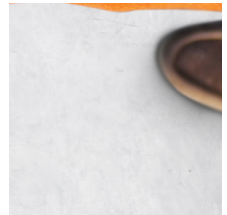
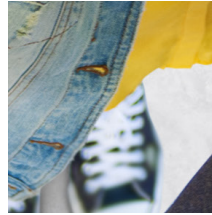
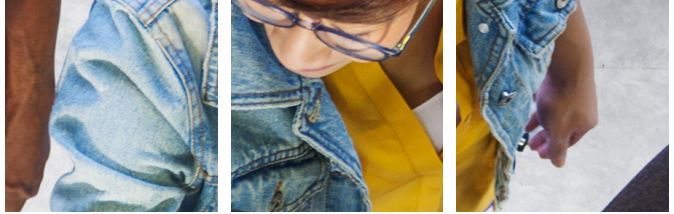




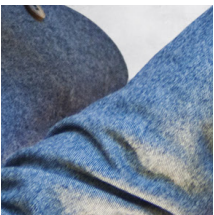
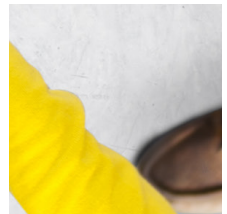
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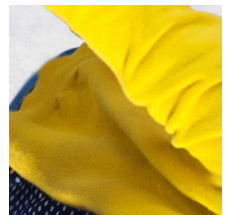


# THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

An EUI Forum on Migration,  
Citizenship and Demography



Editors:  
Rainer Bauböck  
Milena Tripkovic



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Editors:

**RAINER BAUBÖCK**  
**MILENA TRIPKOVIC**

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# PREFACE

Rainer Bauböck and Milena Tripkovic  
European University Institute

This book discusses the challenges that the contemporary refugee and migration crisis, which culminated with the arrival of more than 1 million asylum seekers in 2015, poses to traditional approaches to immigrant integration employed by the European countries affected.<sup>1</sup> These challenges arise from a host of factors particular to the ongoing patterns of immigration: the unprecedented number of migrants and refugees that have recently entered Europe; the mostly unregulated and uncontrolled nature of this new immigration; the burden that this puts on European countries that had previously had very little experience with immigration and integration but also the opportunities it provides in terms of addressing the key social and economic challenges that Europe will be facing in the next 30 years; the desire of immigrants and refugees to settle in specific countries (particularly Germany and Sweden); and the security concerns that have arisen in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. The contributions, both individually and in their entirety, seek to explore the medium and long-term impacts of these and other challenges on the debate and to measure the success of immigrant integration. The book is divided into four sections, addressing the impact of this new wave of immigration on: (I) access to citizenship and legal statuses, (II) educational integration, (III) labour market integration, and (IV) cultural integration.

1 The book is based on contributions first presented at a conference on the Integration of Migrants and Refugees within the EUI [Forum on Citizenship, Migration and Demography](#) on 29 and 30 September 2016. The Forum series was initiated in 2015 by former EUI President J.H.H. Weiler and the Director of the Robert Schuman Centre Brigid Laffan. All the contributions to this volume have been revised after the conference.

## The new challenges

Even before the current refugee/migrant crisis, population movements towards developed countries had been steadily increasing over time. Since 2000, the immigrant populations in both the EU and the OECD have grown by 30%.<sup>2</sup> Although research shows that the rise in immigration does not have a negative effect on the success of integration,<sup>3</sup> the specificity of the current crisis might pose altogether new challenges to 'traditional' integration mechanisms and processes.

There are many reasons to think that circumstances are different this time round. First, the number of refugees and migrants currently entering Europe is unprecedented. In 2014, around 219,000 people crossed the Mediterranean, while the number grew to around one million in 2015.<sup>4</sup> There were almost 1.3 million asylum applications in the EU countries during 2015.<sup>5</sup> The high number of refugees and migrants has already caused difficulties for both transit and recipient countries, which are struggling to provide conditions for satisfying basic needs such as food, shelter and healthcare. However, it is not only the numbers – the nature of immigration has also been transformed by becoming much less regulated and controlled, thus preventing the destination countries from predicting and planning the necessary resources to host the immigrants. The prospect of a persisting

2 OECD (2015), 'Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In,' available at: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in\\_9789264234024-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in_9789264234024-en) (last accessed August 22, 2016).

3 Ibid.

4 Hume, T. and Pawle, L. (2015), 'Number of Migrants Reaching Europe this Year Passes 1 Million,' available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/22/europe/million-refugees-enter-europe/> (last accessed August 22, 2016).

5 Eurostat (2016), 'Asylum Statistics,' available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics) (last accessed August 22, 2016).





flow of refugees and migrants in the coming years makes integration a crucial issue for the future of Europe.

Second, both demands for and obstacles to burden-sharing between EU countries through redistributing refugees and forced migrants from over-burdened Greece and Italy to other EU member states have increased dramatically. Many countries that have so far not had much experience with immigration – and immigrant integration – have been asked to accept significant numbers of newcomers. This has already triggered negative reactions and explicit hostility in some Member States. For instance, in August 2015 Slovakia announced that it will only accept Christians,<sup>6</sup> while Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán stated that accepting immigrants will serve to spread terrorism<sup>7</sup> and called a referendum to block the implementation of EU decisions regarding the relocation of refugees.<sup>8</sup> The lack of experience of such countries with hosting and integrating immigrants, combined with hostile attitudes towards them, compounds the problems in countries that are currently overburdened and does not augur well for the integration of refugees in the most reluctant host states. Most refugees/migrants entering Europe before the effective closure of the previously-open Balkan route since November 2015 resolutely aimed for specific destinations and mainly wanted to settle in Germany or Sweden.<sup>9</sup> However, if the EU plan which aims to relocate and resettle 160,000 people

6 BBC (2015), 'Migrant Crisis: Slovakia Will Only Accept Christians', available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33986738> (last accessed August 22, 2016).

7 Feher, M. (2015), 'EU Migrant Distribution Will Spread Terrorism, Hungary's Orban Says,' available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-migrant-distribution-will-spread-terrorism-hungarys-orban-says-1447698602> (last accessed August 22, 2016).

8 The referendum of 2 October 2016 resulted in 98.36% of the voters endorsing the government position but failed to reach the required turnout of 50%.

9 Economist (2015), 'Germany, the EU Country which Takes the Most Asylum Seekers, is Straining', available at: <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21661941-wanting-burden-shared-germany-eu-country-which-takes-most-asylum-seekers-straining> (last accessed August 22, 2016).

across Europe by September 2017 is carried out as intended,<sup>10</sup> many people will be sent to countries other than those of their preference. Refugee destinations will stop being a matter of personal choice. While this process may be necessary for the sake of fair burden-sharing, it will most probably negatively influence both the capacity and willingness of immigrants to integrate into their new communities and public opinion in countries where refugee relocation is seen to be imposed by 'Brussels.'

Third, the public debate on how to handle the crisis has steadily been shifting towards a focus on the security threat posed by the uncontrolled influx of refugees and migrants. In the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks of November 2015, Poland withdrew its earlier promise to accept 7,000 individuals as part of the EU plan.<sup>11</sup> Further terrorist attacks in Brussels and Nice have only deepened security concerns. The massive, apparently organised, sexual molestation and assaults by Muslim-background immigrants on women on New Year's Eve 2015 in Cologne soured the public mood and support for the 'culture of welcome' for newly arriving refugees that had prevailed in Germany and Austria in summer 2015. Although civil society organizations continue to provide crucial support for newcomers, public opinion has shifted dramatically. While anti-migration rhetoric and the securitization of the crisis had previously been the domain of right-wing populist parties and politicians, the very real security anxieties arising from these events negatively influence the public attitude towards immigration and integration in all European states.

These problems are only the three most apparent and immediate obstacles to proactive integration

10 European Commission (2016), 'Relocation and Resettlement: Positive Trend Continues, but More Efforts Needed', available at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-2435\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2435_en.htm) (last accessed August 22, 2016).

11 Wall Street Journal (2015), 'Paris Terror Attacks Transform Debate Over Europe's Migration Crisis', available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/paris-terror-attacks-transform-debate-over-europes-migration-crisis-1447608944> (last accessed August 22, 2016).



policies for refugees and migrants in the host societies. In the absence of realistic prospects of ending the violent conflicts that are the cause of the current refugee crises, disputes about burden-sharing and a pandering of politicians to hostile public opinion cannot change the fact that Europe will become the new permanent home for most of the refugees. This makes it imperative to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past, when integration policies were delayed in order to encourage return and deter potential migrants, or were ineffective in preventing social segregation and discrimination of first- and second-generation immigrants.

The current debates on the integration of refugees and immigrants therefore need to consider how the new circumstances challenge conventional wisdoms. ‘Traditional’ immigrant societies have experienced and solicited immigration for many decades and have developed a set of normative ideas on how to best achieve integration and social cohesion. In the 1990s, the academic literature distinguished different national models or ‘philosophies’ of integration, often categorized into exclusionary, laissez-faire, assimilationist and multicultural approaches. In the 2000s, the internal consistency and practical relevance of such national models has been widely questioned.<sup>12</sup> The uncontrolled influx of a high number of refugees and immigrants provides a new context for this debate, confronting host countries with similar problems – even if the politics of immigrant integration still largely depend on national contexts, such as previous immigration experiences or the electoral strength of right-wing populist parties. Instead of focusing on comparing national approaches, this book will therefore be structured by different ‘sectors’ of integration. Within each of its four sections, the

12 See, e.g., Christian Joppke (2007), Beyond national models: Civic integration policies for immigrants in Western Europe, *West European Politics*, 30 (1): 1-22; Christophe Bertossi and Jan Willem Duyvendak (2012), National models of immigrant integration: The costs for comparative research. *Comparative European Politics* 10 (3): 237-247.

contributions aim to take the nationally specific impact of numbers of new arrivals and of public attitudes into account as an important context that requires specific strategies and policy responses.

## Four dimensions of integration: citizenship, education, employment and culture

The book covers four dimensions of integration: citizenship and legal statuses, education, labour market integration and cultural integration. On each of these topics there is a specially commissioned keynote paper and this is followed by shorter commentaries that provide complementary views. A comprehensive overview of pertinent challenges presented by the current migration and refugee crisis is set out in the introductory chapter by Rainer Münz. It provides statistical data about the core dimensions of integration, which are subsequently discussed in greater detail in other contributions. The chapter particularly emphasizes the changes in Europe’s demography that have come about as a result of decreasing emigration and increasing immigration over the last few centuries. Furthermore, Münz gives special attention to the fundamental transformation in the domain of immigration policy – the fact that the reasons for accepting newcomers have now become predominantly humanitarian, which has critical importance for the development and application of new policies.

In the section on *citizenship and legal statuses*, the contributions focus on the complex relationship between naturalisation and integration. In his keynote paper, Maarten Vink goes a step further than merely trying to establish that citizenship matters for integration by exploring why, under which conditions, and to whom citizenship acquisition matters. This perspective allows him to offer a more nuanced understanding of the link between citizenship and migrant integration and to conclude, for example, that the acquisition of



citizenship most improves the opportunities for those immigrants who need it the most (such as refugees and more generally immigrants from less developed countries). Restrictive policies thus have a particularly negative impact on those in the most precarious situation. Even more nuances can be observed – as Kees Groenendijk suggests – if we take into account how laws in countries of origin and destination interact in determining access to legal statuses. Countries of origin are particularly important as their laws and practices often interplay with those of the host country to create difficulties in the legalisation of irregular statuses. Additionally, Groenendijk identifies the transition from the status of temporary to permanent migrant and the effects that this change has on integration as an important topic for further research. Vink's observation that citizenship is of great importance to certain categories of immigrants even if acquisition rates are low is further developed by Ines Michalowski, who examines a number of specificities of the acquisition of citizenship status by refugees. Most importantly, these concern: the lack of value of their original citizenship; a number of obstacles which do not necessarily characterise other categories of immigrants (lack of educational and professional skills and lack of financial resources); and citizenship conditions that are more difficult to meet for refugees (residence and language, income and civic knowledge tests). Barbara Oomen's contribution takes an additional angle on the mostly state-centric debate on the link between legal policies and integration by emphasising the role of sub-state units (particularly cities). These units often enhance the legal status of immigrants by providing them with additional rights and privileges which not only extend beyond but also above the state, as these entitlements are commonly couched in international human rights.

The section on the educational integration of refugees opens with a keynote paper by Maurice Crul, Elif Keskiner, Jens Schneider, Frans Lelie and Safoura Ghaemina. It compares four cases (Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and

Turkey) which reflect different approaches to the integration of the children of refugees in institutions of compulsory education. The contribution by Michael Teutsch recognizes the difficulties created for education systems by the current refugee inflow: the number of refugees, the high percentage of new arrivals of young people who are still in need of compulsory education, the often low probability of them being accorded refugee status, and the polarisation of the education and skill levels that they possess. However, Teutsch still believes that challenges can be turned into opportunities to reform the educational sphere. While the differences observed by Crul et al. are undeniable, Teutsch's contribution also sheds light on some positive changes (for instance, in Germany) and proposes a more flexible understanding of 'success' when it comes to educational achievement by recognizing that for some groups of students (particularly those who arrive at an age corresponding to the last few years of compulsory schooling) the clock cannot be turned back and more effort ought to be put into finding appropriate ways of engaging them in vocational training for jobs requiring less formal school education. Crul et al.'s contribution suggests that diverse educational philosophies identified in the four countries covered by their analysis shape the professional destinies of refugee children – ranging from those that provide the best possible educational opportunities in the given circumstances in Sweden, where quick mainstreaming (also secured by intensive language teaching) is the dominant approach, to those where the outcome is often to divert refugee children into vocational tracks (less in the Netherlands and more so in Germany), and finally to those where a lack of resources and a policy of temporary protection rather than integration results in a lack of access to public schools and substitute education geared towards return to Syria, as is the case in Turkey.

