tends to trap people in dead ends. Low wage, socially isolated work in the in/formal economy can close opportunities for career advancement, regulated working conditions and employment in the formal labour market. For instance, union representatives claimed that domestic work is the worst alternative for migrants, especially for those with backgrounds in higher education. According to these interviewees, cleaning work is a dead end that will only lead to getting stuck in “*städsvenska*” (cleaning Swedish).

The concept “*städsvenska*” was mentioned by many interviewees,

and basically refers to the minimum of basic vocabulary needed to understand instructions to carry out cleaning services. Interviewees spoke of migrant workers socially isolated in time consuming and physically demanding work and with little time to expand their Swedish language skills beyond “*städsvenska*.” This situation thus reduces a migrant domestic worker’s opportunities to study enough language to change circumstances, find new contact for other work or meet other people than the closest social network (who usually are fellow migrants who speak similar languages). According to John, language is the single most important factor to social exclusion and getting stuck in cleaning jobs with the main priority to make money in order to get by. Likewise, Esperanza recounts that she took Swedish classes for two months but started to work as a cleaner because she needed to make money to pay rent, public transportation, food and remittances for her children in Ecuador. Similarly, Susanna and Helena say that despite their advanced university degrees, their only alternative for work in Sweden is cleaning, because of the language barrier.

The language factor is entangled in a range of other social dynamics. In Oleg’s analysis (an entrepreneur/domestic/maintenance worker from Russia), language is key to processes of social inclusion and exclusion, which he exemplifies with his Russian girlfriend’s situation:

[Even] Though she works, and functions well, she is still outside of society, because she does not know the language. Because without the language you cannot function, you cannot be part of society without the language. Even if you are working, right? So that is a problem for most, that they are actually outside [society]. And to be part of society, you need to know at least a little Swedish. Without a little Swedish [language] it is not possible to be in it. But she is OK with it. She has no need to be part of Swedish society, that is; the need is not in her. /.../ You do not care about such things, you only care about working, to get.... Often, those who come here, they often have problems in their countries of origin. And they need to help relatives. Or, for example, the woman I know, she has two children, she helps her children. She sends money to her children. So therefore, maybe you can go out to see your friends or so once a month, but not every day, not every week. Because the first priority is to work. /.../ Every person has a hub of social relationships; they are over there, in his or her country of origin. So you call every day, you send mail, you keep in touch over the Internet, and then one works and helps and sends

money there; that is the first priority. In other words, you are here physically but over there psychologically. So therefore, the priority is the old relations, the relatives. But then, step by step, there are social relations over here and less and less in the country of origin. But it takes time, it takes time....

Again, fluency in Swedish turns out to be crucial, not only to participation in the formal labour market, but also in terms of social interaction and sense of belonging. As a matter of fact, the two are mutually reinforcing. Anna (a domestic cleaner and manager from Poland) maintains:

Work is important [to social inclusion], one has to work. But to feel good about things, I think it does not take only work. Work maybe first, but language is very important /.../, and people are too. One needs to see people, not to be alone here. There are many who work here [who] know a little bit of language but are not very interested in seeing people. They feel lonely. If they have a few days off they go back to Poland and see people there. I think; why not see people here? I know one woman, /.../ she had been here for 15 – 16 years /.../ and has many friends in Poland. I said: why do you not do that over here? But she did not know the language very well, that was a barrier. And another thing perhaps [is important as well]; /.../ one needs to feel at home /.../ One needs to decide: do I want to stay in Sweden or am I only here because of work? If one is a tourist, then one lives like a tourist and never feels better about [being here]. It does not matter how much you work, or how much money you make per week if you feel like a tourist.

Susanna, a chemist by profession, and Helena, a lawyer by profession, consider their current work as domestic cleaners in the in/formal economy a temporary solution due to their language status. As Helena explains, because she does not speak Swedish she can only get cleaning work in the in/formal labour market. She was previously working for 12 years in the domestic cleaning sector of Stockholm as a “paperless” migrant. But now, even though Helena has had “papers” for more than a year, she still cannot get access to full time employment, benefits and protections in the formal cleaning sector. She says that she would much rather work in the formal sector and she would like even more to work in the profession she was trained for (i.e. as a lawyer) but is still working in/formally as a cleaner “temporarily.” Back home, Helena says that she would never have accepted a cleaning job, and she

adds that she really hopes that this will not be her line of work for the remainder of her time in Stockholm.

In the gap between “*städsvenska*” and fluent Swedish, entrepreneurs and other intermediaries offer services to migrants. As mentioned earlier, Olga initially had to pay half of her salary to a Polish speaking woman who communicated in Swedish with clients. However, Olga currently tries to get by without the help of an intermediary by speaking English. She says that her English is enough for cleaning work: “we do not discuss Philosophy, you know.”

The in/formal domestic service sector is thus segmented by language and organized by bilingual intermediaries and entrepreneurs who speak common languages with migrant workers as well as clients. For instance, Anna (from Poland) hires Polish workers who, due to language barriers, cannot manage client contacts by themselves:

It was actually two women I knew, who had previously worked *svart*, and they wanted to work *vitt* as soon as possible. So I employed them first. /.../ They knew others who wanted to [get employed] as well, who were good at the job, and then we started and it worked fantastically. /.../ They have [been to Sweden] for about four, five years. /.../ They [only] know a little bit of Swedish; it was a mistake that they never went to [language] school. They only learned a little bit. They speak Swedish, but not well [enough] to understand much; they have problems speaking, reading, writing. So [therefore] I am the one who must call all clients, make bookings, etc. /.../ I went to SFI [public Swedish language school] /.../ and for two years to *komvux* [high school for adults] /.../ but the company was doing well /.../ and it takes time to take care of everything at work. So I had to choose; school or work. /.../ Perhaps I made a mistake, but I chose work. /.../ When you work, when you do cleaning, you do not develop [language skills] very much or very quickly. Because you do not speak so much, you do not have that much contact with the Swedes. One would have to say that language [development] stops at a [certain] level; one stops; one does not progress. /.../ And one only speaks, if one makes phone calls, and one speaks about work, one only uses the same words as one knew before.

Thus, language is perceived a barrier to independent labour market participation and ultimately to social inclusion despite that Helena is now able to work, to a certain extent, in the formal labour market. Helena even speaks of entrepreneurs and employers who actively seek

to prevent workers from learning Swedish as a way to control them and reinforce dependency. In Helena's view, these actors purposely exclude workers from access to the full rights, benefits and protections of formal employment using lack of Swedish fluency as a control mechanism:

We [the domestic workers] never get the phone number of the client because the cleaning company wants to avoid that to prevent you from establishing a direct contact with the client. So one needs to go through the cleaning company in case one needs to ask for directions or anything else. /.../ On the one hand the [cleaning] company dislikes the lack of language skills and they express disapproval when you cannot understand. But on the other hand that is a good situation for them because that way they can avoid situations where cleaners establish a direct contact with the client, and that way the cleaning companies can control their cleaners more efficiently. /.../ And the cleaner cannot steal the client from the cleaning company.

Correspondingly, Juan from Bolivia critiques the ways in which companies in the in/formal cleaning sector deliberately reinforce power over those with the least bargaining resources. Like Helena, he claims that language operates as a power mechanism for employers to exploit workers:

The companies always ask if you have papers and if you speak Swedish. If you do they say "what a pity, we will not call you back then." It is a way to assert pressure in order not to pay "*vitt*" and continue paying "*svart*." The companies have a selection mechanism /.../ to find paperless [workers] and pay less while not having any responsibility. They say they do not want people who can speak Swedish.

Apparently, fluent Swedish is a major factor that separates the conditions of Swedish speaking workers from non-Swedish speaking workers, partly along the lines of the formal and informal aspects of the labour markets. Jan from Sweden, who manages a domestic service company, confirms this dynamic by asserting that the "*svart*" market consist of those who cannot get into "the system," i.e. those who do not speak Swedish. Likewise, an interviewee at an agency for job seeking migrants claims that the difference between possession and lack of fluency in Swedish is the largest barrier to the social inclusion of

migrants. However, Eva from Hungary also speaks of ethnic discrimination as a dimension to the demand for fluent Swedish. She describes a language barrier to the labour market where she has a disadvantage due to her foreign accent, reinforcing her perceived “foreignness” in the minds of clients and employers:

I feel as if I am outside. I struggle to get work, but there is always resistance. I keep wondering how I will adjust and change and help out [so that] people [clients] feel good after I have been there to clean. /.../ I really struggle but there is always resistance, I come to a halt, as if going against a wall. And I suspect that [it is] because I do not speak Swedish really well, and I am a foreigner. Although [they] do not say [that], because one is not allowed to say that, but I feel it...; that is why I feel [as if] I am on the outside of it all.

Clients of domestic services commonly inquire if workers speak Swedish and cleaning companies often advertise their services by declaring that their workers speak Swedish. Jessica from Sweden, a manager and worker of a domestic service company, says that she will not hire workers who do not speak enough Swedish. Another Swedish manager of a domestic service company, Lisa, says that she might hire workers with limited Swedish fluency for cleaning offices or staircases (as opposed to dealing with domestic cleaning), but stresses that she wants her employees to learn Swedish. Swedish language requirements may thus indirectly weed out potential employees from the formal labour market who do not fit clients’ ethnic preferences. As I will elaborate further in chapter 5., ethnification along with gendering is integral to certain sectors of the labour market and has been widely documented in the domestic service sector, in terms of the construction and conditions of workers (Anderson 2000, Gavanas 2006, 2009, Mulinari 2006, Parreñas 2001).

Migration status and social inclusion

Migration status is another major factor that condition inclusion and exclusion in the formal labour market. While migrants are cast as a major “risk” group in research and politics on social exclusion, undocumented migrants are often cast as the most extreme example of social exclusion (Jordan and Düvell 2002). Lack of documented migra-

tion status may thus position a migrant in exploitative relations in the labour market and elsewhere. A wide variety of migration trajectories are usually implied under the label “undocumented,” “paperless” or “irregular”¹¹ migration. Undocumented/paperless/irregular migration refers to migrants whose visa have expired (for instance overstayers on a previous tourist or student visa); migrants whose asylum applications have been turned down and migrants who never registered their entry or presence in the country in the first place. All these categories usually correspond to migrants labeled “third country nationals” who do not hold EU or Schengen citizenship. However, during the course of fieldwork I came across an additional category of migrants that partly live under similar conditions as “undocumented” migrants: EU citizens who have not yet regularized their residency and work permit (i.e. received a Swedish social security number – “the four magic digits”). Various homeless centres in Stockholm report that this group of undocumented EU citizens is increasing in numbers. Furthermore, interviewees speak of migrants who have not regularized their migration status in their *previous* country of residence, such as Russians who have lived in Eastern European countries and Roma migrants.