The contributions on the topic of *labour market integration* discuss two crucial and at the same time contradictory trends: on the one hand, the





long-term economic opportunities for ageing Europe created by the newly arrived migrants and refugees and, on the other hand, the short-term problems in providing effective employment opportunities for these categories of newcomers. Klaus F. Zimmermann's keynote chapter outlines how and why the influx of refugees must not only be perceived as a problem but ought to also be seen as an opportunity. He suggests that the most benefits could be reaped from early profiling of refugees and their allocation in line with the relocation quota system. After this, free mobility within the country should be permitted even before the recognition of refugee status, and recognized refugees should be free to move to other EU countries if they have a work contract. However, this positive outlook on the opportunities created by contemporary migratory movements is overshadowed by a number of obstacles and on average refugees take as many as 20 years to fully integrate into the labour market. Martin Ruhs identifies some of the problems: the size of the population concerned; the pressure that this puts on the receiving states; the (un)feasibility of particular policies in the host state; the fact that refugees might stay permanently; and the lack of cooperation between states. To this, Alessandra Venturini adds another dimension: problems created by the lack of any cooperation between the state of origin and the host state. Cooperation between these countries is one of the best tools for a speedy and comprehensive integration of immigrants. In the case of refugees it is clearly missing, but other (transit) states appear as actors, which complicates matters and makes integration more difficult. However, some positive trends are described in the chapter by Iván Martín, who presents results of empirical research which reveal a clear policy trend in the majority of EU countries towards facilitation of the integration of migrants and refugees, as opposed to the previous (pre-2015) trends which sought to introduce barriers to their integration. A number of instruments are used to facilitate labour market integration, such

as skills assessment, introductory programmes (cultural and other kinds of orientation), language learning, and job mediation services.

The contributions on the topic of *cultural integration* clearly recognize a trend towards the securitization of migration and a shifting of the blame for any failures in the integration process onto the newcomers. Ruth Wodak's keynote paper discusses both the different dimensions of integration and the culturalization of integration policies. She identifies a tendency in Europe towards more demanding conditions for citizenship acquisition – primarily with regard to language competence and civic knowledge tests. This trend is, at least to some extent, caused by a hostile political discourse which blames integration failure on the newcomers' unwillingness to integrate. Instead of ethnic and national conflicts, religion has become the main divisive force in contemporary Europe, as Anna Triandafyllidou argues in her paper. Rejecting members of other religions coincides with natives turning towards the nation-state to provide them with security. Tamás Szűcs' contribution shows how public opinion and the political discourse on immigrants have been moving towards considering migrants as a security threat and demands for stronger borders to keep the migrants out. To counter such trends, for more than a decade the EU has consistently and coherently tried to also promote the inclusion of newcomers in cultural domains, such as the arts and sports. These programmes provide funding for creative – and unobtrusive – ways of integrating immigrants. However, the extent to which Member States use opportunities of EU funding for such initiatives greatly varies and depends on their general approaches to integration.

A particular value of this book is that it reaches a number of cross-sectional conclusions that establish links between different domains of integration, making the success of integration in one domain critical for outcomes in another.



For instance, Münz and Zimmermann discuss the importance of appropriate educational skills for the full labour integration of refugees and better labour market outcomes. Similarly, language proficiency is considered critical for both educational prospects (Crul et al.) and for labour market integration (Martín). Crul et al.'s contribution argues that the acquisition of particular statuses – such as the recognition of refugee status – is of utmost importance for optimal educational opportunities and subsequent labour market integration. Zimmermann also argues that a proper legal status allows for quicker employment integration and the much-needed worker mobility. This shows that all integration domains interact with each other and that policies introduced in one area will affect other areas as well, which calls for a comprehensive understanding and policies on immigrant integration.

In summer and autumn 2015, German Chancellor Merkel and the leaders of the EU institutions emphasized that agreeing on a common policy on refugee admission and fair burden-sharing between the Member States was an even greater challenge than steering through the Euro crisis. At the end of 2016, the sense of urgency has become somewhat weaker, with smaller numbers of new inflows and other crises – such as that triggered by the Brexit referendum – occupying the minds of European policymakers. However, the difficulties raised by the long-term task of integrating refugees and migrants for whose arrival European societies had been unprepared will remain high on the agenda for years to come. In the absence of innovative approaches, the resulting problems will feed into the rise of nationalist populism that is already shaking the foundations of the European building.

Florence, 30 December 2016



# THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES – A EUROPEAN SYNOPSIS

Rainer Münz

EPSC, European Commission<sup>1</sup>

For centuries, Europe was a continent of emigration, exporting a considerable part of its growing population. Between the Age of Discoveries and the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, some 70 million people left their European homelands for overseas destinations. Among them were colonial settlers, adventurers, labour migrants and refugees.<sup>2</sup> Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans have also moved – and continue to move – from peripheries to urban areas and regions with higher economic growth. However, a fundamental shift occurred in the 1980s. Three decades ago, for the first time in modern history the number of third-country nationals entering the EU started to be larger than the number of EU citizens leaving for overseas destinations. Only since that time can we truly speak of Europe and the EU as a region of immigration. It took even longer before the integration of migrants and their children became an issue of political concern, although since the 1950s many countries in Western Europe had recruited foreign labour and accepted refugees. Initially, most of these refugees were people fleeing communist regimes and socialist economies.

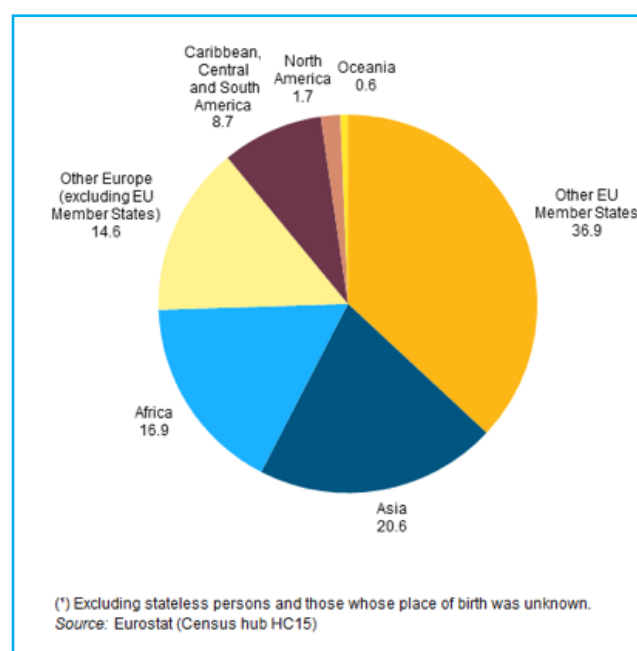
1 Rainer Münz is policy advisor at the European Political Strategy Centre, the in-house think tank advising the President of the European Commission. The analysis and proposals expressed in this text are the author's personal views and do not necessarily represent positions of the European Commission.

2 See: <http://www.european-emigration.com/>; Bade (2003). The peak period was 1840 to 1940, with 55 million Europeans leaving (Tara 2016).

## Migrants in Europe

Today, some 57 million citizens and residents of the EU live outside their country of birth. They represent over 10% of the EU's total population.<sup>3</sup> About a third of them (2014: 36.9%, Fig. 1) are mobile EU citizens.<sup>4</sup> The others have come as labour migrants, dependent family members, international students or asylum seekers and refugees. Of these 'others', one in five is from Asia (2014: 20.6%),<sup>5</sup> one in six from Africa (16.9%)<sup>6</sup> and one in seven from other European countries (non-EU: 14.6%; Fig. 1).

**Fig. 1: Mobile EU citizens and non-EU born migrants by continent of origin**



3 This number is calculated from stock data available for 1 January 2015: 34.3 million people born outside of the EU-28 were living in an EU Member State on 1 January 2015 + 18.5 million persons born in an EU Member State other than the one where they were resident = 52.8 million (Eurostat 2016c). Given the net inflows since January 2015, the total number on 1 January 2017 is likely to be 57 million.

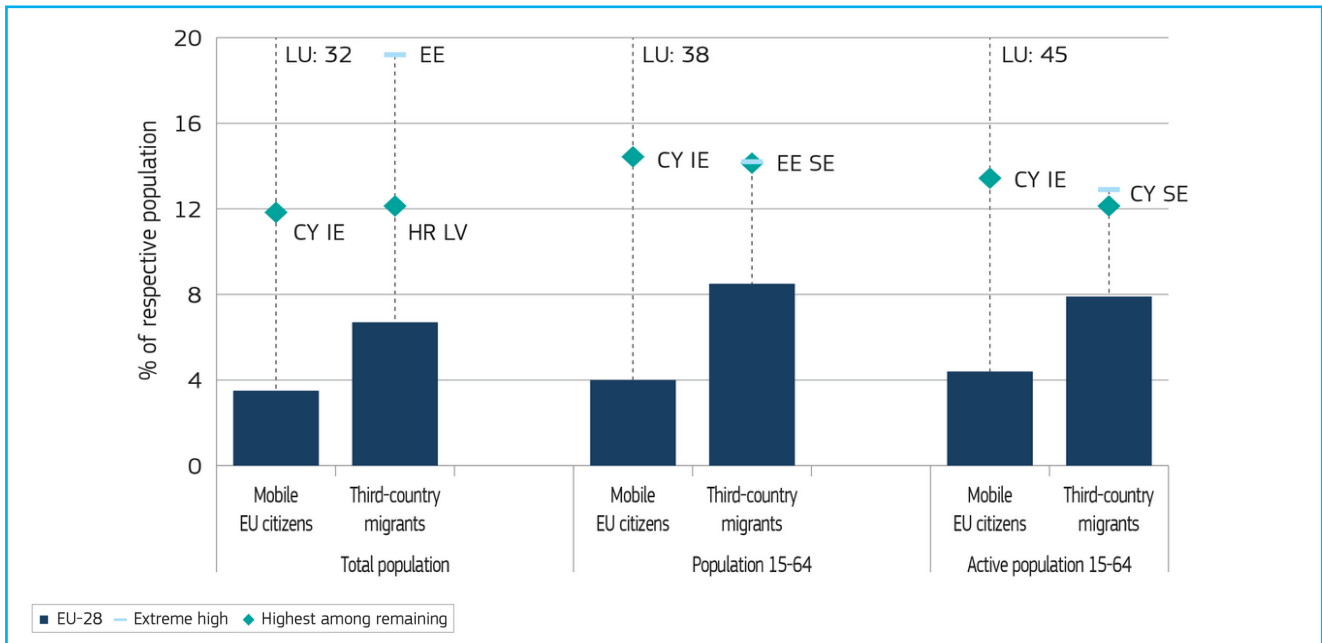
4 With Poland and Romania being the most important sending countries (Eurostat 2016c).

5 Mostly from southern Asia (India, Pakistan; Eurostat 2016c) and since 2015 also Afghanistan and Syria (Eurostat 2016a).

6 Mostly from the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; Eurostat 2016c).



**Fig. 2: Share of mobile EU citizens and non-EU born migrants in the total EU population, in the population aged 15-64, and in the economically active population aged 15-64 in 2014**



Source: DG EMPL, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

In 2014,<sup>7</sup> the share of non EU-born residents was 6.7 percent of the total EU population and 7.9 percent of economically active persons. Mobile EU citizens constituted 3.5 percent of the total population and 4.4 percent of economically active persons (Fig. 2).<sup>8</sup> An estimated 6 percent belonged to the second generation, having one or two foreign-born parents.<sup>9</sup>

In relative terms, Luxemburg, Cyprus and Ireland reported the largest proportions of mobile EU citizens, while Estonia, Croatia, Latvia,<sup>10</sup> and

7 The data are from the EU Labour Force Survey (LFS) ad-hoc module 2014 covering mobile EU citizens and EU residents born outside the EU (including people admitted as asylum seekers or refugees prior to 2014). See Lien 2016.

8 European Commission 2016b. The large inflow of irregular migrants and refugees during the years 2014-2016 has increased the size and share of the non-EU born population, but – so far – has had no lasting impact on the non-EU born workforce as the majority of them have not yet become economically active.

9 Precise information is only available for the EU population of main working age (15-64). Among these, in 2014, the second-generation totalled 18.4 million people (6.1% of this age group), of which 13.3 million (4.4%) had at least one parent born in the EU, whereas 5.1 million (1.7%) had both parents born outside the EU. These data do not include information on Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands.

10 Most foreign-born residents of Estonia and Latvia moved prior to 1991 as Soviet citizens from other Soviet republics to the Baltics and only became 'foreign-born' when the Baltic countries

Sweden hosted the largest shares of non-EU born migrants (Fig. 2).

### Asylum seekers and refugees

In the years 2014-16, the focus of public attention was on the irregular entrance gate as over 1.5 million irregular migrants and refugees entered Italy and Greece via the Mediterranean – the majority of them moving on and asking for asylum in various northern and western EU countries.<sup>11</sup> This extra inflow – in addition to some 2 million first residency permits issued to third-country nationals arriving in a regular manner – was unprecedented in size. In fact, in the years 2000-2013 the EU countries had only admitted less than 4 million asylum seekers and refugees altogether, on average less than 300,000 per year.<sup>12</sup>

Another difference also plays a role: between 2000 and 2013 some 80 to 90 percent of all the newly arriving third-country nationals entered the EU

declared independence. A considerable proportion of them were never naturalised and are now stateless or have meanwhile acquired Russian citizenship (Eurostat 2016c).

11 See <http://migration.iom.int/europe/> and <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>.

12 Eurostat 2016a.



in a regular manner and not for humanitarian reasons.<sup>13</sup> In 2015 the share of those admitted for humanitarian reasons was over 35 percent.

## Entrance gates

Over the last two decades the main ‘entrance gates’ to EU countries have been:

- (a) the free movement of EU citizens within the EU;
- (b) dependent family members joining regular migrants and refugees already living in an EU country;
- (c) the recruitment of skilled and unskilled foreign labour;
- (d) the admission of foreign students (playing a somewhat smaller role);
- (e) admission for asylum and humanitarian protection (playing only a minor role – with the exception of 2014-2016).

From a quantitative point of view, free movement and family reunion were the most important ‘entrance gates’.

These ‘gates’ define the initial terms of residence and they clearly create selection effects. This is not only relevant when migrants settle in an EU country but it also has a long-term influence on migrant integration.

## Integration: Refugees vs. other immigrants

Integration only matters for migrants who intend to stay for a longer period of time or – in the case of refugees – are prevented from returning to their country of origin. Although the integration of migrants and their children is multifaceted, four dimensions stand out:

- Labour market outcomes

13 Eurostat 2016c.

- Education
- Language and culture
- Legal status and citizenship

Data that would allow a systematic comparison between regular migrants and refugees across Europe are not available for all four dimensions,<sup>14</sup> but the accessible data give us an idea of the differences and similarities. Existing research also gives us an idea of the obstacles to integration that immigrants and their European host countries have faced in the past. The main findings are:

- The economic integration of migrants takes time and has – on average – become more difficult in recent years.
- This is particularly an issue for those admitted as asylum seekers/refugees and for those joining parents or a spouse already established in an EU country (family reunion). It takes seven to ten years until the employment rates of these groups of migrants reach 50 percent.
- High educational attainment speeds up the integration process. Skilled migrants, however, face systemic barriers in access to work for which they have initially been trained.
- The education systems of countries with larger numbers of migrants on average have difficulties coping with children that have a migrant background. They have significantly lower PISA scores and a much higher share of early school leavers. In the EU 25 percent of all young non-EU citizens leave the education system without graduating.
- Over time only six out of ten third country nationals residing in Europe acquire citizenship in an EU country. At the same time European citizenship does not necessarily lead to a full identification with European values and traditions

14 Eurostat 2011, 2016c.





## Employment in the formal sector

Economic activity is at the core of the inclusion process. This key variable relies on the ability of migrants and refugees<sup>15</sup> to generate income from gainful employment. This, in turn, depends on the trajectory defined by the entrance gates, the personal skills of migrants, their duration of stay, the general economic and labour market situation and legal conditions in the receiving country.<sup>16</sup>

It is, therefore, no surprise that those admitted to an EU country as skilled or unskilled workers initially have the highest employment rates (0-4 years of residence: 83%). Over time, some of these become unemployed or economically inactive and the rate drops with a longer duration of stay (20+ years: 65%). Third-country nationals admitted as students remaining in the EU after the end of their studies only reach their maximum employment rates about ten years after arrival (10-14 years: 80%) and usually remain economically active at a

15 The analytical part of this text is based on data gathered before 2015. Many results are based on the EU Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module 2014 (EU LFS). Irregular migrants and asylum seekers arriving in 2014-2016 are not included in this survey. When speaking of 'refugees' the text refers to people residing in the EU who were admitted as asylum seekers or for humanitarian reasons prior to 2014.

16 For refugees, the possibility of accessing and competing in the labour market depends on the reception (and integration) policies adopted in the country granting asylum, such as whether they provide for specific language and vocational training programmes. In many countries, asylum seekers who are granted subsidiary protection face greater restrictions than those enjoying refugee status.

high level (Fig. 4). This is clearly related to the fact that – by definition – all of them are highly skilled.

By contrast, migrants arriving for family reunion or as asylum seekers take 7-10 years on average before reaching an employment rate of 50% (Fig. 4). In the case of refugees, this is related to several factors. On average, they have lower educational attainments than the citizens of the country which processes the asylum claim.<sup>17</sup> Access to labour markets is usually delayed by asylum procedures. Refugees need time to adapt, learn the language of the receiving country and get their skills evaluated, recognised or upgraded. The more regulated labour markets are, the more difficult it is for refugees to find a job.<sup>18</sup>

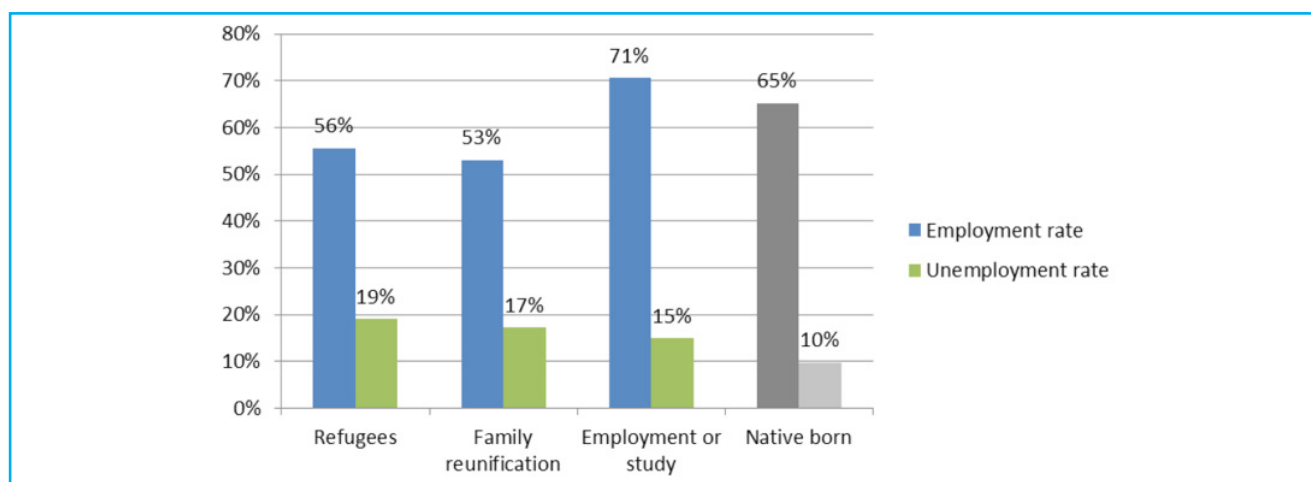
Over time, differences in labour market outcomes disappear. Employment rates converge for those with more than 20 years of stay and the reason for which the initial residency permit was issued no longer plays a decisive role.

The overall employment rate of migrants with non-EU backgrounds increases with the duration of their stay, rising from 51.1% for those residing in the country for less than five years to 68.3% for those who have already spent at least ten years in the EU.

17 Among recent asylum seekers (2014-2016) who have come to Europe, only two groups include a relevant share of tertiary educated people: Syrians and Iranians (UNHCR 2015, Rich 2016).

18 OECD 2015.

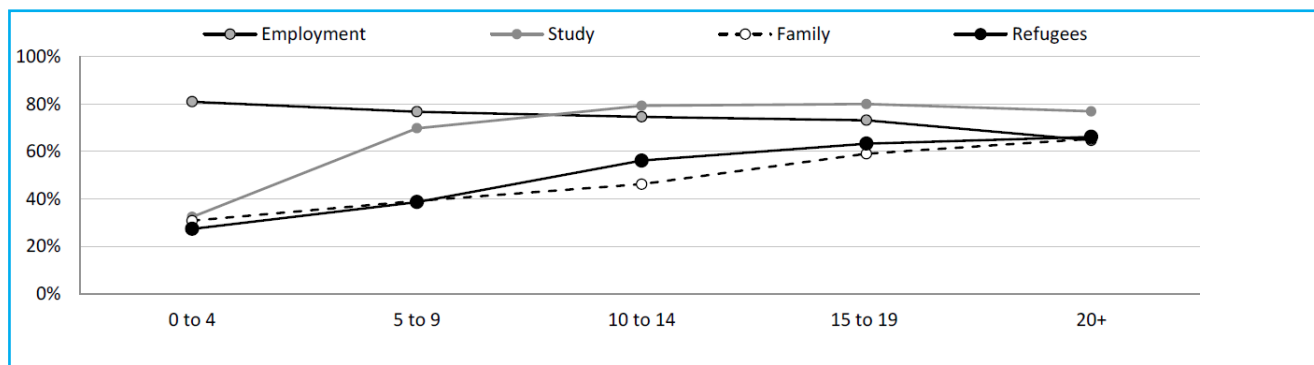
**Fig. 3: Labour market outcomes of non-EU-born persons by type of initial residency permit in the European Union. Ages 15-64 in 2014**



Source: OECD, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module



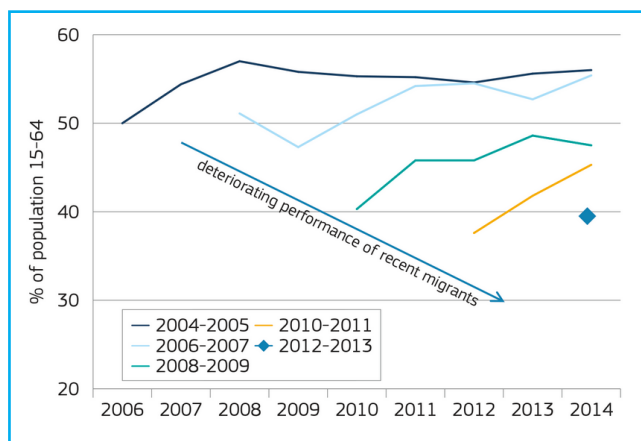
**Fig.4: Employment rates by type of initial residency permit and years of residence in the European Union. Ages 15-64 in 2014**



Source: OECD, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

Labour market outcomes are also strongly influenced by the general economic situation. As a result of the recent financial and economic crisis, the employment chances of newly arriving non-EU migrants clearly deteriorated for those arriving after 2006 (Fig. 5).<sup>19</sup>

**Fig. 5: Employment rates of non-EU-born migrants by years of residence in the EU. Ages 15-64, years of arrival: 2004-2013**



Source: DG EMPL, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

Labour market outcomes are strongly influenced by educational attainment and skills. Tertiary educated refugees and other migrants of working age have employment rates that are about 25 percentage points higher than those of refugees and other migrants with primary education (Fig. 6). This is true for both regular migrants

<sup>19</sup> European Commission 2016b.

and refugees who have come more recently and for those with longer durations of stay. The gap reflects the demand for skills, which gives people with higher education better opportunities in the labour market. At the same time, it might be less challenging for people who have spent more time in the education system to learn the host country's language, which in turn also facilitates labour market integration.

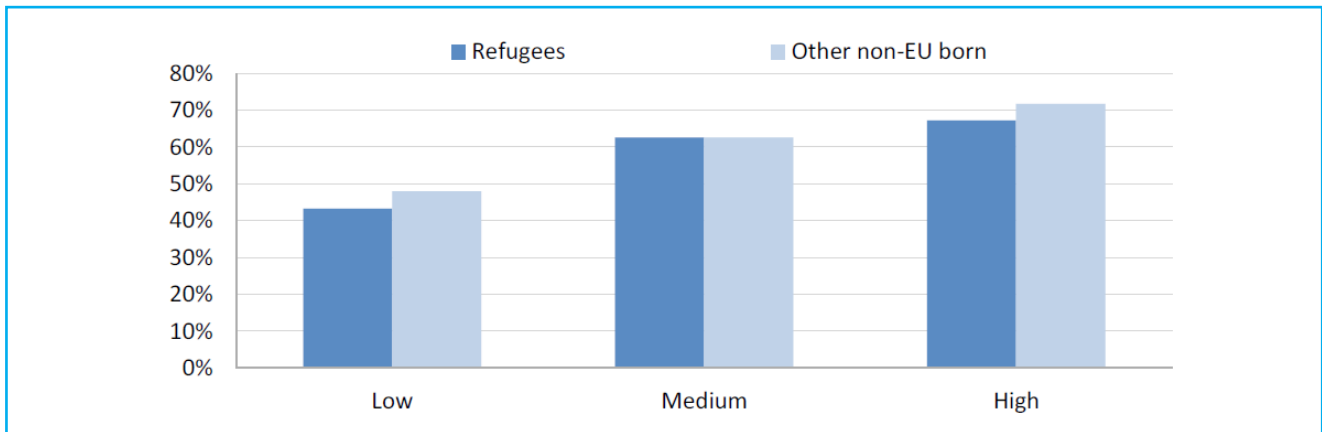
Another relevant factor is work experience. Eurostat's Labour Force Surveys (LFS) do not provide information on this issue, but a recent study by the German Migration and Asylum Agency (BAMF) shows that three in four (75%) male asylum seekers arriving in the year 2015 were employed before leaving their country of origin but only one in three women (33%) seeking asylum in Germany during that year were.<sup>20</sup>

Outcomes also vary widely between countries. In Belgium, France, Italy and Croatia, those admitted as refugees fare better than other non EU-born migrants. Conversely, in Finland, the UK, Spain and Portugal, the employment rate of recognised refugees is at least 10 percentage points lower.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Rich 2016.