Like other recently arrived migrants, undocumented EU citizens may end up working in the in/formal domestic service sector. For instance, Olga from Poland has worked in Sweden as a domestic cleaner for two years and a half but her migration status in Sweden is undocumented. Olga says she cannot work in the formal labour market because she does not have a Swedish social security number, and she cannot get a Swedish social security number because she is not registered at a residential address (which cannot be done without a Swedish social security number). Eva and Petra from Hungary describe the same situation for Eva’s son when he migrated to Sweden. Similarly, Miguel from Morocco, who has a Spanish residence permit, was working in the informal labour market with any job he could get while (successfully) applying for a social security number at the time of our interview. Subsequently, Miguel was able to find full time employment in the formal domestic cleaning sector as a final cleaner (“*flyttstädning*”).

Undocumented migrants serve as the “cheapest” and most “exploit-

¹¹ In this text I use the term “undocumented” but sometimes interchangeably with “paperless” or “irregular” when discussed in these terms by interviewees and secondary sources.

able” workers in the in/formal (cleaning) sectors (Jordan and Düvell 2002, Schierup 2006, Sassen 1994, Slavnic 2010). However, improved benefits, protection, security and working conditions do not necessarily follow the transition from an undocumented to a documented migration status (Khosravi 2010). In the words of Helena from Russia:

Even if you are here legally ... you do not get a regular employment right away. Instead, you are told to work for a “trial period” [quoting the employer]: “you can work *svart* [informally] for a month and then we will see what happens,” and there is no guarantee that you will get a job at the end of the trial period. /.../ In my experience, from when I was paperless – when I had no [work/residence] permit, I did not get a job, which was then explained by [quoting the employer]: “because you do not have any papers it is difficult to get a job.” Now I have papers, and in order to employ me one needs to go through all the regulations. But they [the employers/ cleaning companies] do not want that either; these cleaning companies and intermediaries exist in order to push down the prices [for labour], and for, if possible, pay everything “*svart*” [informally]. /.../ The tendency is to try to hire asylum seekers or paperless workers because they can be exploited and pressured much more than [me]. Because I am here legally, I can ... I have a Swedish husband and then their possibilities to assert influence and pressure me are much narrower because ... the cleaning companies understand that I can, through my husband, simply turn to the authorities. If you stand up against them and they know that you have something to back you up, then they become a bit more malleable because they know they cannot push you around as much. And looking back at this I figure that they try to hire people for “trial work” who are as dependent as possible. So they try to take as much advantage of them [workers] as possible for a short period of time and then they say that “no you are not smart enough to do this” and then they kick you out and bring in someone new. They [undocumented migrant workers] get paid less. Those who work “*vitt*” earn about 86 – 92 crowns per hour after taxes and then the employer pays taxes and all social security fees. Those who work “*svart*” earn between 50 and 70 [crowns per hour]. And if you work “*svart*” there is also the risk that you will not get paid at all.

It is integral to the labour market conditions of undocumented migrants to have no *de facto* rights against the employers and/ or clients they work for (Inghammar 2010). Thus they may be too afraid to complain about their working conditions. For instance, Ivan speaks of undocumented migrants who work for 60 crowns per hour and have

no say about their situation. He has met undocumented migrants in the construction as well as the cleaning sector who go to work in the informal labour market straight away upon arrival and do not apply for a documented migration status.

Some interviewees stress that the presence of undocumented migrants in the in/formal cleaning sector is demand driven. One interviewee from a centre for “paperless” migrants said that most of their visitors work in the cleaning sector and came here because of the demand for undocumented workers in Sweden. Correspondingly, an interviewee from another centre for “paperless” migrants claims that the presence of undocumented migrants has been normalized in Swedish society, and that the welfare in Sweden is partly underpinned by their work. Interviewees point out that undocumented migrants have no shortage of work despite high unemployment rates in Sweden. For instance, Michael from a “paperless” migrants’ organization says:

There is a demand for cheap labour here in Sweden, because employers keep looking for persons who are paperless. I do not know any paperless [migrant] who does not have a job right now. Everyone has got a job, but what kind of job is that?

Social rights as well as social identity are founded on labour market attachment in Sweden (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2007:104). Furthermore there is a social stigma attached to not having a “proper” job, “proper” housing and a “proper” migration status, which may reinforce social isolation (Khosravi 2010, Behtoui 2006). For example, Miguel from Morocco said that he was ashamed of not having a job, his own apartment or enough money required to participate in social life, and that people did not trust him for these reasons. There are also pragmatic reasons to withdraw from social contexts based on consumption; some migrant workers need to spend every possible minute working (for extremely low wages) and every disposable penny on remittances. For example, when Maria gets home from her cleaning work, she just eats and sleeps. She is tired and does not have much time for social interaction or entertainment. She needs to get up for work the next morning and she cannot spend her money on going out to cafes and restaurants and seeing people; she needs all the money she can save for her children in Mongolia. As Oleg explained previously, social inclusion in the sense of participating in social life in

Sweden might not be a priority for all migrant workers, who might be focused on transnational family relations.

In his ethnographic research on undocumented migrants in Stockholm, social anthropologist Shahram Khosravi argues that undocumented migrants are not “excluded” but “excerpted”; they have not been thrown out but neither are they considered participants (2010). In Khosravi’s words, “undocumented migrants are included in society without being recognised as members” (2010). According to this concept of “inclusive exclusion” (Agamben 1998 in Khosravi 2010), undocumented migrants are part of society through their labour, consumption and presence in public discourse – but confined and regulated into an outsider status in terms of (lack of) legal protection, representation, voice, labour market insurance/rights and social rights. It is difficult to apply the theoretical term “social exclusion” to everyday life situations. There is no clear line between being “inside” and “outside” society, and the norms and ideals defining inclusion are contested. For instance: who defines the norms and terms according to which migrants and others are to be “included”? In addition, the criteria and measures for “inclusion” and “exclusion” vary between theoretical and political approaches (Alm et al. 2010).

Interviewees illustrate the multidimensional aspects of social exclusion. Processes of marginalization are cumulative and dynamic, and a range of interconnected factors impact migrant domestic workers’ power resources and positions in negotiating inclusion in the labour market and rights towards the welfare state. Stigmatization, discrimination, ethnification, social isolation and limited options are mutually reinforcing as aspects of inclusion and exclusion add up. There is generally a social stigma attached to disadvantaged groups constructed in ethnic/racial terms in the public imagination (Behtoui 2006:15f). This can be illustrated by the words of one interviewee, John from Turkey: “those who have papers look down upon those who do not have papers. They think we are like garbage in society that should not be there. But we are here, regardless of whether we have papers or not.” Similarly, Khosravi discusses the ways in which undocumented migration status can be perceived as a “quality” of a person. Interviewees in Khosravi’s ethnography describe how “illegality” (or undocumented migration status) makes a person appear untrustworthy or unattractive (2010:21).

Khosravi’s ethnography demonstrates conditions in undocumented

migration, including aspects of emotional distress and depression. Social/family/life goals are put on hold at intermediate stations in the migration process. Some of the migrants I interviewed in the in/formal cleaning sector described social isolation and psychological stress from experiences of poverty, hardship, stigmatization and marginalization – regardless of migration status. Helena feels that her situation in the in/formal domestic cleaning sector is taking its toll on her social life and personal development:

One can only get involved in leisure activities when one is in a more or less stable position. But in my situation you never know what is going to happen the next day and that is a very wearisome situation. /.../ Because of my situation and current position I was seriously considering to just drop everything and return [to Russia]. Because one is used to having a job and to see some kind of future and development, but there is none of that here /.../. The only thing one has time to think about is how much one is going to earn this week and whether it is going to be enough. /.../ And this leaves no possibilities for personal development and I feel really sorry for people who end up in this system. Instead of progressing one stands still and stagnates, and that really gets to you. /.../ One needs to endure and try to look at the current situation in terms of an intermediate station.

Helena describes a situation in limbo outside the stability of a steady income. Similarly, Juan from Bolivia describes a position on the margin of society, neither here nor there, where an undocumented migration status partly excludes a person from the benefits of the formal labour market as well as social rights. Simultaneously, he describes the undocumented situation in terms of partial inclusion through the in/formal economy and through consumption:

They [undocumented migrants] are not included, but neither are they excluded. They too need to go to the shops to buy things, to inhabit public spaces /.../. But they do not have the same benefits in Swedish society; like social insurance. /.../ Despite that they are working. They have regular income. They are not completely excluded but neither are they included. As if on the margin, [living] on the sidelines. Neither here nor there; circulating. They need to consume but are not allowed to have [a bank account and] an ATM card. /.../ They do not have access to everything. Like transportation. But they do not demand documents for buying a monthly pass for public

transportation. They do not have work benefits because they work “*svart*.” There are also the “paperless” who work “*vitt*.” /.../ Not all are on the margin, it is relative.

Interviewees from migrants’ organizations recounted the ways in which stress, insecurity and fear of deportation contribute to deteriorating health. For instance, one interviewee from a centre for “paperless” migrants said that insecurity, anxiety and pressure is part of the “paperless” condition, and that many undocumented migrants are not well for these reasons – especially those who have children. Another interviewee from the same centre claimed that there is a correlation between health conditions, migration status, fear and precariousness. Yet another interviewee at another centre for “paperless” migrants spoke of the stigmatization of undocumented migrants, which leads to feelings of social exclusion, which leads to deteriorating health. Undocumented as well as some documented workers in the in/formal domestic service sector often find themselves in precarious situations. Part-time on-call workers live in a casualized relation to labour market rights/benefits/protections and with insecurities as to their income from one week to the next. In addition, they may have responsibilities to support other family members. On top of this, undocumented migrants face the risk of deportation and a general situation of rightslessness (SIEPS 2010). All these factors of insecurity, precariousness and lack of enforceable rights vis á vis the welfare state and the labour market are cumulative and dynamic aspects in processes of social exclusion.

5. Exploitation, sexual harassment and gendered aspects of social exclusion

Why are migrant women preferred as domestic workers and sex workers? The answer is not just about money, that they are cheaper and more easily exploited. There are additional reasons that relate to racialised assumptions about the sexual and domestic nature of migrant women from ‘poor’ countries. It means that they can be treated differently, treatment which is conditioned by embodied racism, which cast them as ‘exotic’ or ‘subservient’ and which for many Europeans may be a way of restoring what they see as ‘proper’ relations between genders and ‘races.’ (Kofman et al 2000:124)

Almost all domestic workers (90 per cent) in Sweden are female, and a very large share are migrants, primarily from Poland and Russia (Calleman 2007:14). There is no other sector in Sweden as heavily dominated by migrant labour as cleaning service (Lodén and Wingborg 2008:125). Working conditions in domestic services are heavily gendered, ethnified, “classed,” racialized and sexualized (Anderson 2000, Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2002, Momsen 1999, Lutz 2008, Parrenas 2001), meaning that demand and client – worker relations are often influenced by intersecting social constructions and practices around femininity and “culture.” In research on *global care chains*¹², gender in combination with ethnicity, family situation and

¹² The concept “global care chains” refers to the series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid and unpaid work of caring (Yeates 2004:369).

educational background, are analyzed as central to the positions and conditions of clients, workers and other actors (Anderson 2000). Gender is an important component in analyzing the purposes, experiences and outcomes of migration processes when it comes to the female dominated domestic service sectors (Kofman 2000, Phizacklea 1998). In addition, it is crucial to highlight the ways clients' and employers' conceptions of worker characteristics, based on stereotypes around gender, class and ethnicity, highly influence the prospects of migrants on the formal and informal labour markets (Anderson 2000, Gavanas 2010, Mulinari 2007). In other words, migrant women and men are differently positioned within in/formal labour markets as well as social networks (Vasta 2004) and it is therefore important to take into account the gendered dimensions of processes of social inclusion and exclusion.