<sup>21</sup> OECD 2016b.

**Fig. 6: Employment rates of regular migrants and refugees in the EU by educational attainment. Ages 15-64 in 2014 in 2014**



Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

By far the largest challenge is the labour market inclusion of refugee women. Their average employment rate is 45 percent (some 17 percentage points lower than that of refugee men). This is partly related to refugee status itself, which initially reduces employment chances (Fig. 4). To some extent these underwhelming labour market outcomes are related to the fact that nearly half of all refugee women residing in the EU in 2014 had a low level of education or no education at all and the majority had no work experience, a substantially higher share than that for any other migrant group.

In this context, it is important to narrow the gap between arrival or admission and economic integration. It is, however equally important to ensure that those entering Europe's labour markets find opportunities for upward mobility and that hidden barriers do not contribute to brain waste.

## Unemployment

In 2014, among the refugees available for the labour market, one in five were unemployed (19%), of whom one in eight for more than a year (12%). In comparison, refugees faced unemployment rates twice as high as that for natives (10%, Fig. 3). Unemployment was also high among third-country nationals (16%), in particular among those coming from Africa and the Middle East.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> European Commission 2016b, OECD 2016b.

The unemployment rates of refugees differ significantly between EU countries, ranging from 15 percent in the UK to more than 50 percent in Spain. Although other non-EU born migrants also have higher unemployment rates (16%) than the native born (10%), at least in Spain, Finland and Belgium they have considerably lower unemployment rates.<sup>23</sup>

For those who are unable to find gainful employment over a longer period of time, other forms of integration need to be explored – including opportunities to contribute via voluntary and non-paid work.<sup>24</sup>

## Education

On average, third-country nationals who have moved to the EU are less well educated than mobile EU citizens and EU nationals residing in their country of birth. More than four in ten refugees (43%) and a little fewer than four in ten other non-EU citizens (38%) residing in the EU only have primary education, compared to less than a quarter of EU nationals (23%; Fig. 7).<sup>25</sup>

A quarter of (other) non-EU citizens (25%)<sup>26</sup> have tertiary education. Among refugees, the share

<sup>23</sup> OECD 2016b.

<sup>24</sup> Papademetriou and Benton 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Referring to the population age 25+.

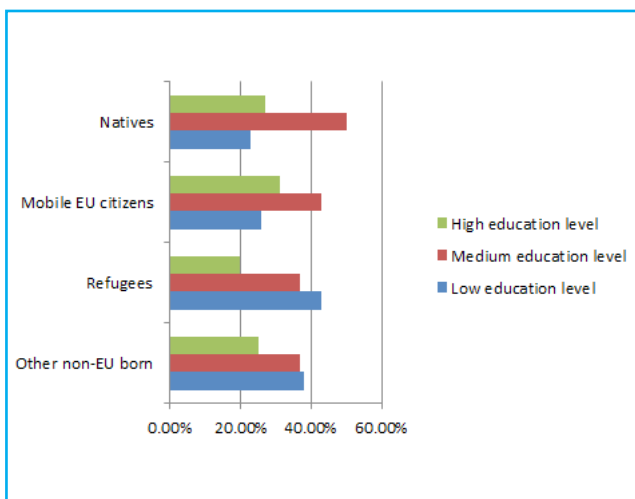
<sup>26</sup> Excluding refugees.



is only one in five (20%).<sup>27</sup> The share of tertiary educated refugees has decreased in recent years, as refugees who have arrived in the past 10 years are less likely to be tertiary educated than those who came 10-20 years ago.<sup>28</sup> This will gradually change over time as some of the recently arrived refugees will complete their education in Europe.

The opposite trend is observed for other non-EU-born migrants. Among these, the share of tertiary educated persons has increased, reaching 34% among those who have arrived in the EU during the period 2004-2014. This clearly shows a shift in the composition of immigrants: from less qualified labour migrants and dependent family members joining them to better qualified workers and third-country nationals completing their education in Europe and remaining in the EU.

**Fig. 7: Educational attainment by place of birth. Ages 25+ in 2014**



Source: EPSC, Eurostat, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

In western and northern Europe, children with a migrant background constitute a growing proportion of all the children of school age. Some

<sup>27</sup> For comparison, among recent asylum seekers in Germany (arriving in 2014-2015), 18% have tertiary education while 30% have low or no education (Rich 2016). The share of tertiary educated asylum seekers is highest among Iranians (35%) and Syrians (27%). The share of asylum seekers with low or no education is largest among Afghans (54%), Serbs (71%) and Macedonians (67%; Rich 2016). This is partly explained by the fact that many asylum seekers from the western Balkans belong to local Roma communities which are marginalised by the respective domestic education systems.

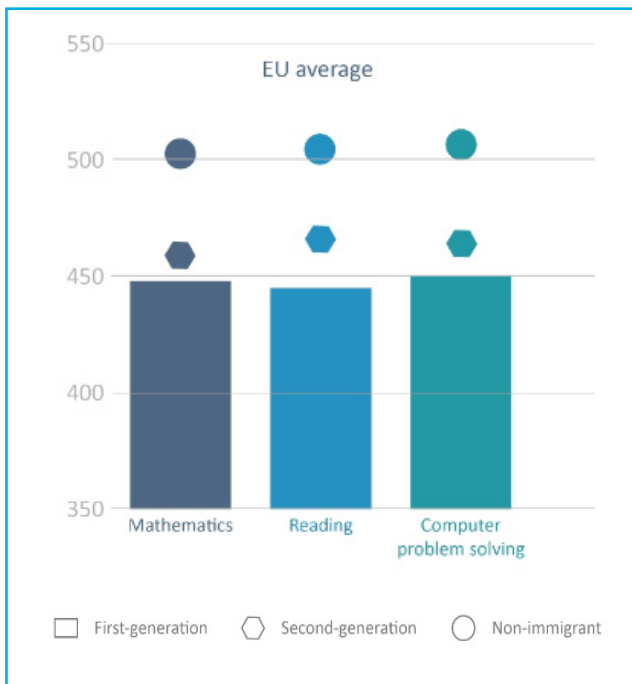
<sup>28</sup> OECD/EU 2015.

have moved with their parents and therefore belong to the first generation; others belong to the second generation. PISA test results clearly show that children with a migrant background have lower scores on average than native children in all three areas analysed in the OECD's global study: reading, mathematics and IT problem solving. The average gap is in the 10-12% range and is almost the same for the first and the second generation (Fig. 8). This reproduction of differences in educational attainment across generations clearly indicates that not only young migrants but also the children of immigrants will face a certain disadvantage when entering the labour market.

The gap is aggravated by the fact that one in four young non-EU citizens growing up in an EU country leaves the education system without graduating (25%). Among native children, the proportion is only one in ten (10%). Under current labour market conditions in Europe, a large proportion of early school leavers are unlikely to find a proper job. As a result, one in five young non-EU citizens (21%) are neither in gainful employment nor in education nor in training (NEET). Among their native peers the NEET rate is only one in eight (12%; Fig. 9).

The over-proportionally high rates of early school leavers with migrant background are aggravating existing integration problems and increasing the risk of poverty and social exclusion. The high rate of NEET young migrants not only hints at a lack of demand for unskilled and untrained labour but will almost certainly translate into long-term exclusion from formal labour markets.

**Fig. 8: PISA scores of children aged 15 with native and migrant backgrounds in the EU in 2012**

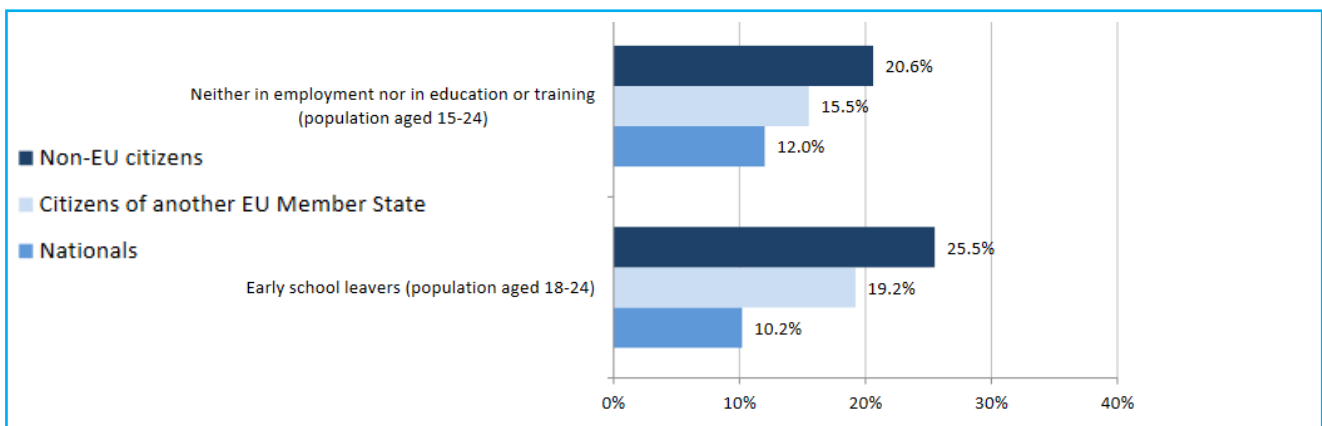


Source: OECD, PISA 2012

Belgium, Germany and Sweden.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, migrants with a university degree are over 10 percentage points less likely to be in work relative to similarly educated natives in Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden (OECD, 2015a).

Formal over-qualification has partly to do with the fact that most economically active refugees have obtained their degrees in education systems that are very different from those in their host countries, possibly resulting in lower skills at the same level of education.<sup>30</sup> Employers usually have difficulties in evaluating such skills. For this reason, formal over-qualification is more closely related to the origin of the qualification than to the origin of the migrant.<sup>31</sup> A certain number of refugees also lack documents that would allow a proper specification of their degrees. This creates considerable obstacles in the formal process of recognition. Another reason for lower valuations of migrants' qualifications is a lower proficiency in the host-country language (Fig. 10).

**Fig. 9: NEET population (aged 15-24) and early school leavers (aged 18-24) by citizenship in the EU in 2015**



Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS 2015

On the other hand, qualifications and skills do not necessarily translate into expected labour market outcomes. Employed refugees are much more likely to be over-qualified (60%) than other non-EU-born migrants (30%) or natives (21%). The differences are particularly large in Austria,

<sup>29</sup> OECD 2016b.

<sup>30</sup> Bonfanti and Xenogiani 2014 assume that between one-third and one-half of the observed level of over-qualification of migrants compared with the native-born can be explained by lower skills at given qualification levels. Also see Damas de Matos and Liebig 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Papademetriou and Benton 2016.





## Social welfare

The recent inflow of refugees and asylum seekers has revived the debate on “welfare migration”<sup>32</sup> suggesting that certain categories of immigrants, in particular those with lower skills, are more inclined to choosing countries with well-established welfare systems as their destination. The fact that most irregular migrants and refugees entering Europe in 2014-2016 choose Germany, Sweden, Austria, France and Italy to launch their asylum requests<sup>33</sup> seem to suggest that both the accessibility of asylum and the generosity of related transfers seem to have a major influence.

If these dynamics were generally true for labour migrants and dependent family members, this could constitute a major obstacle to economic integration as it might discourage certain groups of migrants eligible for social benefits from entering the labour market. For migrants not using the asylum system as entrance gate the empirical evidence is rather mixed.<sup>34</sup> This, however, does not prevent a larger public to voice concern and to assume that immigrants – as well as mobile EU citizens – receive social benefits without sufficiently contributing to the welfare system through taxes and contributions.<sup>35</sup>

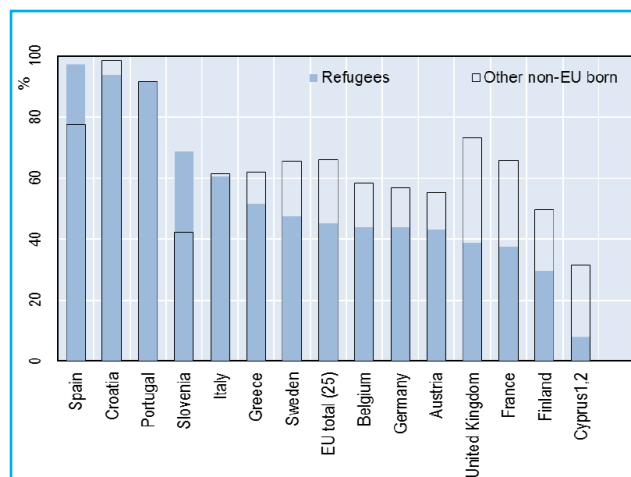
## Language

Cultural integration is not easy to measure, but language proficiency can be used as a proxy. In any case, migrant integration requires command of the main language spoken in the receiving country. In 2014, less than half (45%) of the refugees residing in the EU reported having an advanced knowledge

of such languages, compared with two thirds (64%) of other migrants from non-EU countries. As empirical data show, knowledge of the host-country language is partly influenced by selective migration, e.g. Latin Americans migrating to Spain, natives of other former Yugoslav republics residing in Croatia and Slovenia, and Slovaks living in the Czech Republic.

Literacy and command of the host-country language tend to improve with a longer duration of stay in a particular country. It is, however, striking that only one in two refugees (49%) with more than ten years of residence in the EU has acquired advanced knowledge of the host-country language, while the share is 69 percent among other non-EU-born migrants with a long duration of stay.<sup>36</sup>

**Fig. 10: Advanced knowledge of host country language among refugees vs. other non-EU citizens. Ages 15-64 in 2014**



Source: OECD, EU-LFS 2014 ad-hoc module

Literacy also matters. The ability to use the host country’s dominant language is influenced by the ability to read texts written in the language. The OECD’s ‘Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies’ (PIAAC) clearly shows that – depending on the EU country

36 OECD 2016b. Lack of motivation and/or opportunity to learn the host-country language can partly be explained by the presence of larger diasporas in the host country, which makes resorting to the native language much easier.

32 One of the economists starting this debate was G. Borjas 1999.

33 Eurostat 2016a.

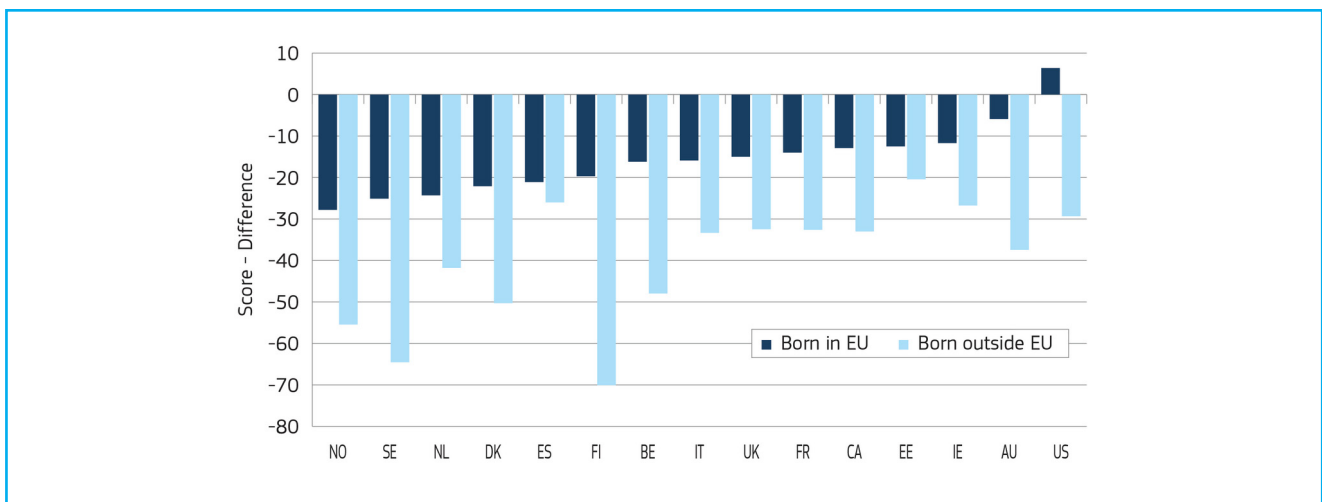
34 For an overview: Barrett 2012; Giulietti and Wahba 2012.

35 A 2009 Eurobarometer survey showed that one in two adult Europeans did believe that immigrants do not contribute to taxes as much as they benefit from social services and welfare programs (European Commission 2010).

and the structure of its migrant population – non-EU-born migrants have literacy scores that are on average 35 points below those of natives. The gap is particularly pronounced in Scandinavian countries. Mobile EU citizens seem to have fewer problems, but also score some 15 points below natives (Fig. 11).

full and equal members of society. In reality, some mobile people show no interest in changing their citizenship status even if they meet all the legal requirements. This is particularly true for EU citizens residing in another EU country, who enjoy almost the same rights as native citizens. Others are reluctant if naturalisation in the country of residence requires them to renounce their original citizenship.

**Fig. 11: Difference in the literacy scores of mobile EU citizens (born in the EU), non-EU-born migrants and natives by region of birth (PIAAC 2012)**



Source: OECD, PIAAC 2012, Bonfanti and Xenogiani 2014

## Nationality and citizenship

In the context of migrant integration, citizenship is primarily about rights and duties, but it also creates a sense of belonging. Between 2009 and 2015 some 6 million people acquired citizenship in an EU country through naturalisation – between 800,000 and 1 million per year. The number and share of new EU citizens varies from county to county depending on the amount and composition of non-nationals theoretically qualifying for naturalisation as well as on the respective citizenship laws and naturalisation practices.

Ideally, naturalisation should be an integral part of migrant inclusion, as non-citizens never become

At the same time, depending on national laws regulating access to citizenship, migrants who want to naturalise have to meet a series of requirements that may become relevant obstacles, such as uninterrupted residency of 5-10 years, passing language and national history tests, meeting required income levels, etc.<sup>37</sup> As a result, in 2014 only 2.8% of all non-citizens residing in the EU naturalised. The rates vary substantially across Europe, with some countries being much more restrictive than others. In 2014, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands and Spain naturalised some 4.4-

<sup>37</sup> See <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/> and Estramina et al. 2014. In 2014, over 60% of all refugees and 55% of all other non-EU-born migrants had been residing in their current host country for more than ten years and would therefore meet a basic requirement for naturalisation.



6.4 percent of their foreign resident populations.<sup>38</sup> During the same year, the rates were below 1 percent in Slovakia, Austria and the three Baltic States (Fig. 12).<sup>39</sup>

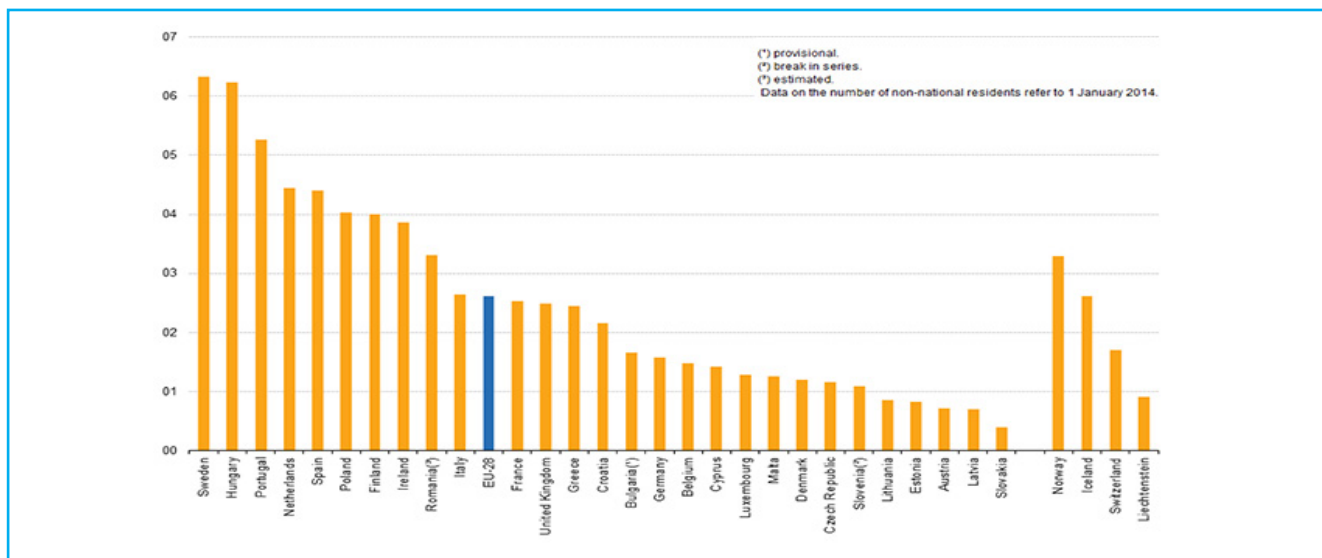
In absolute numbers Spain had the highest number of naturalisations (2014: 206,000), followed by Italy (130,000), the UK (126,000) and Germany (111,000).<sup>40</sup>

Empirical data show that migrants who naturalise have somewhat better labour market outcomes than those who remain citizens of their country of origin. Some call this a citizenship premium. However, this does not necessarily constitute a causal relationship. It might well be that those who manage to acquire citizenship are also more successful in the labour market. As the difference disappears over time, it looks as if immigrants on the path to naturalisation enjoy faster integration rather than a permanent advantage on the labour market.

The data available also suggest that migrants who were initially admitted as refugees are more likely to naturalise in the host country than other third-country nationals. In 2014, 61% of all the refugees with more than ten years of residence in the EU had taken up the host-country nationality, compared with 57% of other non-EU-born migrants. Among refugees, the take-up rate was higher for women than for men.<sup>41</sup>

Quite a few EU countries have both low naturalisation rates and legal provisions that do not extend citizenship to children of immigrants.<sup>42</sup> This creates a growing gap between the electorate (or demos) and the resident population. With gross immigration being larger than the annual number of naturalisations and a growing numbers of EU-born children becoming foreigners at birth, the number of people not represented in our political system is growing. Whatever long-term consequences this may have, it is definitely not making integration more likely.

**Fig. 12: Annual naturalisation rates in EU Member States in 2014 as % of all non-citizens**



Source: Eurostat 2016b, Acquisition of citizenship statistics

38 Hungary also reported a rate above 6%, but this calculation is problematic as the vast majority of those acquiring Hungarian citizenship were non-resident ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries and applying for naturalisation from abroad.

39 OECD 2016b.

40 Eurostat 2016b.

41 OECD 2016b. In this context, it should not be overlooked that naturalisation requirements are sometimes less strict for recognised refugees than for other third-country nationals (<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/modes-of-acquisition>).

42 This is the norm in a majority of EU countries (<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/>).

At the same time, we see that a certain number of naturalised as well as EU-born citizens with a migrant background are not fully identifying with their country of citizenship, but rather see themselves as a diaspora. In other cases there is identification with radical interpretations of Islam.<sup>43</sup> This is a trend which apparently affects young EU-born people with a migrant background, i.e. the second generation and recent converts more than the first generation of immigrants.<sup>44</sup> Young European-born Muslims joining radical groups fighting in the Middle East and North Africa are the most extreme cases.<sup>45</sup> This clearly indicates that European citizenship does not necessarily lead to a full identification with European values and traditions.

Large-scale immigration together with irregular entry and the reaction of domestic audiences in several receiving countries have brought back questions of national identity. A growing number of natives see the newcomers as a challenge or even threat to their national identity. This is particularly true when a considerable number of those arriving in Europe become part of visible or religious minorities.

So far, European governments have had difficulties establishing a clear line on how to best address the cultural and civic integration of recent newcomers.<sup>46</sup> Approaches range from outright restrictions<sup>47</sup> to more liberal forms of accommodation. In any event, the political, social and residential segregation of ethnic and religious communities can become both drivers of anxiety among natives and barriers for those cut off from social interaction, political inclusion and economic participation.

43 European Parliament 2015a.

44 <http://www.cfr.org/religion/europes-angry-muslims/p8218>

45 See, for example: Jourova 2015; The Sufan Group 2015.

46 Papademetriou and Benton 2016.

47 For example, burkini bans in France.

## Conclusions

Data that would allow for a systematic comparison between regular migrants and refugees across Europe are not available for all dimensions,<sup>48</sup> but existing data give us an idea about differences and similarities.

Employment outcomes depend on the entrance gate, skill levels and gender. The situation is more difficult for people admitted as refugees or for family reunion and in particular for migrant women with lower educational attainment. Over time, newcomers make progress in entering the labour forces of receiving countries. However, it takes 15 to 20 years before differences by entrance gate fully disappear. Nevertheless, throughout their working lives immigrants remain over-represented in low-skilled work.

Skilled migrants often face entry barriers to jobs for which they would be qualified. Despite progress in recognising qualifications, newcomers face more limited opportunities than natives hinting at a permanent 'brain waste' of those migrants with higher skills. The main exception is migrants arriving as students, finishing their degrees in an EU country and remaining in the host country.

In many parts of Western Europe, a quarter or more of young people now have a migration background. The education systems of receiving countries have difficulties in coping with these children. As a result, they are more susceptible to leaving school early and to then not being in education, employment or training (NEET). The consequences are obvious. They not only have significantly lower PISA scores but are also underrepresented in higher education.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, young adults with a migrant background belonging to visible minorities generally display lower labour force participation levels.

48 Eurostat 2011, 2016c.

49 Not counting newly arriving migrants admitted as students.



These empirical results are particularly problematic as finding work is the most important route to integration in general. It also plays a crucial role in ensuring that a majority of natives trust existing immigration and integration systems. Integration, however, is not a one-way street. It requires efforts on the part of immigrants and their children but it also requires that Europe's receiving societies give newcomers a fair chance.