The question of who does what household task, as well as criteria for the ideal domestic worker, have shifted historically along racialized and gendered notions in different regional contexts (Nakano Glenn 1992:3). Gendered notions of race¹³ and ethnicity are prevalent among domestic service clients in Sweden as well as in other national contexts, which influences preferences and notions of worker characteristics (Bakan and Stasiulis 1995, Cox 1999, Gavanas 2006, 2009, 2010, Narula 1999, de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005). Traditionally, in most European contexts, care and household labour have been seen as women's domain, carried out for free as a labour of love (Folbre and Nelson 2000). However, the forms and ethnic/racial/class/gender composition of domestic service sectors are variable (Gregson and Lowe 1994:59). For instance, sociologist Helma Lutz notes that it was previously more common for men to do domestic work until the middle of the 19th century in many European countries (2002:94). In different regional and historical contexts there are hierarchies of domestic tasks, constructing some tasks as dirtier and degrading, and more or less suitable for different people in terms of, for instance, ethnicity, class and gender (Gregson and Lowe 1994:109). In Sweden, there has been a traditional ambivalence towards domestic service due to its historical and hierarchical connotations (Gavanas 2006, Öberg 1999).

¹³ I am here referring to theoretical traditions that analyze "race" as a social construction (as opposed to uses of the term in biological discourse) and the use of this concept in social sciences, lately by post colonial theories, in contrast to/combination with notions of "ethnicity" (de los Reyes and Molina 2006).

Proposals for subsidies and tax deduction for domestic service were highly controversial in Sweden throughout the 1990s and 2000s even though tax deductions were introduced in 2007 (Gavanas 2006). The mere idea of private domestic service goes against the grain of social democratic and feminist traditions as well as cultural preferences for public care, and controversies around domestic service date back to the beginning of the 1900s. In Sweden, historical associations with servitude in the so-called “maid debate” (*pigdebatten*) reflect *ambivalences* around *hierarchical* aspects of domestic work and crystallize social democratic and feminist dilemmas around equality, pitting gendered stratification against class and ethnic stratification (Öberg 1999). Calling to mind oppression of “maids” by the upper classes of the 1800s, the maid debate reveals the tensions between egalitarian ideals on the one hand and the needs of working parents on the other hand. In addition, the “maid debate” crystallizes Swedish nationalist claims for superiority to be at the forefront of “civilization” by associating all types of equality with “swedishness” (Gavanas 2006, Gavanas and Williams 2008).

From being framed as a women’s and class issue, the maid debate expanded to involve the conditions of migrant workers as well (Öberg 1999:183). In the debates that preceded the tax deductions introduced in 2007, access to affordable domestic service was cast as a women’s rights issue (to compete with men on the labour market), as stimulant for the economy (generating more business, more jobs and more taxes) and a way to introduce migrants into the formal labour market. Interestingly, until the election year of 2010, most arguments for the introduction of tax deductions for domestic services (based on arguments around women’s rights, employment opportunities for migrants and benefits to the service sector) have been voiced from the perspectives of potential employers/ clients of such services – the voices of migrant domestic workers were conspicuously absent in the maid debate (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005:102). However, in the debates that preceded the 2010 election, proponents of the tax deductions, although casting the deductions as highly successful and popular to clients, did stress the perspectives of (migrant) workers and their needs for formal employment opportunities. However, as this report suggests, workers with access to the full benefits and protections of the formal domestic service sector do not represent all worker in this sector and thus the conditions of workers excluded from full

time regulated employment in formal labour markets are still absent in the debate.

Interestingly, clients who hire domestic services in Sweden are exceptionally preoccupied with moral issues around the hierarchical aspects of relations with domestic workers. In contrast to Spanish and UK domestic service clients in a previous project on domestic service in London, Stockholm and Madrid (Gavanas 2006, 2008, 2010), Swedish clients feel called to legitimize their need of domestic services. Swedish clients tend to claim egalitarian relations between themselves and their domestic workers, which tends to be interconnected with collective and nationalist notions of ‘Swedishness’. Some Swedish clients (see Gavanas 2006) also feel called to justify the hiring of migrant domestic workers by claiming that they are helping migrants by offering them a job and an opportunity to stay in Sweden. Swedish clients often voice contradictory ethnic and national stereotypes, especially when it comes to Eastern European domestic workers (Gavanas 2006, 2010). These clients construct all Eastern European migrants, regardless of socio-economic status, educational background, national origin or citizenship as desperately poor, and therefore willing to work more for less pay. Thus, despite their self proclaimed egalitarian “Swedish” ethics, domestic service clients and employers interviewed in Stockholm were not that different from clients/employers in London and Madrid when it comes to racial and ethnic constructions of the characteristics of domestic workers. Neither were they different in their claims of “helping” migrants out of poverty while also legitimizing their practices in terms of their own need.

Despite the international reputation and self congratulatory images of Swedish society and labour market relations as a particularly egalitarian, exploitative working conditions are reported by migrant domestic workers in Sweden (Gavanas 2006, 2010). Furthermore, as it turns out in the present study, sexual harassment by clients, employers and entrepreneurs is significant to the labour market conditions of workers in Stockholm’s in/formal domestic cleaning sector¹⁴. As com-

14 According to the report RITA by the Swedish Building Maintenance Workers’ Union (2008, www.fastighets.se) it is not uncommon that migrant domestic workers in the informal economy are forced to “pay” with sexual services to get a job, or to work for free during a “trial week” (2008:48). In the RITA report, workers in the Swedish informal cleaning sector were interviewed, and some interviewees speak of employers who demand sex from workers in exchange for work (2008:68) and social networks where “friends” fail to pay their workers/“friends” (2008:69). As one interviewee says in the report; “it is tougher as a woman. They get a lot of offers from the bosses in exchange for work ... Nobody wants to report because you are so grateful to have a job. And if you do not have papers, it is worse” (2008:87).

pared to other professions domestic work is characterized by invisibility, precariousness and low degrees of regulation (Calleman 2007). The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched an international decent work campaign in 2010 for domestic workers, illuminating working conditions such as underpayment, long working hours and sexual harassment (www.ilo.org). In addition, Human Rights Watch has produced numerous reports on the exploitation and sexual abuse of domestic workers in different parts of the world (www.hrw.org). Furthermore, the international RESPECT network for migrant domestic workers submitted a campaign to the UN in 2009 for the rights of migrant domestic workers in Europe and internationally. The demands included protection from exploitation and sexual harassment (www.respectnetworkeu.org). The Swedish context seems to be part of a larger international pattern in domestic services. In “Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour,” (2000) sociologist Bridget Anderson asserts that in the EU, male employers of domestic workers commonly expect the domestic worker to be sexually available to them (2000:135). For instance, in Berlin as well as in Stockholm, it is very common for domestic workers to stipulate “No Sex” in their advertisements for work (2000:38). Anderson accounts of domestic workers in Athens and Paris who speak of clients who harass domestic workers sexually.

Exposure to the control, blackmail and pressures imposed by clients/employers/entrepreneurs are generally part of the working conditions in the informal economy; particularly behind the closed doors of private homes in domestic services (Lutz 2008, Anderson 2000). Needless to say, this does not mean that ALL clients, entrepreneurs or employers seek to take unfair advantage of domestic workers, or that ALL domestic workers have experienced pressure, blackmail or attempts at exploitation. Nevertheless, interviewees report that employers/intermediaries/clients may take into account the fact that a domestic worker without a legally binding employment contract, and/or without work/residence permit, is not likely to report violence, abuse or sexual harassment to the authorities. Sexual harassment in combination with blackmail and racism has previously been reported in Swedish cleaning sectors generally (Abbasian and Bildt 2007:9, Hammar 2000). 10 out of the 30 interviewees for this report brought up sexual harassment as part of the everyday working environment in domestic service. For instance, clients as well as employers and entre-

preneurs may require sexual services from job seeking workers and only hire those who agree. In some cases clients approach workers via Internet or telephone and inquire beforehand whether certain sexual services could be purchased as part of the cleaning service. Clients may inquire about “extra” services such as massage, striptease and sexual services, sometimes coded in expressions like “having a good time” or “you know what I mean.” In the words of Susanna there are domestic workers who work for 25 crowns per hour and are required to do “strange things,” like for instance provide sexual services. Maria and Susanna recount incidences where clients, employers and entrepreneurs will only hire workers who are willing to perform sexual services in exchange for keeping their jobs. Interviewees in the present report spoke of sexual approaches from several clients per day. In some cases, the same client called several times per day to inquire about sexual services. One interviewee said that 80% of those who responded to her advertisement for domestic cleaning services made sexual requests. In some cases, clients expected sexual services for free as an extra bonus. In other cases clients offer to pay extra for sexual services. Below I recount at length my conversation with Eva and Petra about recurring experiences of sexual harassment:

Petra: ...the other thing she [Eva] has experienced many times. In the beginning I helped [Eva] to find jobs and answered the phone for her. But she too experiences that... Many [clients] call and they start asking; “how old are you? What are you doing? Where do you live? What do you look like?”

Eva: Yes.

Petra: ...and then I’m thinking, what is this about? I asked [the client]: But this is about cleaning; it is about work, right? “Yes,” he said, “but you know, when you come over we can watch movies, or...” – he started to sneak in [that he] wants people to sell themselves; women that is. For 50 crowns or something like that [laughs]. So that was supposed to be part of the job [laughs] /.../ Lately, many [clients] are calling her [Eva].

Eva: Yes.

Me (Anna): And what do they say when they call? Do they want cleaning AND something more? Or do they only want sex and not cleaning?

Eva: No, it is always the same thing: cleaning and sex... Yes....

Petra: [First] cleaning and then sex, if you have some extra time [laughs]

Eva: If you are really, really good, yes [laughs]

Me (Anna): For 50 crowns? [laughs]

Eva: Yes for 50 [laughs]

Petra: Yes exactly [laughs]. In the beginning when I helped you [Eva] I had five such questions per day. And then there were those who called again and again. And then I told [them] that “do you not understand that you have got the wrong [advertisement] section? If you are looking for sex you are supposed to look in the pornographic section. This [advertisement] is about [cleaning] work.”

Eva: Yes

Petra: “Do you not get it?,” I said. “yes but” [*quoting the client*] “you are probably a nice girl, you look good...”

Eva: Yes, yes, yes.

Petra: And then they start [off on that topic]

Eva: The things they say! [laughs]

Petra: They say “but I do not want to hurt you,” and things like that. And then I say, you know what? I just want to work, I do not want to do anything else: just work!”

Eva: Yes

Petra: “Yes but” [*quoting the client*] “That is not a problem, you can clean [laughs]... You can clean and then we watch movies and have fun afterwards.”

I said: No thank you.

Me (Anna): [to Petra] So you have represented Eva?

Petra: Yes exactly. I was speaking as if Eva was answering the phone, because she could not answer the phone so well then, because [she was not] speaking Swedish so well, and I was afraid that if... I have heard on the Internet and read the papers, that when you come alone to someone’s home it becomes... you never know, there could be someone who is psychologically deranged, or... That is why I thought I will help her. And we will go [to the client] together for the first time, so that one can see who that person is. So [that you can] be a bit safer, for her [Eva].

Eva: yes, it is not good [to go] alone...

In other words, not only do Eva and Petra have to deal with the general insecurity of trying to get enough work and enough pay; they also need to take into account the possibility that clients may attempt to attack them through verbal or physical means, and that they have no *de facto* protection against such clients. Eva and several other interviewees thus deem it necessary to take extra precautions because of the risk of sexual assault, and bring colleagues to work for protection. As Petra says; “it can be anyone, or several people, and she could get raped – you

never know.” Eva spoke of another situation where she was alone with a client in his car and managed to get away from his sexual advances by hinting that a passing police car might have seen him. Olga mentioned a situation where the blackmail of a client backfired when she threatened him right back:

I can [call the police]; of course! One man [did not] want to pay me. [I said]: “One moment, I call the police.” [Quoting the client]: “Oh, but you work *svart*.” [Quoting herself]: “And you know it [that I work *svart*]. Yes, I work *svart* [but] you must pay for [the taxes] – not me.” He paid me, yes!

Olga, who works informally as a domestic cleaner, says that “of course many men call” about her advertisement about cleaning services on the Internet. Clients ask Olga how much she charges and whether she offers sexual services:

Some people, men, of course, ask me how much, of course, and if ... [they] need sex, you know. [quoting herself]: No I am only cleaning woman [quoting the client]: “No problem, I will pay you more.” They call more and more.

During the interview, Olga shows me a message she had just received from a client on her mobile phone; “*Hej Olga: Do you come to me in morning 10? Harry i Märsta. If you have plunging neckline I give you 400/tim when you clean, OK?*” In Olga’s experience it is common for clients to seek sexual services as part of the deal:

Today one man called me and [asked] ... can you come? [quoting herself]: Yes I have time. How big is your apartment? [quoting the client]: “Maybe one and a half hour.” [quoting herself]: For me it is too small, I need 200 [crowns] [quoting the client]: “Of course, I will pay you more if you want! You understand?” [quoting herself]: No, I am only cleaning woman. [quoting the client]: “Oh, I am sorry, good bye.” It is more and more times [this happens]. Many [phone calls].

Olga recalls one time when she arrived to the apartment of one client, and he wanted to take her shoes off and offer her a drink, which she found very suspicious. Other interviewees speak of physical and verbal approaches after their arrival to the work site (i.e. the client’s home); and that they can never be sure what to expect. Some clients are subtle and start off by giving compliments and offering drinks –

others are not so subtle. Not only are Olga, Eva and others exposed to a high risk of assault and harassment in their everyday working life; they also express frustration over the risk of losing important income.

Eva: I was very angry, because from Jordbro to Nacka, that is a long time [and distance to travel]. /.../ One and a half [hour]. And I do not have work, I need to do [it], there is no money. But [then] he is wearing a bathrobe when I come in [to his home]. And I changed into my cleaning clothes and started to clean. I asked him “what do you want [me to clean] first? [quoting the client] “You are vacuuming and then washing the floor. So I started to vacuum and [when] I looked behind [me]: [he was wearing] no clothes! [laughs]

Petra: He was naked! [Laughs]

Eva: No clothes! /.../ I asked him “Why are you doing that?” and I thought I [will continue to] clean, and then he is watching movies, you know /.../. And I thought “what a movie” [porn]. And he has TV screens in three different places /.../ anywhere I go [in his home], all I see is TV. /.../ I did not want to watch it, it was really... well...

Me (Anna): So it was porn on the TV?

Eva: Yes. [pauses, looks disgusted, uncomfortable]

Clients, employers and entrepreneurs seemingly presume that they may freely harass, blackmail or pressure cleaners without risking repercussions. Olga, Eva and their colleagues may travel long distances to clients only to find out that they will not be paid the agreed upon amount for their cleaning services unless they service clients sexually as well. Especially in cases where cleaners are working in the in/formal economy and are undocumented they are not expected to report abuse, harassment or under/non-payment to the authorities. Many workers in the in/formal cleaning sector are recently arrived migrants with limited access to authorities and government agencies. Thus, Oleg from Russia asserts that clients take advantage of migrant workers' perceived exploitability in the cleaning sector due to their lack of Swedish language skills, lack of *de facto* rights and distrust in government authorities. He brings up cases where clients interview potential cleaners seeking work and only hire those who agree to provide sexual services. He also brings up cases where clients blackmail workers and refuse to pay for completed cleaning services unless they get sexual services on top of the cleaning services:

Oleg: I have noticed one thing that I would like to tell you because you are a woman. You see, there are some people, that is some men, who try to take advantage of those women who come from other countries, who work as cleaners. They try to find them and trick them just to take advantage of them sexually. You see, there are people like this, I have met people who try... /.../ They test, they try. They make an interview [with the potential domestic worker] and they give them the job, or they do not give them the job; they are taking a look at the person who will clean. Or they accept, they give the job, or they say “no, we do not want [you].” Or they may use them once and then throw them out. I mean, they do not say it directly, they do not take advantage immediately, but their goal is to take advantage of people.

Anna (me): So they are not really interested in cleaning?

Oleg: Yes it can be both; they need cleaning but they can take advantage of this [too]. And they trick these women, or force them, or often trick them...

Anna (me): Are they being violent as well; do they attack them?

Oleg: No, /.../ you see, when a person comes, a woman who comes here [to Sweden], well she does not know the language, she does not have information about the system, she does not know how it works here. She just sees a man who ... has money and wants her and tries to force her in some way. And maybe it is different [between different migrant women], but there are those who let go, or who accept. But there are some who are very strong, they refuse. But it is hard for them, even those who want to refuse, it is hard for them. For example they may work and not get paid, for instance. That is, you work all day, and you are going to get for example 6 – 700 crowns, and then you do not get paid if you will not accept to go to the bed [i.e. perform sexual services].

Anna (me); That is absolutely terrible! This is something I will include in this report for sure. /.../ I have heard others say the same thing. Are they afraid, then, if they work “*svart*,” the women, that they will get reported to the authorities and things like that?

Oleg: Exactly. They are afraid too, yes. /.../ They do not know, to consider calling the police. The police in their country is a hostile organization, it is not like here.

Undocumented migrants are in an especially difficult position in the face of violence and sexual harassment. One volunteer at a medical centre for “paperless” migrants reported a high rate of gynaecological problems among women who attend the centre, and women who have been sexually exploited and/or raped. Some of these file domestic cleaning as their occupation.

There are clients and employers who presume that migrant domestic workers are poor and desperate enough to accept any conditions or tasks for extra cheap. As previous studies on domestic work suggest (see Bakan and Stasiulis 1995, Cox 1999, Gavanas 2006, Narula 1999, de los Reyes and Mulinari 2005), such presumption are often ethnified and racialized in Stockholm as well as elsewhere. For instance, Swedish clients often presume domestic workers and au pairs from the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries to be poor, desperate, willing to work extra hard and to accept any working conditions (Gavanas 2006). One of the interviewees in the present study suggests that clients consider certain migrant workers to be more likely to offer sexual services than others. Sara from Eritrea has experienced racist aspects to the demand for sexual services in the domestic service sector. Potential clients always ask Sara where she comes from, and when they find out that she is from an African country they do not call her back. Those who do call her back start asking if she offers “more services:”

Sara: If you say you are from Africa, then they turn to the other issue of massage [etc.]. Because they think we are black, we can do that, I do not know why. /.../. If you say no [to giving extra services], then they cancel. [*quoting clients*]: “But you want money? If you are going to clean, and do that [extra] I will give you money, so what?” /.../ Sometimes I just switch off.

Sara’s friend: They think you are willing to do anything for money; it is insulting!

Sara: One [client] wanted me to pose naked for 500 crowns per hour.

In sum, the multidimensional processes of exclusion from the full benefits and protection of the formal labour market in domestic service has gendered dimensions that intersect with ethnification and racialization (Kofman 2000). Sexual harassment is a gendered aspect of the power relations between actors in the domestic service sector¹⁵, which may contribute to the further precariousness of migrant workers’ positions in the labour market and ultimately to further social exclusion.

¹⁵ This does not mean that only women are sexually harassed. For instance, it has been reported elsewhere that undocumented migrant men have been sexually harassed/blackmailed as well in other contexts (Khosravi 2010). However, the majority of workers in the domestic service sector (who carry out cleaning and care) are women.

Exploitation and demand for flexible and cheap labour

Exploitative relations between actors in the domestic service sector is a major factor to processes of social exclusion. Even though I make no claims for interviewees in this report to represent all domestic workers in Stockholm¹⁶, they do illuminate processes and relations between actors that may lead to inclusion and exclusion in relation to the labour market and welfare state. Interviewees assert that it is difficult to defend oneself from attempts at harassment and exploitation working in the in/formal labour market. Maria, Susanna and others address the fact that those who work informally and those who are undocumented migrants have no employment contracts, no *de facto* rights and therefore no feasible way to protest against employers' practices. These workers may be expected to be extra accommodating and flexible to the clients' special requests. According to one interviewee who volunteers at a centre for "paperless" migrants, it is hard to discern between direct coercion and someone taking advantage of a worker's "exploitability". Employers/clients/entrepreneurs can try to pressure migrant workers into accepting exploitative conditions and try to capitalize on workers' fears of losing their jobs and fears of deportation. In the words of one interviewee from a migrants' organization it is part and parcel of undocumented migration to be an "easy prey," to be in dependency positions and to have limited rights or legal/police protection.

One seemingly common exploitative pattern is for employers and intermediaries to have workers do "trial work" for free (RITA 2008). Helena from Russia has observed this pattern in the domestic service sector:

Out of those I have worked for here [in Stockholm] there are [only] about two who have been formal companies with an office where you go and get assignments. Usually, I probably have 8 – 10 such phone numbers, there is someone who calls you [to assign informal domestic cleaning work]. You meet them somewhere downtown and get an assignment and you then go somewhere and do the cleaning – it is usually [arranged] privately. It occurs that an intermediary calls you up and tells you to go to a subway station where a car will pick

¹⁶ For instance, I have not had the resources to expand the scope of the report and interview a higher amount of managers and workers from well established, large formal domestic service companies with more than ten employees.

you up. You get inside the car and the driver brings you to a certain address. There you meet up with another intermediary and two other cleaners and he [the intermediary] says; “well you will clean here but first you are going to test clean [so we can see] how good you are.” And then after four hours he says “no, I am not sure that you are good enough,” so you do not get paid and then you have to go [all the way] back home [with no pay]. From what I understand, scams like these are very prevalent in this business.