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# SECTION 1 CITIZENSHIP AND LEGAL STATUSES

# CITIZENSHIP AND LEGAL STATUSES IN RELATION TO THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

In European migration-receiving countries, the integration of migrants and especially refugees has traditionally been based on the assumption that their stay is temporary rather than permanent. As a result, integration policies have been ad hoc at best and have lacked a focus on the comprehensive immersion of migrants in the host societies. One of the best ways to become a full and equal member of society is by securing a route towards citizenship through naturalisation. Citizenship is an important measurement of integration because it extends rights to unconditional residence and political participation, and because naturalisation represents a deliberate choice by immigrants to link their future with that of the host country. Nevertheless, citizenship acquisition rates in Europe remain relatively low – with significant variation between countries and between migrant groups – and policies outlining comprehensive

1 The research discussed in this paper draws on ongoing collaboration within the European Union Democracy Observatory on Citizenship (EUDO CITIZENSHIP) and within the Maastricht Centre for Citizenship, Migration and Development (MACIMIDE), in particular with Floris Peters and Hans Schmeets. The paper also outlines a research agenda for a new five-year project ‘Migrant Life Course and Legal Status Transition’ (MiLifeStatus), funded by a Consolidator Grant from the European Research Council (grant no. 682626). See <https://macimide.maastrichtuniversity.nl/milifestatus/>.

pathways towards citizenship are the exception rather than the rule. “Citizenship policies remain a major area of weakness for most European countries,” concludes the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX). “The highly discretionary and costly path to citizenship often discourages rather than encourages immigrants to apply and succeed as new citizens.”<sup>2</sup>

Recent comparative research on citizenship for immigrants has focused on issues such as the conditions for acquiring the citizenship of the host country, how they differ between countries, how they change over time and how they distinguish various classes of would-be citizens. Recent research has also examined the overall effect of citizenship and naturalisation policies on various integration indicators (Bauböck et al, 2013; OECD 2011). The available evidence on the ‘citizenship premium’ for integration provides a mixed picture, across domains, across migrant groups and across countries. Generally, however, permanent residence and ultimately citizenship are seen as crucial opportunities, especially for those migrants who are most in need of a secure legal status and those who face the greatest hurdles along the way towards building a new life in the host society.

Regarding the long-term status of refugees that are currently entering Europe, the more immediately relevant question is that of what kind of legal statuses and protection the new refugees are offered. In this chapter, I reflect on the relevance of citizenship acquisition – and legal status transition more broadly – for migrant integration. After reviewing the literature on citizenship and integration, I present and discuss existing evidence with regard to three questions. First, what do we know about the variation in requirements for citizenship acquisition across European countries? I focus especially on ordinary naturalisation procedures and compare them with those providing facilitated

2 Quoted from <http://mipex.eu/access-nationality> [accessed 16 September 2016].





access to citizenship for refugees. Second, what do we know about the extent to which migrants actually acquire citizenship? I present the available statistics and key findings from the literature with a focus on cross-national variation. Third, what do we know about how citizenship matters for integration? I present and discuss the key findings from the literature and identify some notable gaps. I conclude the chapter with a reflection on how these findings can be used to contribute to current policy debates and on some key theoretical and empirical challenges.

## 2. Citizenship and immigrant integration

For foreign-born residents and their children, obtaining citizenship in the host country confers membership, rights and participation opportunities, and encourages a sense of belonging (Bloemraad 2006). However, whether and especially under which conditions citizenship stimulates integration remain open questions. Both immigrant naturalisation rates and the associated integration outcomes are characterised by significant heterogeneity. To put it simply, not all migrants have an equal interest in acquiring destination country citizenship, and even when they naturalise this new status does not bring the same consequences for all.

Citizenship is a legal status and a relationship between an individual and a state that entails specific legal rights and duties, such as the right to reside without restriction in the territory of the state of citizenship, the right to vote in elections and the right to hold public office or be employed in selected public sector jobs.<sup>3</sup> If migrants hold the citizenship of the country where they reside,

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., the EUDO CITIZENSHIP Citizenship Glossary at <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/citizenship-glossary/glossary#Cithip> [accessed 13 September 2016]. In some countries, the status may be called ‘nationality’ rather than citizenship and persons holding the status are referred to as nationals rather than citizens. For the sake of consistency, I refer to ‘citizenship’ throughout the paper, except when citing legal documents that directly refer to ‘nationality.’

this is commonly viewed as the most advanced legal status they can obtain. However, a range of alternative legal statuses may be available to them, either related to the grounds on the basis of which they have been admitted to the territory of the state, such as residence permits related to work, study, family reunification or humanitarian grounds, or a residence status proving the right to permanent residence, such as the Green Card in the US or the permit in the EU for so-called ‘long-term resident third-country nationals,’ i.e. persons without the citizenship of one of the EU member states “who have resided legally and continuously within the territory of a member state for five years immediately prior to the submission of the relevant application” (Directive 2003/109/EC, art. 4, under 1).<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, I understand integration in a broad sense as the process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups (Penninx 2003). This definition deliberately views integration as a process rather than as an endpoint and is also deliberately open as to what precisely determines the acceptance of immigrants in a society, which may after all vary from one receiving society to another. In a formal sense, the acquisition of citizenship itself may be viewed as the ultimate form of integration as naturalised migrants acquire a status that provides (nearly)<sup>5</sup> equal rights to those of the majority population, such as the right of abode, of diplomatic protection, of political franchise and of access to public sector jobs that are restricted to citizens. In a practical sense, citizenship may not ‘matter’ much, if naturalised immigrants continue

<sup>4</sup> Citizens of EU member states do not need a residence permit and have the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the member states, within the constraints set by Directive 2004/38/EC.

<sup>5</sup> In some countries, the rights of naturalised immigrants may be restricted in that some selected high political offices are only open to ‘natural born’ citizens. Countries may also apply denaturalisation rules, which allow deprivation of citizenship within a certain time period after naturalisation (e.g. for being convicted for major crimes or terrorist activities), which in practice leads to a form of conditional citizenship.



to face discrimination – e.g. in the labour market – or they lack the human capital to make full use of their newly acquired status. For some migrants, the security of residence and access to the labour market tied to permanent residence may provide sufficient legal security and opportunities, without them seeing a need to naturalise.

Investigating the relationship between citizenship and integration poses methodological challenges, as better-integrated immigrants are also more likely to naturalise (OECD 2011). A key limitation of existing studies is also that they mostly investigate these relationships within only one societal context. This is problematic if one assumes, as I do (building on Yang 1994; Dronkers and Vink 2012; Vink, Prokic-Breuer and Dronkers 2013; Peters and Vink 2016; Peters, Vink and Schmeets 2016a, b), that:

- migrants have different motivations to naturalise and these are partly associated with origin factors and the individual life course – hence demographic contexts and family situations matter greatly;
- pathways into citizenship are conditioned by the institutional contexts in both origin and destination countries with regard to acceptance of dual citizenship, length of required residence, language and integration requirements and the socioeconomic context; and
- the potential ‘integration premium’ associated with naturalisation is conditioned by the trajectory into citizenship – especially the time to naturalisation.

Hence, citizenship does not matter in the same way when it is acquired by a young immigrant of working age after only a few years of residence in the destination country as when it is acquired by an older immigrant near the end of her or his working life after having already lived in the country for years. Immigrants naturalising to secure citizenship for their children, as is often

necessary in Europe, also tell a different story to that of educated immigrants in the US whose native-born children are already citizens since birth and who seek better employability in the public sector.

From this perspective, the ambiguous findings in the literature on the consequences of citizenship are hardly surprising (cf. Peters and Vink 2016). For example, whereas some find evidence of a positive association between citizenship and labour market integration (Bratsberg et al 2002; Steinhardt 2012; Helgertz et al 2014), others find no such effect (Chiswick 1978; Bevelander and Veenman 2006; Scott 2008). Remarkably, however, these varying outcomes are often seen as undermining the overall significance of citizenship for migrants, with some scholars and decision-makers arguing for the existence of a citizenship premium and others against it, especially in the context of labour market integration. However, rather than focusing on *whether* immigrant legal status transitions matter, especially those from being a foreigner to being a citizen, I argue that the focus should be on *why*, *how* and *for whom* such transitions matter.

There are two key implications of this view of naturalisation, which builds on recent applications of the sociological life-course paradigm to the literature on migration and integration (Wingens et al 2011). First, we should think about the relevance of legal status transitions from a double-context perspective: the relevance of naturalisation depends both on the institutional context under which citizenship (or alternative legal statuses) is made available; and on the personal context of the country of origin and the life situation of an individual migrant. Second, viewing the relevance of legal status transitions within the life-course trajectory of migrants also means that we should think less of citizenship acquisition as a one-off transition from foreigner to citizen, and more as a pathway or a ‘road to citizenship’ (Aptekar 2015).



Whereas most of the literature is focused on the citizenship premium in the labour market, or on citizenship and political participation, there is additional – though patchy – evidence on how legal status transitions matter for living conditions, mobility trajectories and educational outcomes among migrant children, among other things (see Bloemraad 2017 for a broad overview). The remainder of this section will briefly review the state of the art in these various domains.

### *Citizenship and socioeconomic integration*<sup>6</sup>

Given the structural challenges immigrants face in the labour market (Algan et al. 2010), citizenship provides the potential to mitigate some of these disadvantages as it removes restrictions on public sector jobs, increases employment opportunities and lowers the administrative costs of hiring and retaining a migrant (Bauböck et al 2013). However, the sociological life-course approach points to a hypothesis, which has not yet been systematically tested, that the impact of citizenship acquisition on labour market outcomes is conditioned both by the institutional setting of the destination context and by the demographic composition of its migrant population. Sweden, for example, houses a relatively large number of refugees who are highly motivated to naturalise in order to reinforce their legal position in the host country. However, refugees are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market (Krahn et al 2000), which may go some way to explaining ambiguous findings on the relationship between citizenship and labour-market integration in Sweden. Understanding the potential impact of a life event such as naturalisation requires a biographical perspective. For example, Steinhardt (2012) finds that naturalisation offers no wage benefit to women, which may be understandable from the perspective that women who have chosen to remain highly active in the labour

market in spite of alternative life-course patterns (part-time work or leaving the labour market) are positively selected. The challenge is thus to identify how the impact of naturalisation is mediated by factors (being married and having children, and contextual factors that facilitate integration in the labour market) which in themselves influence the propensity to naturalise. In other words, while recognising that naturalisation is a selective process and may be reversely influenced by labour market performance, both individual-level and contextual factors are expected to mediate this relationship.

### *Citizenship and political participation*

Beyond work and income, citizenship is closely tied to democratic participation, as naturalisation gives access to rights that are often, though not always, exclusive to citizens. Besides voting, however, citizenship may encourage political participation in a broader sense. Examples of non-electoral forms of political participation include conventional acts (such as contacting a politician or government official, participating in a political campaign or becoming a member of a political party) and ‘unconventional’ types of political activity (participating in protests and boycotts, and signing petitions). In liberal democracies, these forms of non-electoral participation are, at least theoretically, equally open to natives and immigrants (whether citizens or non-citizens) alike, yet one would not expect all residents in a country to be equally active. A number of individual resources are typically viewed as prerequisites for political participation – time, money, civic skills, civic engagement and language skills – and differences would in the first place be expected on the basis of socio-economic background, especially educational attainment. In addition to such factors, immigrants often come from countries with dramatically different political cultures to those of the countries of

6 This section builds on Peters and Vink (2016).



destination. For them, participation in political activities, especially those that go beyond the act of voting, requires additional effort and is less self-evidently possible than for natives. It is sometimes argued that citizenship, as the most secure legal status provided to immigrants and as it includes a set of entitlements providing access to co-determining political decision-making in a country, may encourage immigrants to engage in political activism beyond the exercise of suffrage.

Previous research, however, has produced mixed results. Some North American studies (e.g. Verba et al. 1995; Barreto and Muñoz 2003, Levin 2013) have found little correlation between citizenship status and participation, while others (e.g. Leal 2002) have found the opposite. In Europe, some single-country or limited multi-country studies suggest the existence of a positive relationship between citizenship and the non-electoral political participation of foreign-born residents (e.g. Giugni and Passy 2004; Bevelander and Pendakur 2011). On the basis of a larger comparative study, Just and Anderson (2012) reveal a positive relationship between citizenship and non-electoral political participation among foreign-born residents, but find that citizenship is a statistically significant determinant of political action only among those respondents who arrived from less democratic countries, and only for non-institutionalized political acts. De Rooij (2012: 469) draws similar conclusions, determining that the effect of citizenship on unconventional participation is only significant for non-Western immigrants.

### *Citizenship and living conditions*

Employment and income are evidently crucial to the societal incorporation of immigrants and reflect the relative success of migrants in this regard. However, labour market outcomes only tell part of the story. One important area that has received some attention in the literature, although mostly in the American context, is the role of citizenship in

relation to immigrants' living conditions. The key indicators in this area are, among others, quality of housing – measured in terms of the physical quality of accommodation and its location – and levels of home ownership. Research consistently shows better outcomes among naturalised immigrants (Borjas 2002; Hutcherson and Jeffers 2012). However, doubts have been raised as to whether citizenship status can overcome the broader phenomenon of residential crowding, net of increased employment opportunities and income premiums associated with naturalisation (McConnell 2015). Improvements in living conditions are likely to significantly depend on demographic background, life-course stage, the economic resources of individuals and contextual conditions, such as public sector involvement in housing (Arbaci 2007). Based on these previous findings, it is expected that most upward mobility in terms of living conditions can be explained by positive selection into naturalisation and, for selected groups (e.g. highly educated immigrants), by a citizenship premium in the labour market. For home ownership, which requires interaction with financial and legal institutions, one may expect an additional positive impact of naturalisation for these groups. These hypotheses have so far not been tested systematically in a cross-national context with appropriate longitudinal data.