Helena speaks of employers who have become increasingly unscrupulous in exploiting workers, with no concerns about any repercussions:

The [exploitation of domestic workers] mostly has to do with the increasing remorselessness among employers, the cleaning companies. They can take advantage of people with no consequences, and they know that those who carry out the work for them are rightsless, more or less, and then they exploit them even more. I believe that this is one of the reasons why this is occurring increasingly. And the other reason is that there are plenty of workers who are willing to take the jobs and accept just about any [substandard] conditions. Therefore, the employers, the cleaning companies, can pick and choose between workers. Because I do not think that the amount of clients has decreased, since people can still afford to have cleaners.

Peter from Russia speaks of fellow migrant workers who get underpaid or not paid at all for their work, only to get fired if they dare to complain. Peter concludes that undocumented migrants have no *de facto* rights to report or sue Swedish citizens; that they are completely without rights. He is baffled by the existence of people with no legal rights considering Sweden’s reputation as being at the international forefront of democracy and equality. One interviewee, Steve who works for a migrants’ organization, discusses the particular difficulties to prevent exploitation in the domestic service sector:

We have seen that there is still a grey zone proliferating where many get exploited. This is extremely difficult to get at, especially when it comes to the construction- and cleaning sectors. In these sectors, widespread exploitation of workers persists. Because they [the clients] do not pay those who clean: they pay a company. So even if they pay legally [formally], and perhaps the household [client] has paid a regular wage to the company they hire, he or she [the company] in their turn only give a small part of the payment to the

person who has carried out the work. Here we have seen very many who get exploited. It is good that [the work] is organized through a [formally registered and regulated] company, but there has to be possibilities to control whether they live up to the norms [regulations] they are supposed to follow. /.../ Even if they work in domestic services, it does not matter. When we have contacted families [clients] we have discovered that they have paid a regular wage, but an intermediary has taken the money – it has not gone to those people who were supposed to have gotten the money. So it is not [just] the families [the clients] who exploit; what we have also seen is that it is the intermediaries or the companies.

Likewise, Michael, an interviewee from another migrants' organization also pointed to the demand for cheap labour and employers who seek to exploit undocumented migrants who have too few options to refuse 20 crowns per hour. Eva and Petra speak about bargaining practices among clients in the formal as well as informal parts of the domestic service sector:

Petra: I must say that it is very difficult to communicate with these clients because they do not want to pay her [Eva] a normal salary.

Me (Anna): They want to bring the price down?

Petra: Yes, and then they come up with things like: "well right now our financial situation is not so good," and this, that and the other... Then I am wondering [to clients]: why do you want to get cleaning services? You can do [the cleaning] yourself if you have got a problem with paying.

Eva: Yes!

Petra: ...and with her [Eva's] clients, she does not have that many, about four – five /.../. Out of those, there is only one who does not question why they have to pay that much. They try to bring the price down, they have even said they will pay 30 crowns [per hour]. /.../ It is really tough in this business.

Me (Anna): What is the normal rate per hour?

Eva: 100 crowns under the table [informally]

Petra: Now I ask for 250 – 290 crowns per hour for the company, because you need to pay taxes, payroll taxes, value-added tax...

E: 50%

Me (Anna): But what about those who manage to bring the price down?

Petra: Not with her [Eva]

Me (Anna): Yes, but for those that do agree?

Petra: Like I say, 50 [crowns], even 30.

Eva: It is the same price [as back in Hungary]: why come to Sweden [in that case]?
Petra: Those [domestic workers] from Thailand and the Philippines, [they even charge] 30 – 45 [crowns per hour]. And you cannot compete with those [prices]; a business person cannot compete; not someone like Eva, who is working on her own.

According to Eva and Petra clients are not being naïve, and scammed by entrepreneurs believing workers get a decent salary. In Eva's and Petra's experience, clients actively seek to exploit workers by deliberately hiring cheaper services from companies who "employ" undocumented migrant workers informally – or by trying to make workers lower their prices:

Eva: It is the same thing as a flea market [*loppis*]! Where one thing costs 10 crowns and another company says [they offer it for] 1 crown. [The result] is a lower price; a much lower price! It is the same thing as in my home country.
Petra: She [Eva] has an hourly rate, and then comes another company that says "yes, but I can do it cheaper and you can pay only 50 crowns per hour. [The clients do not check up on the company] because it is cheap. /.../ They do not want to pay; they know [what is going on]. /.../ I do not know how it is for other small companies, but I think it is very, very hard. And [it is] hopeless; one does not see a future. When she calls the clients, they just say immediately; send me an offer [of the cost]; they do not want to meet her. /.../ They just want cheap labour. /.../

The negotiating positions of Eva and others who work in the domestic cleaning sectors are as a result of a range of top-down structural shifts and conditions in the labour market, i.e. regulations around migration, taxes, social (welfare) rights and the labour market ("*from above*") and the bottom-up strategies of actors (workers, clients, intermediaries and employers) in the in/formal domestic service sectors ("*from below*"). Within these processes and negotiations, migrant workers who lack crucial bargaining resources (such as, for instance, fluency in Swedish and/or migration documentation) are disproportionately at risk for social exclusion and "*hyper casualization*." That is, "a precarious subsistence on the edge of a deteriorating and increasingly disciplinary welfare system combined with equally precarious work activities within a growing informal sector of the economy" (Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006:206).

6. Tax deductions for domestic services: consequences to actors in the in/formal domestic service sector

The tax deductions for domestic service introduced in 2007 is one major factor that influences demand as well as conditions for work in the domestic service sector. Until recently, middle and working class people in Sweden have generally not considered domestic service affordable given the hourly rate with taxes included. Regardless of actual income, a large share of households have not previously prioritized these services (Gavanas 2006, 2010). However, since the 1990s, the domestic service sector has been expanding rapidly (Ernsjö Rappe and Strannegård 2004:57). In the beginning of 2000, two major companies dominated the domestic service sector: “*Hemfrid*” with 3500 clients, and “*Homemaid*” with 2000 clients (Ibid). In 2010, according to the Tax Agency, there were 67,000 domestic service companies; 810,000 persons had used tax deductions for household services (including household repair and maintenance) and out of these 238,583 had purchased domestic (cleaning) services (www.skatteverket.se, *pressmeddelande* 2010-07-02). Simultaneous to, and in symbiosis with, formal domestic service, informal service is obviously difficult to quantify. In 1996, the Tax Agency estimated that 90,000 persons bought domestic services from the informal market, and they also claimed that the purchase of informal domestic cleaning services is increasing, and that these services are partly carried out by

migrants (Calleman 2007:13). In 2004, three out of 1,000 respondents in a SIFO poll had purchased informal domestic cleaning services (Ibid). In 2006, the tax agency estimated 19% of the cleaning sector to be informal (2006:42). However, to my knowledge at the time of writing this report, there are no recent estimations of the development of informal domestic service since the tax deductions introduced in 2007.

Since the introduction of tax deductions in Sweden, purchasing formal domestic services has become increasingly common, and increasingly considered acceptable in public discourse (Björklund Larsen 2010:107). In their first report after the tax deductions, Statistics Sweden concluded that high income earners are still the largest group of clients who use tax deductions for domestic services, but also the elderly (Sköld 2009)¹⁷. Interestingly, elderly clients (65+ and 75+ of age) constituted 1/3 of the 46,000 persons who used the tax deductions in the first half year of the deduction (Sköld 2009). Some interviewees for this report, who manage domestic service companies, experience a steep increase in demand and claim that the social groups requiring domestic services are spreading across income levels (see also Gavanoas 2006 and 2010). Interviewees from domestic service companies report that their client base has increased and widened dramatically as a result of the tax deductions. Seven interviewees report that families with dependent children constitute the majority of their clients. Furthermore, interviewees characterize most of their clients as middle class, ethnic Swedes, with a higher education. Five interviewees mention the elderly as a significant group of clients. One interviewee, Jessica (manager and worker at a domestic service company), has observed that many of her clients are mothers on maternal leave:

There are a lot of families with children; /.../ 90% are families with children. And there are surprisingly many that are on maternal leave who want domestic cleaning services. /.../ That is something that me and many... the cleaners also, have been wondering about, why... /.../ That they have cleaning services every week too; they get it so often – most other (clients) have every other week. /.../ For five hours. /.../ That is also something that one notices; that many

17 I discuss the privatization and marketization of elderly care as well as the prevalent use of informally paid domestic services among the elderly in another recent study. In this study I also discuss the ethnification of domestic workers at length. See: Gavanoas (2010) "Privatisering och varufiering av äldreomsorg: äldre som aktörer på formella och informella marknader." Chapter in: *"Kön i arbete – feministiska reflektioner om arbete i senkapitalismen."* Paula Mulinari och Rebecca Selberg (eds). Stockholm: Gleerups förlag.

clients are very clean and tidy in and by themselves. You get there and [think] “well there is no dirt here” /.../. It feels like you just stand there and do not clean anything away basically. So I think that there is a certain type of people who really, really... they want to come home and “it smells fresh,” sort of. They want the sensation that someone has been there and cleaned. But then it is mostly downtown [i.e. in wealthy areas], where the pedantic people live.

Jessica characterizes her client base as Swedish middle class households with well paid jobs and higher education. Lisa, who manages another domestic service company, said that, contrary to her expectations, most clients turned out not to be upper class. She had expected clients to be located in the wealthiest parts of town but was very surprised when clients turned out to also be from less wealthy suburbs. As Lisa put it, she expected clients to be “rich ladies from downtown.” She had previously believed that “ordinary social democrats” (“*grå-sossarna*”) would not want domestic services, but says that those preconceived notions have been completely disproven.

Since the introduction of the tax deductions for domestic services, household tasks that were previously carried out by unpaid (female) family members, or hired informally, have now become increasingly commodified, marketized and formalized. The increase in demand for domestic services in the formal sector reflects the fact that certain demands are socially constructed and affected by the social/cultural value and priority attributed to the service (Anderson & O’Connell Davidson 2003). Correspondingly, anthropologist Björklund Larsen argues that the Swedish maid debate “makes explicit what is usually implicit and unspoken; namely, that work is contextually defined and valued” (2010:95). In the words of Jan (who manages a domestic service company), the political reforms/ tax deductions have created a market for domestic services that was not there before. He says that the job opportunities and client base are all thanks to the tax deductions. In other words there are shifts and trends in the ways households organize paid and unpaid housework and care; the distribution of labour within households and practices of “buying in” services from public and/or private providers.

Among actors I interviewed in the in/formal domestic service sector there are contesting outlooks and experiences considering the consequences of tax deductions to the formal and informal aspects of sector. In other words, differently positioned actors are impacted dif-

ferently by the tax deduction policies and there are simultaneous consequences towards social inclusion and social exclusion. Simply put, those who have access to the full benefits and protections of the formal labour market have experienced improved conditions contributing to social inclusion while those with no access to the formal labour market have been further excluded. Some interviewees have observed deteriorating conditions for those who work informally as a result of the tax deductions. For example, Helena (who works as a domestic cleaner) has seen an increased demand for domestic cleaning services, but simultaneously she has observed an increasing amount of actors who exploit workers, for instance by systematically offering unpaid “trial work” with no intention of hiring. One representative from an organization that works with “paperless” migration claims that the tax deductions and formalization of domestic services have brought the payment rates down in for those who work informally:

When [the tax deductions for domestic services] was introduced, there were people [here] who said that [as a result] they got even worse pay, or did not get work at all. /.../ What people said then was; who do you think is funding these services now? It is the paperless [migrant workers].

Likewise, Oleg has observed a worsening position for workers in the informal parts of the domestic service sector as a result of the tax deductions:

Anna (me): [considering Oleg’s plans to start a domestic service company through his girl friend] ...so you think there are many advantages with *vitt* [formal work] instead of *svart* [informal work]?

Oleg: Yes that is right, it is much better to work normally, that is *vitt*; of course that is much better /.../

Anna (me): Is it the case that clients would rather have it *svart* because it is cheaper?

Oleg: Yes, before, much earlier it was completely correct that clients wanted *svart* [i.e. to pay for the cleaning services informally]. But now after the tax deductions, the 50% deduction, now most [clients] do not want *svart* – is it ends up similarly, it is about the same [cost to the client to pay *vitt* or *svart*].

Anna (me): So does that mean that you cannot compete then or; do you have to bring the price down [because you still have no other choice than offering services informally]?

Oleg: Exactly. Now after the deductions it has gotten much worse. Before, we could compete, we could get more jobs, but now it is actually very difficult to get jobs. You see, it is very hard these days. /.../

One interviewee, Steve from a migrant organization, observes a dual development in the wake of the tax deductions:

Because domestic services have become more regularized [formalized], there is less exploitation. But it still occurs that they [domestic workers] do not get their correct payment. They [the companies] agree to pay a certain sum, but in reality they do not pay that sum. That is what we have seen. And also, people still hire people who do not have permit [residence/work permit], and they are aware that they do not have permit. And after a number of days, or sometimes a number of months, that they have been working; they have not gotten paid.

There were also interviewees who had experienced a positive development (towards social inclusion) for migrant workers as a result of the tax deductions. Most of these interviewees had started their own domestic service companies and in their experience the expanding formal domestic service sector is able to offer great work opportunities with fair and regulated working conditions that increase opportunities for social inclusion in the labour market for a significant number of people. For instance Jessica, a manager and worker at a domestic service company claimed that there were only positive effects to both clients and workers from the tax deductions. She said that it does not make sense to clients any more to purchase “*svart*” services when they can get “*vit*” services for basically the same price. Jessica also maintains that the tax deductions are beneficial for migrant workers, so they can have a chance to work in the formal labour market and not have to work in the informal labour market. Plus she says that the tax deductions enable fairer working conditions as well as recommendations.

Three managers of domestic service companies claimed that the tax deductions were a necessary precondition for their business’ existence. They also argued that if the tax deductions were to be removed, the market for “*vit*” (formal) services would disappear and the market for “*svart*” (informal) services would return. Lisa, who manages a domestic service company, argues that the “*vit*”/formal market will literally replace the “*svart*”/informal market:

Lisa: I think that [the informal market] will disappear; I think it will disappear. Because we will hire the Polish woman [“*polskan*”]¹⁸ [who has previously worked informally for clients]; she does not want to work *svart*! You see, the Polish woman or the man from Nigeria actually do not want to work *svart*; there is nobody who would want to do that. Almost everyone in this society want to work *vitt*; that is they want to have insurances and everything in order [“*ordning och reda*”]; almost everybody wants that! So they will not be around anymore. /.../ [Even] if there are those kinds of employers there will not be those kinds of employees in a while. Because we will engulf them; we will of course need those people. So in the end there will be no justification [for a *svart* labour market].

Anna (me): But what about people who are undocumented [migrants], and who have no social security number?

Lisa: Well that is a problem, because they cannot work [in our company]. In order to work *vitt* you need a social security number. The government will have to think about that [laughs]. Because you have to... everyone in this country needs to get a temporary social security number so that they can work, that is the way it is. And then, if we would have someone [a migrant worker] who does not know Swedish then. Well, but then perhaps we have an order for night time office cleaning. So they will not have to communicate with 50 other people just then. Instead it will perhaps be a first step towards inclusion in society [“*komma in i samhället*”]. Or [they can] clean staircases or something else where one does not need the Swedish language *right then*. But then I will not have one single person employed here unless they go to Swedish class. /.../ I think that because we have this /.../ tax deduction [for domestic services], more people who have not gotten into the Swedish labour market [will] be able to get into the Swedish labour market. You could imagine, if I get people [clients] who are Turkish immigrants since the 1970s who have gotten old, then I need to have Turkish or Kurdish staff. And then of course I can hire those people. And then you do not have to know perfect Swedish. /.../ I am completely convinced [that] since the *svart* market is disappearing those people will be visible, and we will have labour shortage!

Some proponents of the tax deduction seek to professionalize domestic service and raise the social status of traditionally undervalued and un(der)paid “women’s work.” There are domestic service companies that contest views in the “maid debate” (*pigdebatten*) that domestic

18 In Sweden, the word “*Polska*” (“a Polish woman”) is often a code word for a “cleaning lady,” regardless of the worker’s actual nationality or regional background (Björklund Larsen 2010:106).

workers are maids whose work and professionalism is undervalued. For instance, the slogan for one domestic service company says; “keep the tax deduction for domestic services; we are not maids!” (*“Bevara RUT – Vi är inga pigor!”*). In addition, interviewees at unions and other organizations addressed the low status of cleaning/domestic work. For example, one interviewee addressed that cleaning is not considered “real work” in Sweden and subsequently respect, value and rights are not attributed to cleaners (as compared to other professions).

There were no interviewees who spoke of informal work as a preferred option; those who worked informally tended to have other plans and saw their current situation as a transitional strategy. However, when it came to formal domestic work, some interviewees did consider domestic cleaning their career and found work in the cleaning sector rewarding and beneficial. Not all interviewees considered cleaning work a necessary evil on route to other types of work but rather an acceptable opportunity for important and legitimate work. For instance, Anna and Eva started out as domestic cleaners working informally, and are now working and developing business ideas in the formal part of the domestic service sector. Sandra, who started a domestic service company two years ago in order to offer her sister work in the formal sector, makes a point about domestic work as legitimate work and a path towards social inclusion for migrants:

There is this [type of] domestic service in most countries. Even in Uganda there was domestic service. So there is nothing strange to most immigrants, to work. It is the case that these clients, or those who hire [domestic services], they do not have time, they want to hire someone who can work in their home; that is sort of completely OK. So, when it comes to all those I have employed or asked, they sort of think “but what would be the problem? We want to work. It does not matter if that is in peoples’ homes or in an office; cleaning is cleaning.” /.../ Everyone took it as something positive, sort of, there were no simple jobs here in Sweden, there is a need for simple jobs too for those who cannot get into the labour market. /.../ There are demands for the [Swedish] language, written and spoken, and stuff like that. And most [people] cannot, and just because they cannot they do not have to just sit and wait. If there is any simple job they very much like to have it. /.../ I feel sort of happy, [and] proud because I have created [this work] for others who cannot create it for themselves. It is [also about the fact that] I come from a different country. Then I sort of know how those people live, those who are from different countries. /.../ How impor-

tant it is for them to work and not just receive money from the State. Nobody feels good about that actually. /.../ One does not feel [like a] whole person [without a job]. /.../ Work provides quality of life. /.../ There are people who feel [like they are] outside of society and it is because they have not gotten jobs, that is gotten started. /.../ It is the same thing with housing /.../. It takes an income to get into a good area too. It is work that enables inclusion [into] society and [being able to] live like everyone else /.../ and feel part of things in different ways. So work is the most important thing I think.

The low social status of the cleaning profession is a point of contention for Sandra as well as for Lisa (another manager of a domestic service company):

[When it comes to the “maid debate”] it really humiliates our employees to say that they are maids! Because then we really have neglected our employees; they are no maids, they are service people /.../ these people know everything. Here we have the [multi talented] jacks of all trades [*tusenkonstnärerna*] with social dignity; that is something completely different.

Petra and Eva similarly contested the low status of domestic cleaning and stressed the connection between low status and low wage in the domestic service sector:

Petra: /.../ The job has low priority [to clients who look for the cheapest cleaners]; there is no status in this business. /.../ In some way, I do not know how, but in some way one should raise the level of the [domestic cleaning] sector. /.../ Because cleaning is a very physically demanding job. But they do not see that, they see it as shit; like nothing. And that is why [these] problems surface, that they want it cheap.

Anna (me): So one should raise the status [of the domestic cleaning profession] then?

Petra: Yes, exactly.

Thus, to Petra, Eva and others, it is not the profession in and by itself that is problematic; what they critique is the working conditions in domestic service and its low status as well as low pay. Ivan from Russia, who manages a domestic service company where his mother works as a cleaner, says that the 120 crowns that she gets paid per hour undervalues her demanding work. He underlines the physically and

psychologically taxing aspects of the domestic cleaning job.

To interviewees who are struggling to get access to the full benefits of employment in the formal labour market, the low status of the domestic service profession is just one of many negative aspects of their working conditions. Interviewees who work informally as cleaners, as well as those who work for small companies in a highly competitive market, are struggling to make ends meet with low pay, unreliable working hours, long commuting distances and precarious and sometimes dangerous working conditions. For instance, Helena describes precarious conditions in the labour market for migrants in general, regardless of migration status. She also says it is impossible to get by as a domestic worker working informally; for herself and for others. Helena has met undocumented migrants and asylum seekers with dependent children, and they cannot get by on the pocket money one gets irregularly from cleaning in/formally. The only way to make it work, Helena says, is to start a formal company, but that would require access to Swedish language, information about the Swedish business system and a stable group of clients in place. However, the worst aspects to Helena considering working life in in/formal domestic cleaning, are the demeaning ways in which migrant domestic workers are treated by employers and intermediaries. In addition, her main problem is the inaccessibility of full time employment that includes regulated rights, benefits and protections.

Likewise, Maria and Susanna describe taxing conditions to migrant domestic workers regardless of migration status, although undocumented migrants are worst off:

Maria: There is no possibility for me to work as a chemist here. That is why I have to work with cleaning. If there [had been] possibilities to work as a chemist, of course I would very much like to work doing my profession. It is really difficult to work as a cleaner; cleaning is the hardest job. /.../ It is very heavy and demanding. /.../ From what I have heard from my friends and such is that employers give the job to those people [who they can] take advantage of salary-wise and they give very little payment if it is *svart* work; if they work *svart* and the salary is very low and they work for many hours. /.../ They cannot get the pay that [they] would have because they have *svart* work, and they have no papers, so they then work... they are forced to work *svart*, so they have... If they do not get a job, then it is... And they get very little work. And if it is *svart* work, at the most they make 50 crowns per hour.

Susanna: /.../ They do not know, because they work *svart* without papers, and they can... the employers maybe do it this way and charge [the client] 100 crowns and give [the cleaner] 50 crowns and then they [the employers] take 50 crowns for themselves, like that. /.../ That can happen. /.../

Correspondingly, Olga speaks of the insecure and physically demanding conditions of informal domestic work. She works all over town but mostly in remote suburbs:

I wake up five o'clock and I am back at home eight o'clock in the evening, because I go to Stockholm, Märsta, blah, blah, blah. /.../ Now I have not [got] many jobs. Today is my free day, yesterday: free day. I have [a] job tomorrow, Thursday, Friday. Maybe this week [I have work] Saturday and Sunday, yes and... I have not got more jobs: I need more jobs! But, you know... my [advertisement offering domestic cleaning services] on the Internet... and maybe some people call me... I do not know...