### *Citizenship and out-migration*

While a legal status transition from foreigner to citizen may be viewed as full assimilation in the destination context, transnationalist theories point to a more complex reality where migrants do not *either* settle in the destination country *or* return to their country of origin but may share intensive interactions in both contexts (Faist 2000). Rather than resulting in the stable settlement of migrants in the destination contexts, naturalisation may encourage return migration to the country of origin or out-migration to another destination. In this light, having dual citizenship provides





opportunities for circular mobility (Alarian and Goodman 2016). Return migration can be viewed as part of an optimal life-cycle residential location sequence (Borjas and Bratsberg 1996). However, the naturalisation literature is almost completely focused on the single transition from foreigner to citizen rather than viewing this as part of a larger life-course trajectory. One exception is a paper by Kuhlenkasper and Steinhardt (2012), who find that out-migrants are less likely to be naturalised German citizens and on average have spent fewer years in Germany than their counterparts who stay in the country. The study demonstrates the need to consider heterogeneity among immigrants, as this ‘negative mobility’ only applies to non-Turkish immigrants. It is unclear whether these findings can be generalised beyond the German context and, if so, whether the timing of naturalisation and/or having children with destination country citizenship matter for these out-migration decisions.

### *Citizenship and the life course of migrant children*

Citizenship also plays a crucial role in the lives of children, either directly through their citizenship status or indirectly through that of the parent(s). Granting citizenship at birth is ‘likely to exert an effect on children’s human capital because it raises the likelihood of a future in the host country and thus parents’ expectations about returns on specific host-country human capital investments (Saurer and Felde 2014: 8). In contrast, growing up in a country without being formally recognized as a full member of society can adversely affect assimilation processes in a context where socioeconomic background and racial discrimination already challenge modes of incorporation. Nevertheless, the role of citizenship in the life course of native-born descendants of immigrants (2<sup>nd</sup> generation) and children arriving in the destination country before adolescence (1.5 generation) has so far been largely overlooked in the literature. Especially in

Europe, citizenship is predominantly attributed by descent from citizen parents (Vink and De Groot 2010). As a result, children of second or even subsequent immigrant generations only acquire residence country citizenship at a later age, if at all. The most significant policy change in recent times has been in Germany, where since 2000 children born in the country automatically receive German citizenship under certain conditions. Studies show a positive impact of this introduction of birthright citizenship on educational attainment (Saurer and Felde 2014). However, comparative research is scarce. Kilpi-Jakonen (2014) demonstrates that, after controlling for the higher propensity of immigrant children whose parents have higher education to have citizenship, second-generation students with Finnish citizenship are more likely to choose general rather than vocational upper secondary education compared to their peers without Finnish citizenship. Given the potential occupational and earnings opportunities associated with citizenship, the naturalisation of parents also impacts the educational attainment of migrants’ descendants (Bean et al 2011). These hypotheses lack systematic comparative testing so far.

### 3. Access to Citizenship

According to international convention, states are sovereign in determining their constituent populations, which entails that within certain limits set by international law they can exclude populations inside their territory from citizenship or include others beyond their borders. As a result, there is significant variation between states with regard to both the rules governing access to citizenship and its loss (see Vink and Bauböck 2013; Vink 2017).

For access to citizenship, on the one hand we can distinguish between ascriptive membership conceptions, mostly applicable through the acquisition of citizenship at birth, and voluntary membership conceptions, which imply a degree





of openness in terms of individual choice, both regarding acquisition (e.g. through ordinary naturalisation) and loss of citizenship (e.g. through voluntary renunciation of the status). Most states in Europe prioritize descent-based transmission of citizenship but use territorial access to citizenship to prevent what is generally accepted as the undesirable phenomenon of statelessness, as in the case of new-born babies whose descent cannot be established found in the territory of a state (Vink and De Groot 2010; cf. Vink and De Groot 2016). In contrast, other countries – such as most states in the Americas – prioritize territorial access to citizenship but simultaneously maintain rules allowing citizens residing outside the territory of the state to transmit citizenship to their offspring, with varying restrictions. In the sense that citizenship for most people is tied up with the mere fact of being born to citizens or in the territory of the ‘right’ country, there is a strong degree of arbitrariness in the way in which welfare entitlements associated with citizenship are distributed among the world population (Shachar 2009).

In addition to regulations determining citizenship at birth, states also maintain a variety of rules regarding the acquisition of citizenship after birth, such as by ordinary naturalisation or by facilitated naturalisation for the spouses of citizens, persons with a cultural affinity to the political community or refugees. Not only do rules on the *acquisition* of citizenship vary between states but so do rules on the *loss* of citizenship too. Due to limitations of space, I focus here exclusively on rules on the acquisition of citizenship after birth, and in particular provisions related to ordinary naturalisation and facilitated naturalisation for refugees.<sup>7</sup>

7 See <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/modes-of-acquisition> and <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/modes-of-loss> for a comparative database of the existing regulations on the acquisition and loss of citizenship in 77 countries.

## Ordinary naturalisation

Ordinary naturalisation is a mode of acquisition after birth of a citizenship not previously held that requires an application by the person concerned or his or her legal agent. Whereas naturalisation was traditionally conferred with a discretionary act granting citizenship by a public authority, countries in Europe are increasingly adopting laws that provide for the nearly automatic acquisition of citizenship by a person who evidently fulfils the eligibility criteria and is thus *entitled* to such acquisition upon application. However, only 7 of the 28 EU member states currently have such an entitlement to citizenship in their ordinary naturalisation procedures.<sup>8</sup> Hence, in most countries the acquisition of citizenship remains based on a discretionary decision usually made by administrative officials.<sup>9</sup> Such discretion reflects a contractual view of citizenship, where explicit consent is required, both by the person applying for citizenship *and* the community granting it (Orgad 2017).

Apart from the legal uncertainty deriving from discretionary application procedures, a key implication of the contractual view – which seems widely held among the politicians and electorates designing these procedures – is that the way in which the eligibility requirements for naturalisation and other procedural requirements, such as fees, are designed is structurally biased towards the ‘supply side’, i.e. the state ‘supplying’ citizenship.<sup>10</sup> In other words, certainly in the

8 See <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/databases/modes-of-acquisition>, mode A06 [accessed 15 September 2016]. Also see Goodman (2010) for a comparative report on naturalisation policies in Europe.

9 Until recently in Switzerland, some municipalities used referendums to decide on the citizenship applications of foreign residents. Hainmueller and Hangartner (2013), using an original quasi-experimental design, demonstrate that discrimination on the basis of applicants’ origin-country characteristics had a significant impact on naturalisation rates among immigrant groups.

10 A further consequence, which I do not elaborate on here, is that a contractual view implies conditional allegiance by both parties to the contract: ‘allegiance and protection are the quid



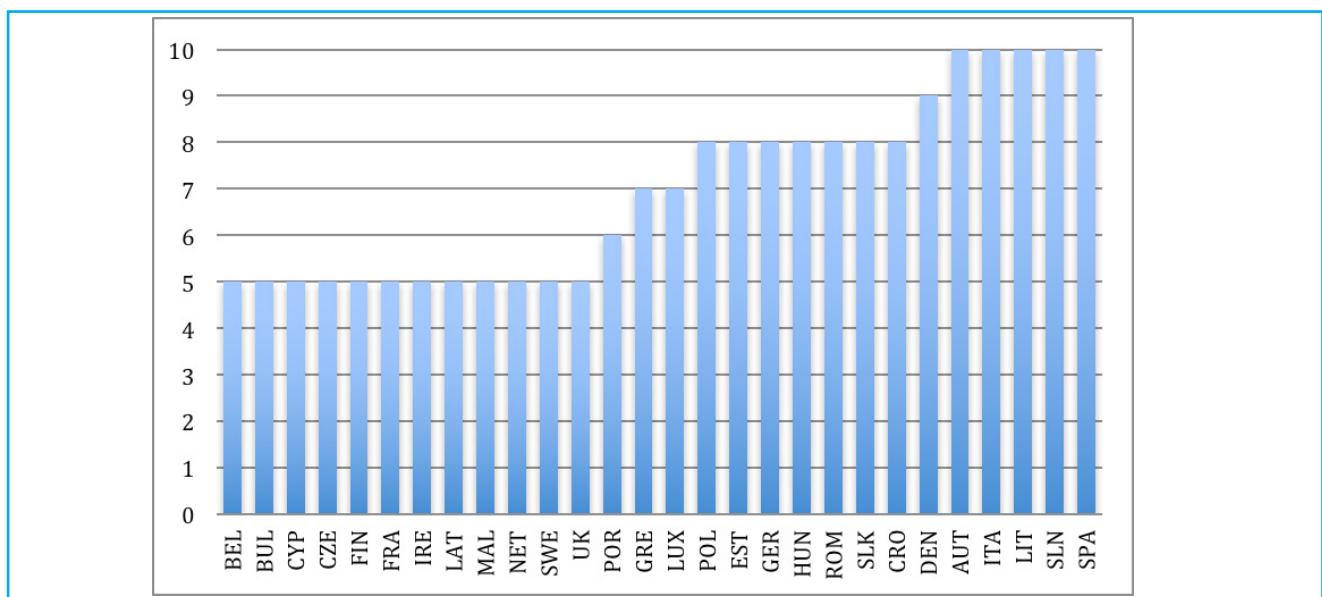
economically most developed states in Europe, naturalisation policies reflect a seller's market where there is much demand but limited supply, and 'buyers' of citizenship are at the mercy of what 'sellers' demand for it.<sup>11</sup> Such asymmetry between the interests of the citizenship-granting state and the citizenship-requesting individual is at odds with the 'citizenship stakeholder' principle, which assumes that the interests of the community and the prospective citizen are mutually constitutive (Bauböck 2017a, 2017b). In this alternative view, naturalisation policies should take into account not just supply-side concerns but also demand-side concerns and provide a pathway to citizenship to newcomers and their children as part of a general concern for democratic inclusion.

.....  
 pro quo of a mutual contract in which each is given in return for the other' (Orgad 2017). The increasing popularity of citizenship deprivation rules can be viewed as a consequence of such a view: certain (criminal and terrorist) acts are seen as violating the citizenship 'contract' and thereby constitute a legitimate ground for ending the contract.

11 The 'citizenship for sale' or 'golden visa' provisions in some countries reflect a different scenario, where states seek to attract economic investment through offering facilitated access to citizenship or residence (Dzankic 2012; Schachar and Bauböck 2014).

The European Convention on Nationality (ECN), signed by 29 states and ratified by 20, provides 'that internal law should contain rules which make it possible for foreigners lawfully and habitually resident in the territory of a State Party to be naturalised' (Article 6, under 3). While the ECN allows considerable discretion for states to 'fix other justifiable conditions for naturalisation, in particular as regards integration' (ECN, Explanatory Report, Article 6, paragraph 3), it does set a maximum period of residence which can be required for naturalisation, namely ten years (before the lodging of an application). When we look at the current residence requirements in all 28 member states of the EU, we see that no state exceeds the maximum of ten years, yet there is considerable variation ranging from the most common requirement of 5 years in 12 countries to a 10-year requirement in Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain (Figure 1). The average residence requirement is 6.8 years.

**Figure 1. Residency requirement for ordinary naturalisation in EU28 (in years)**



Source: [www.eudo-citizenship.eu](http://www.eudo-citizenship.eu) (situation 1 January 2016)\*

\* Additional residence requirements may apply.

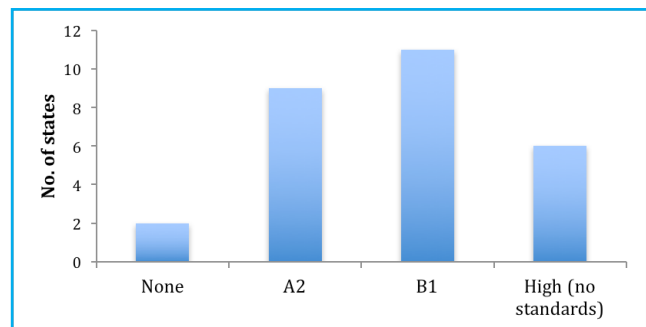
The nominal residence requirements in citizenship laws need to be interpreted with great care, as additional residence requirements often apply, such as a need for the residence period to be uninterrupted or the requirement of a permanent residence, either at the moment of application or even at the moment of starting to count the years of residence (Goodman 2010: 8-9). For example, although in Poland the citizenship law nominally requires 3 years' residence, persons need to be in possession throughout this period of a permanent residence permit or a long-term EU residence permit, for which 5 years' residence are required. Hence the minimum residence requirement for ordinary naturalisation in Poland is 8 years in total. In Portugal, 6 years' legal residence is required, without any need to have permanent residence. In Denmark, by contrast, 9 years' residence is required with a permanent residence permit at the time of application. In Austria, by far the country with the strictest residence requirements, 10 years of continuous residence is required, of which the 5 years immediately before the application must be with a permanent resident permit. In practice, such additional residence requirements can have a significant impact on eligibility for naturalisation.<sup>12</sup>

Access to ordinary naturalisation is also conditioned by the existence of, among other things, a) language requirements, b) so-called integration requirements, c) economic requirements, d) the fees required to start the application procedure, and e) a requirement to renounce one's previous citizenship. Regarding *language requirements*, we find that most EU member states nowadays have a formalized language requirement, either at level A2 ('Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance') or level B1 ('Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure etc.') from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

<sup>12</sup> See EUDO CITIZENSHIP Observatory 2016 for a more detailed measurement of 'citizenship law indicators'.