In contrast, Paula speaks of similar conditions but says that she accepts them:

I am very pleased with my salary. There have been times where I have made 4,000 crowns [per month] and then I have been pleased [too]. And all the time I have dreamt of having a normal income, nothing more, just a normal salary every month. The working hours are not so good, but well, you cannot get everything in life.

There are a number of drawbacks to workers in the cleaning sector generally. Part time work, long commuting distances, irregular work hours, demanding work loads and work related physical ordeals are prevalent (Abbasian and Bildt 2007, Rystedt 2010). In addition, with a few big business exceptions, the largest share of companies in Stockholm employ only a few workers and there is hard competition in the market (Abbasian and Bildt 2007, Rystedt 2010). Thus, most interviewees in this report who managed or worked for formal companies were only able to offer/get part time work. Moreover, interviewees in this report contest the low status of the domestic service profession.

In sum, even though the tax deductions for domestic services provide job opportunities for those able to access the regulated formal labour market there is tough competition for small companies that

seek to establish themselves in the formal labour market, and there is still demand for cleaning services on the informal market. In addition, there are still migrant workers who see no other option than accepting in/formal and precarious part time cleaning work despite *de facto* rightslessness, demeaning social status, physically demanding requirements for “flexibility”, insecurity and exposure to harassment and exploitation.

7. Concluding discussion

...residents of poor districts will be required to work in more affluent ones, to serve the needs of communities of which they are not, and probably never will be, members. This is not inclusion. (Jordan and Düvell 2002:31).

For economic and familial reasons, people from all over the world and of all kinds of educational and professional backgrounds end up cleaning peoples' homes in Stockholm. Despite the fact that tax deductions for domestic services have contributed to an expanding formal sector with rights and benefits to an increasing number of workers, demand for in/formal domestic services – as well as supply of workers with few other options to allow them to decline such work – is still thriving. In this discussion of the conditions of migrant workers in the domestic service sector in Stockholm it is necessary to distinguish between choices of workers based on *opportunity* and those based on *necessity* (Engblom 2009). Legal scholar Samuel Engblom defines *opportunity based* informal work as driven by prospects for profits to employers and employees, whereas *necessity based* informal work is driven by limited options for making a living (2009:2). None of the workers in this study said that they worked in the informal economy out of preference.

The tax deductions for domestic services have entailed some benefits for people who are now able to be formally employed; especially to those who have secured full time employment at domestic service companies that are able to offer social benefits, career opportunities as well as regulated and secure working conditions. Even though a few interviewees in this study had plans for a career in the formal parts of

the domestic service sector, most interviewed workers considered their current cleaning work a mid station on their way to other destinations. The question is, where will these interviewees (and others who cannot access full time formal and regulated employment) actually end up ten years from now? Despite having the formal possibility to apply for citizenship rights as an EU citizen, Olga has been in an undocumented migration status and worked in informal domestic service for more than two years. Esperanza has worked as a cleaner informally since 2004 and still has nothing to indicate that she will neither get a work permit, nor a documented migration status – not to mention formal employment. Helena still can only find precarious in/formal domestic cleaning work despite the fact that she transitioned to a documented migration status more than one year ago. Will Olga, Esperanza and Helena and the other interviewees we have met in this report have full labour market rights, social rights, and migration rights to reunite with their families? Will they be able to support their children and/or relatives, have prospects for a sufficient pension and make a living in their profession of choice? Or will they be stuck in the in/formal economy, “*städsvenska*,” with insufficient social, migration and labour market rights and worn out bodies from years of physically demanding work? These multidimensional, dynamic and cumulative dimensions of social inclusion and social exclusion have been highlighted in this report through the lens of in/formal workers in the domestic service sector. In other words, interviewees bring up mutually reinforcing and intersecting factors that contribute to processes of establishment and marginalization towards the labour market and welfare state.

The interviewees in this report raise a number of significant issues that condition migrants’ social inclusion processes in terms of rights and participation in the formal labour market: language, migration status, social networks and exploitative relations. These factors impact migrants’ resources and bargaining power to make the journey past mid-stations and dead ends in the in/formal domestic cleaning sector. Some interviewees felt that they and their friends and significant others were socially included and some that they were socially excluded – or both – according to their own definitions. Paradoxically, despite an increasing amount of formal opportunities for employment in domestic services there are those who work under casualized employment conditions and/or work informally for formal companies.

These workers are included as participants of the formal labour market while excluded from the full rights, protections and benefits that formal employment entails. Especially undocumented migrants are at risk for “included exclusion” and attempts at exploitation by employers, clients, subcontractors and entrepreneurs. EU citizens who have not yet documented their migration status may work under similar conditions as undocumented “third country nationals” to a certain extent.

Stockholm’s symbiotic formal and informal domestic service sector is part of an international division of labour where some migrant workers are partially excluded from social rights and formal labour market access and constitute a cheap and flexible reserve army for the “included” middle class (Byrne 2005:173). Interviewees in this study highlight the continued demand for cheap, flexible and practically rightsless workers despite the recent tax deductions that were supposed to formalize the informal domestic service sector. They also demonstrate the gendered dimensions of exploitative relations where sexual harassment constitutes part of the power dynamics and negotiations between workers, clients, entrepreneurs and employers in domestic service. Although interviewees highlight these problematic power relations; that some actors attempt to take unfair advantage of workers who lack crucial bargaining resources, this of course does not mean that all employers, clients and intermediaries seek to establish exploitative relations – or that workers are about to accept being “victims” of such attempts¹⁹.

Sociologists Bowman and Cole argue that improving the conditions for domestic workers does not necessitate eliminating the market and thereby drive it further underground. Rather they suggest exposing domestic services to the same kind of institutionalization that has protected workers in other markets (2009:171). Further, they argue that the problem in the Swedish domestic service sector “is not commodification per se but a shadowy form of commodification in which the labour standards and social protections characteristic of more visible sectors of the economy are absent” (2009:174, see also Calleman 2007). However, as Schierup, Hansen and Castles assert; in Sweden there is “a still limited but increasing exploitation of undocumented

¹⁹ Although outside the scope of the current report I have highlighted more at length the (counter) strategies and critical perspectives of domestic workers on client-worker relations in previous studies (see e.g. Gavanas 2006).

labour as mediators of flexibility in a growing range of activities in the labour market: a new development for which no institutional response exists (2006:250).” So how do you go about regulating and improving the rights and working conditions for all domestic workers – not just those with access to the formal parts of the sector – and raising wages as well as the social status of the profession? This study has demonstrated that, despite popular belief in Swedish public and political discourse, one cannot treat the formal and informal parts of the domestic service sector as separate areas where one can simply replace the other. In discussing social exclusion and migrant domestic workers’ conditions on labour markets it is important to take into account the dynamics, actors and relations that interconnect formal and informal aspects of markets.

This report confirms the arguments by Neergaard, Schierup, Slavnic and others, that you cannot discuss social inclusion and social exclusion without taking into account the power relations that operate in, and interconnect, the in/formal parts of domestic service sector. Welfare state policies, labour markets and social networks may contribute to workers’ inclusion into the formal labour market, but according to what conditions? Deregulation, marketization, shrinking welfare state and migration rights, as well as exploitative relations between actors in the formal as well as informal economy, may also contribute to workers’ further marginalization. The rights and benefits of actors in the formal domestic service sector is partly underpinned by socially excluded migrant workers in the in/formal domestic service sector. Specifically, interviewees highlight the ways informalization from below constitute coping strategies of marginalized actors and perpetuate further informalization and workers’ further exclusion from the rights and security of the formal labour market. This report thus reflects, in line with Slavnic’s arguments (2007, 2010) about “informalization from below,” that those groups and individuals with the least bargaining power become both the target and means of flexibilization strategies of actors in the domestic service sector, and also targets of economic and sexual exploitation. Thus, in the political economy of social exclusion, processes of labour market informalization, dynamics of exploitation and marginalization are mutually reinforcing (Slavnic 2010:18).

I end this report by repeating the words of Helena, whose analysis and experience sums up the multidimensionality of migration, social

exclusion processes and its interconnection with processes of labour market informalization:

... In my situation you never know what is going to happen the next day and that is a very wearisome situation. /.../ Because of my situation and current position I was seriously considering to just drop everything and return [to Russia]. Because one is used to having a job and to see some kind of future and development, but there is none of that here /.../. The only thing one has time to think about is how much one is going to earn this week and whether it is going to be enough. /.../ And this leaves no possibilities for personal development and I feel really sorry for people who end up in this system. Instead of progressing one stands still and stagnates, and that really gets to you. /.../ One needs to endure and try to look at the current situation in terms of an intermediate station.

Appendix 1.

Interview guide

Questions for Businesses managers and organization representatives:

How old are you? (*Hur gammal är du?*)

What is your country of origin? (*Varifrån kommer du?*)

When did you move to Sweden and how come? (*När och hur kom du till Sverige?*)

Do you have asylum, residency or Swedish citizenship? If so, how did you apply for it? (*Har du fått asyl eller medborgarskap? Isåfall hur?*)

What is your previous education and work experience? How come you started working with your current profession? (*Vilken utbildning har du och vad har du arbetat med tidigare? Hur kom du att arbeta med dina nuvarande uppdrag?*)

What is the purpose and activities of your organization/ business? (*Vad gör din organisation/ ditt företag?*)

Whom are your employees (in terms of age, sex, background and number)? (*Vilka arbetar hos er? (antal, ålder, kön, bakgrund)*)

How do you advertise your services/ activities? (*Hur marknadsför ni er?*)

Do you have any specializations? (*Har ni några specialiteter?*)

Do you have a partner and/ or children or other relatives? Any social networks, political activities or recreational engagements? (*Har du familj? Sociala nätverk? Politiska/kulturella engagemang? Fritidsintressen?*)

Did your relatives or social networks help out in connecting you with your current work? (*Har din familj eller dina sociala nätverk bidragit till det du arbetar med nu?*)

In your estimation, which are the main actors in domestic services, and in what ways have their conditions changed over time? (*Vilka aktörer deltar i hushållstjänstbranscen och hur har deras villkor ändrats?*)

What developments have you observed in the informal market, in relation to the formal market? (*Hur har den informella marknaden utvecklats i relation till den formella marknaden?*)

For how long do you plan to keep working in your current profession? Do you have any plans for the future? (*Hur länge har du tänkt att arbeta med detta? Har du några planer sedan?*)

How would you describe the working conditions and options for different clients and different workers in the domestic service sector? (*Hur upplever du att arbetsvillkor och alternativ ser ut för olika kunder och olika arbetare i hushållstjänstbranschen?*)

How would you define "social inclusion"? Exclusion? Marginalization? (*Hur definierar du social inkludering? Exkludering? Marginalisering?*)

What factors, in your view, contribute to social inclusion, marginalization and exclusion? (*Vilka faktorer anser du bidrar till social inkludering, respektive marginalisering, utanförskap?*)

According to your perspective, what are the relations between migration and domestic services? (*Hur ser du på förhållandet mellan migration och hushållstjänstbranschen?*)

Have you been in contact with any state initiatives around social welfare or work? (*Vilka erfarenheter har du av statliga initiativ kring social välfärd och arbete?*)

Questions for workers:

How old are you? (*Hur gammal är du?*)

What is your country of origin? (*Varifrån kommer du?*)

When did you move to Sweden and how come? (*När och hur kom du till Sverige?*)

Do you have asylum, residency or Swedish citizenship? If so, how did you apply for it? (*Har du fått asyl eller medborgarskap? Isåfall hur?*)

When did you start working in domestic services and how come? (*När och hur kom det sig att du började arbeta med städning?*)

How do you get work now and how did you get work before? (*Hur får du städjobb nu och hur fick du jobb tidigare?*)

How do you advertise your services? (*Hur marknadsför ni tjänsterna?*)

Which were your previous professions? (*Vad har du arbetat med innan?*)

What is your education? For example, are you trained for other professions than your current work? (*Vilka skolor har du gått i tidigare? Har du till exempel utbildning för något annat än det du arbetar med nu?*)

Are you involved in any political or social activities? (*Har du några speciella intressen?*)

What are your plans for work in the future? Do you plan to continue your current work or move to other types of work? (*Hur länge har du tänkt att arbeta med städning? Har du några planer för vad du vill göra sedan?*)

Do you have a partner and/ or children or other relatives? Did your relatives or social networks help out in connecting you with your current work? (*Har du familj? Sociala nätverk? Har din familj eller dina sociala nätverk bidragit till det du arbetar med nu?*)

In your estimation, which are the main actors in domestic services, and in what ways have their conditions changed over time? (*Vilka aktörer deltar i hushållstjänstbranschen och hur har deras villkor ändrats?*)

What developments have you observed in the informal market, in relation to the formal market? (*Hur har den informella marknaden utvecklats i relation till den formella marknaden?*)

How would you describe the working conditions and options for different clients and different workers in the domestic service sector? (*Hur upplever du att arbetsvillkor och alternativ ser ut för olika kunder och olika arbetare i hushållstjänstbranschen?*)

Are there any factors you feel are especially important to a person's position in society? (*Finns det frågor du tycker är viktiga för att man skall känna att man har en bra plats i samhället?*)

How would you define "social inclusion"? Exclusion? Marginalization? (*Hur definierar du social inkludering? Exkludering? Marginalisering?*)

What factors, in your view, contribute to social inclusion, marginalization and exclusion? (*Vilka faktorer anser du bidrar till social inkludering, respektive marginalisering, utanförskap?*)

According to your perspective, what are the relations between migration and domestic services? (*Hur ser du på förhållandet mellan migration och hushållstjänstbranschen?*)

Have you been in contact with any unions or state initiatives around social welfare or work? (*Vilka erfarenheter har du av statliga initiativ och fackligt arbete kring social välfärd och arbete?*)

Whom are your clients? Which is your ideal client and your worst type of client? (*Vilka är dina kunder? Vilka gillar du mest och vilka gillar du minst?*)

What is it like to work informally as compared to formally in your experience? (*Hur tycker du det är att arbeta med "svarta" jobb jämfört med "vita"?*)

What do you like about your work and what would you like to change? (*Vad gillar du med ditt arbete och vad skulle du vilja förändra?*)

Do you consider your salary and/ or working schedule satisfactory? (*Hur trivs du med din lön och dina arbetstider?*)

Appendix 2.

Data summary

(all names are pseudonyms)

Interviewees conducted in person:

Organizations, Unions, Agencies: (12)

20100519, K, organization for paperless migrants
20100511, C, organization for paperless migrants
20091008, XX, work agency for migrants
20091102, P, organization for the homeless
20091116, ZZ, organization for paperless migrants
20090922, YY, union
20090929, Steve, migrant organization
20100525, Peter, organization for paperless migrants
20100531, Michael, organization for paperless migrants
20100607, John, organization for paperless migrants
20100602, Karl, organization for the homeless
20100609, Anita and Stefan, organization for paperless migrants

Managers of Domestic Service Companies: (7)

20091103, Anna + Friend, Domestic Service Company (Poland,
Turkey)

20091103, Lisa, Domestic Service Company (Sweden)
20090921, Sandra, Domestic Service Company (Uganda)
20090928, Jan, Domestic Service Company (Sweden)
20100604, Jessica, Domestic Service Company (Sweden)
20100408, 20100617, Eva and Petra, Domestic Service Company
(Hungary)
20100607, Ivan, Domestic Service Company (Russia)

Workers: (11)

20091020, Olga, 51 years, Poland, domestic cleaning
20091109, Oleg, 59 years, Russia, domestic cleaning
20091112, Sara + Friend, 23 years, Eritrea, domestic cleaning
20091112, Johanna, 53 years, Katarina, 58 years, Latvia & Lithuania,
domestic cleaning
20091116, Emmanuel, 43 years, Bangladesh, office cleaning and
domestic maintenance service
20091208, Helena, 42 years, Russia, domestic cleaning
20091210, Maria, 45 years and Susanna, 37 years, Mongolia, domestic
cleaning & office cleaning
20100525, Esperanza, 38 years, Ecuador, hotel cleaning
20100505, 20100609, Miguel, 30 years, Morocco, all-round worker
(including all types of cleaning)
20100429, Juan, 55 years, Bolivia, staircase & hotel cleaning
20091119, Paula, 35 years, Poland, domestic cleaning (interview con-
ducted through Internet)

Total number of interviews: 30

Additional informal interviews;

Short informal interview with P from Romania (job seeking hotel
cleaner)

Informal phone interview with Stina (domestic worker from Sweden)

Summary:

Who cleans the welfare state?

Migration, informalization, social exclusion and domestic services in Stockholm

This report explores the dynamics of migration, social exclusion and labour market informalization through the lens of the domestic service sector in Stockholm. Based on a recent interview study, the author identifies crucial aspects of a range of large scale social and economic shifts in Sweden. Especially in focus are the conditions of migrant domestic workers in a globalized economy.

The report highlights four interrelated themes:

- the ways the formal and informal parts of the domestic service sector are inseparable and connected through a range of actor strategies, practices and intermediaries;
- the ways intermediaries operate in cases where migrant workers lack significant power resources: Swedish language fluency, social networks, and documented migration status;
- the dynamics of sexual harassment and blackmailing in relations and negotiations between actors in the in/formal domestic service sector;
- the ways in which tax deductions for domestic services impact actors.

The report highlights four results:

- One crucial issue is missing so far in the public and academic debate on domestic services in Sweden; the conditions of workers who are

excluded from the full benefits and protections of the formal labour market. Moreover, it is important to take into account the dynamics, practices and relations that *interconnect* formal and informal aspects; in/formalization “from above” as well as “from below” in the domestic service sector.

- It is crucial for concepts of social exclusion to focus on exploitative relations in the labour market. In addition, precariousness and *de facto* rightslessness are part of the multidimensional, cumulative and dynamic aspects of social exclusion processes in the domestic service sector.
- Gendered and sexualized aspects of exploitation are significant to relations between actors in the in/formal domestic service sector in Stockholm and contribute to processes of social exclusion.
- The tax deductions that were introduced for domestic services in 2007 have dual consequences to processes of social inclusion and exclusion. Some actors who have access to the full benefits and protections of the formal labour market report improved conditions contributing to social inclusion in relation to the labour market and welfare state. However, some actors who, for different reasons, have no access to the full range of benefits and protections of the formal labour market report further exclusion, or “inclusive exclusion.”

Sammanfattning:

Vem städar i folkhemmet?

Migration, informalisering, social exkludering och hushållstjänster i Stockholm

Denna rapport utforskar samband mellan migration, social exkludering och informalisering av arbetsmarknader med fokus på hushållstjänstesektorn i Stockholm. Med hjälp av en intervjustudie identifierar författaren centrala aspekter och konsekvenser av en rad sociala och ekonomiska processer i Sverige. I synnerhet diskuterar rapporten hur villkor utvecklas bland migrerande hushållstjänstearbetare i en global ekonomi.

Rapporten belyser fyra sammanlänkade teman:

- hur formella och informella delar av hushållstjänstesektorn samverkar i symbios via aktörers strategier och praktiker samt mellanhänder;
- hur mellanhänder aktualiseras i situationer där migrerande arbetare saknar viktiga maktresurser; färdigheter i flytande svenska, sociala nätverk och dokumenterad migrationsstatus
- hur utpressning och sexuella trakasserier ingår i förhandlingar och maktrelationer mellan aktörer i den in/formella hushållstjänstesektorn;
- hur skatteavdragen för hushållsnära tjänster inverkar på olika aktörers villkor.

Rapporten diskuterar fyra resultat:

- Villkoren för de arbetare som är exkluderade från den formella

arbetsmarknaden är en central fråga har hittills lyst med sin frånvaro i den offentliga och akademiska debatten om hushållstjänster i Sverige. Det är dessutom viktigt att ta hänsyn till de dynamiker, praktiker och relationer som sammanlänkar formella och informella aspekter av hushållstjänstesektorn; informalisering ”ovanifrån” såväl som ”underifrån.”

- Exploatering är en central fråga i diskussioner om social exkludering och i relationer bland aktörer på in/formella arbetsmarknader. Dessutom är otrygghet och *de facto* rättslöshet aspekter av mångdimensionella, kumulativa och dynamiska exkluderingsprocesser i hushållstjänstesektorn.
- Genusifiering och sexualisering är viktiga aspekter av exploatering och ingår i relationer mellan aktörer i Stockholms in/formella hushållstjänstesektor, vilket i sin tur bidrar till sociala exkluderingsprocesser.
- Skatteavdragen för hushållsnära tjänster som introducerades 2007 har tudelade konsekvenser för social inkludering- och exkludering. Vissa aktörer med tillträde till formella delar av hushållstjänstesektorn upplever förbättrade villkor som bidrar till inkludering i relation till arbetsmarknad och välfärdsstat. Andra aktörer som av olika anledningar saknar tillträde till den formella arbetsmarknadens alla förmåner, upplever ytterligare exkludering, eller ”inkluderad exkludering.”

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Research Report 2010/3

This report explores the dynamics of migration, social exclusion and labour market informalization through the lens of the domestic service sector in Stockholm. Based on a recent interview study, the author identifies crucial aspects of a range of large scale social and economic shifts in Sweden. Especially in focus are the conditions of migrant domestic workers in a globalized economy.

The report highlights four interrelated themes:

- the ways the formal and informal parts of the domestic service sector are inseparable and connected through a range of actor strategies, practices and intermediaries;
- the ways intermediaries operate in cases where migrant workers lack significant power resources: Swedish language fluency, social networks, and documented migration status;
- the dynamics of sexual harassment and blackmailing in relations and negotiations between actors in the in/formal domestic service sector;
- the ways in which tax deductions for domestic services impact actors.

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With a Swedish summary



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