Some states maintain high, but unstandardized language requirements, as is the case in Hungary, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Spain (MIPEX 2015). Only two countries, Ireland and Sweden, have no formal language requirements at all in the citizenship law (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Language requirements for ordinary naturalisation in EU28**



Source: MIPEX (2015)

While having language skills enables a person to participate in society, for example in the labour market and in political decision-making (e.g. elections), and thus ensures a basis for active citizenship, overly high requirements may also provide a significant barrier to accessing citizenship. The obstacles may relate both to literacy requirements and to the costs associated with acquiring such language skills, as in many states it is up to the immigrant to arrange and finance her or his own language training. According to Goodman (2010), the number of countries with a formal language test increased from six in 1998 to sixteen in 2010.

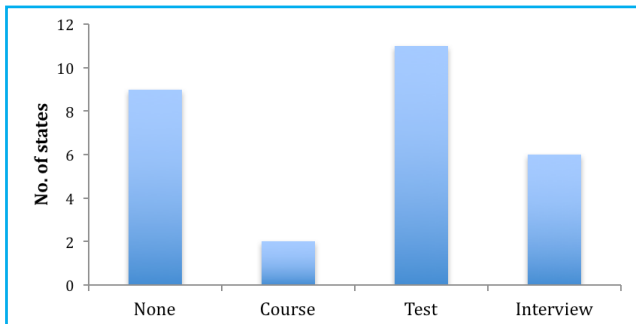
*Integration requirements* also vary significantly between states. Such requirements demand sufficient knowledge of a country's history, political institutions and/or the habits and traditions of its society and are often seen as part of a trend towards 'fortifying citizenship' (Goodman 2012).<sup>13</sup> They may be found either

<sup>13</sup> How to categorise and measure such integration requirements is subject to considerable controversy (Goodman



as requirements for permanent residence or for citizenship, or for both. Whereas the argument for language skills is that they provide an important basis for a migrant's integration within society, requiring migrants to obtain and reproduce such 'civic knowledge' has been much more contested (e.g. Bauböck and Joppke 2010). According to information from MIPEX (2015), in 2015 eleven EU28 states required a formal citizenship test. Two states, Belgium and Luxembourg, only required applicants to have taken an integration course, whereas in six states integration was assessed in an informal interview. Nine states had no formal integration requirement for citizenship acquisition. Barriers to citizenship relate both to intellectual requirements and the costs associated with acquiring sufficient knowledge, as in many states it is up to the immigrant to arrange and finance her or his own training. Only in two countries where there is a formal test (Estonia and Germany) does the state provide sufficient courses. In the other nine countries it is up to the immigrant to arrange this for herself (MIPEX 2015).

**Figure 3. Integration requirements for ordinary naturalisation in EU28**

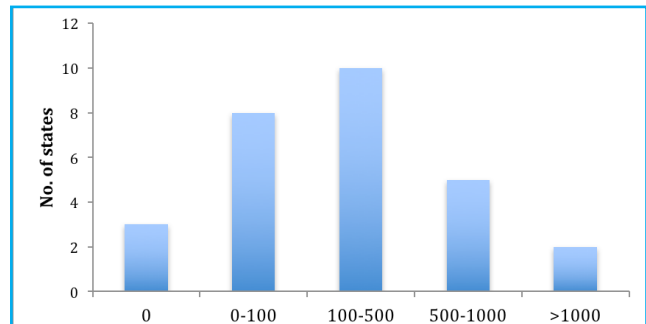


Source: MIPEX (2015)

In terms of *economic requirements*, about half of the EU28 states, mostly in Central and Eastern Europe plus Austria, Denmark and Italy, require applicants to demonstrate that they have a stable  
 .....  
 2010; Michalowski and Van Oers 2012).

and sufficient source of income, or some similar type of requirement. Other states, such as the Netherlands and the UK, do not have such income requirements but instead require applicants to pay a considerable *fee*. In the Netherlands, a single application for naturalisation costs €855 and an application for a family of two parents and two children would amount to €1343. Note that these fees are to be paid irrespective of the outcome of the application and do not include additional costs for language training and civics courses.<sup>14</sup> In the UK, the fee for ordinary naturalisation is £1236 for each adult applicant and £936 for each child under the age of 18 (plus an additional £80 to cover the ceremony fee if the child turns 18 during the application process).<sup>15</sup> According to MIPEX (2015), the average fee in the EU28 is around €250 per person, yet there is considerable variation. Only in 11 states are the application costs below €100 per person, whereas in 17 other states the fees exceed €100. In two states (Austria and the UK) they even amount to more than €1000 per person. This makes naturalisation prohibitively costly.

**Figure 4. Fees (in euros) for ordinary naturalisation in EU28**



Source: MIPEX (2015)

Additional procedural requirements may still discourage immigrants from applying or may lead  
 .....  
 14 See <https://ind.nl/EN/individuals/dutch-citizenship/costs-income-requirements> [accessed 26 January 2017].  
 15 See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fees-for-citizenship-applications> [accessed 17 September 2016].

to rejections for those who do apply. For example, in the Netherlands the Research Department of the Ministry of Security and Justice recently investigated why so few migrants whose asylum applications had been rejected but who had been granted regular residence status as part of an extraordinary regularization in 2007 had submitted an application for naturalisation (only around 30% have naturalised). Not being in possession of the right documents from the country of origin was indicated as by far the main obstacle for the respondents to a survey (71% indicated they did not have the appropriate documents, even though nearly all said they had tried to obtain them). Whereas recognized refugees are exempted from such identity requirements, as they cannot be expected to return to the country from which they have fled, these ‘regularized migrants’ had to meet the regular identity requirements, even though many cite opposition from authorities, difficulties traveling to the country of origin and the high costs involved in trying to obtain the proper paperwork as the main problems they encounter. Under current regulations in the Netherlands it is difficult to prove that one cannot get the documents needed and exceptions are rarely made (WODC 2015).

Finally, whereas most states in the EU (and Denmark as one of the most recent to do so in 2015) have now removed the somewhat outdated provision of asking a naturalising immigrant to renounce her or his previous citizenship, there are still eight states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia) that maintain such a renunciation requirement.

### *Facilitated naturalisation for refugees*

The 1951 Refugee Convention requires that ‘Contracting States shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalisation of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to

expedite naturalization proceedings and to reduce as far as possible the charges and costs of such proceedings’ (Article 34). In his commentary on the Convention, Grahl-Madsen (1963) emphasizes that ‘[n]aturalization in a country of refuge is one of the possibilities for putting an end to a person’s refugee character’ (comment 1 on Article 34).

What is meant in Article 34 is in fact the laying of foundations, or stepping stones, so that the refugee may familiarize himself with the language, customs and way of life of the nation among whom he lives, so that he – without any feeling of coercion – may be more readily integrated in the economic, social and cultural life of his country of refuge.

Language courses, vocational adaptation courses, lectures on national institutions and social pattern, and above all stimulation of social contacts between refugees and the indigenous population, are but some of the means which may be employed for the purpose.

By facilitating “assimilation” the Contracting State is to a certain extent also facilitating the naturalisation of refugees: In the sense the word is used in Article 34, “assimilation” is “an apt description of a certain stage in the development of the life of the refugee and of the general refugee problem”; indeed it “clearly corresponded to the conditions the refugee should fulfil in order to qualify for naturalisation” (*ibid.*, comment 3).

Naturalisation may be facilitated in a number of ways, for example by a ‘less rigid implementation of financial criteria’, by waiving the requirement to be released from one’s former citizenship, or by a shorter residence requirement. Grahl-Madsen argues that Article 34 of the Convention requires fair treatment of refugees, but no better treatment than that accorded to other aliens if that treatment is a favourable one (*ibid.*, comment 4).

A comparable requirement to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship for ‘recognised refugees’ can be found in the ECN (Art. 6, under 4(g)). The





Explanatory Report clarifies this obligation as follows:

In order to comply with this paragraph, it is sufficient for a State Party to ensure favourable conditions for the acquisition of nationality for the persons belonging to each of the categories of persons listed in the sub-paragraphs. Examples include a reduction of the length of required residence, less stringent language requirements, an easier procedure and lower procedural fees. States Parties still retain their discretion to decide whether to grant their nationality to such applicants. Where the generally required conditions are already very favourable (for example a short period of residence for all applicants for naturalisation), such States are not required to take additional measures (Explanatory Report to the ECN, Art. 6, paragraph 4, consideration 52).

Looking at the existing regulations in EU member states, it is remarkable that eight states have no specific provisions related to refugees. In other states, facilitation is minimal. In the Netherlands, the only facilitation mentioned in the law itself is a waiver of the requirement to renounce one's previous citizenship (additionally, the naturalisation fee is lowered from €840 to €625). In Denmark, the residence requirement is lowered from 9 to 8 years. Overall, whereas the average number of years of residence required for ordinary naturalisation in the EU28 is 7 years, for refugees it is 4.5 years. While this amounts to a considerable facilitation, in 7 member states the residence requirement for naturalisation by refugees is still six years or more. One state (Lithuania) requires the same extraordinary length of time (10 years) for both ordinary naturalisation and that of refugees. Such requirements clearly violate what the UNHCR considers best practice 'in order to restore an effective nationality to refugees

and to enable their full integration into society', namely a residency requirement not exceeding five years (UNHCR 2009: 3). UNHCR is also concerned that time spent by refugees prior to determination of their application does not "slow down refugees' route to citizenship" (*ibid.*). In Ireland, discretionary exemption from residence and other requirements is possible and in practice refugees are exempted from income requirements, yet time spent in the country as an asylum seeker is not reckonable for the purpose of making an application, according to a High Court judgment (Becker and Cosgrave 2013: 4).

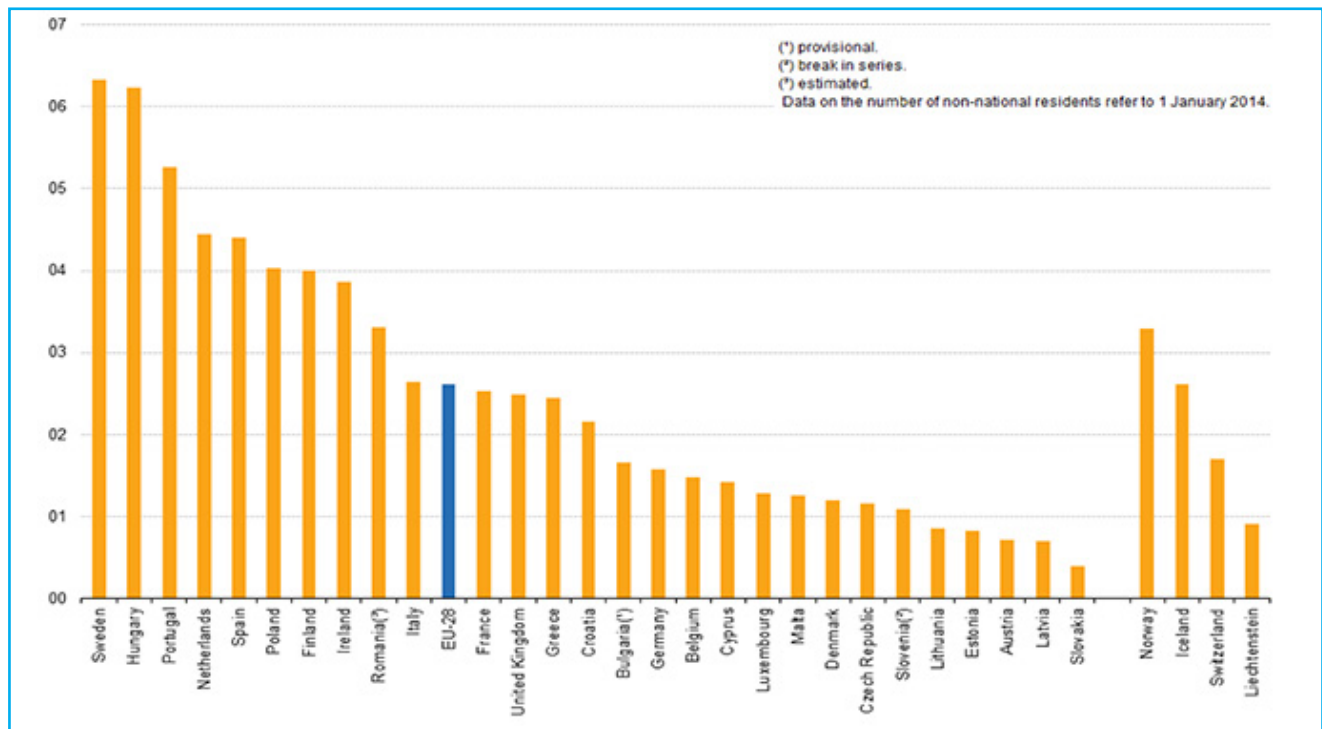
## 4. Acquisition of Citizenship

So what do we know about how many migrants acquire citizenship in the EU? Overall, based on statistics reported by the member states, we know that on average around 850,000 persons a year acquired the citizenship of one of the EU28 member states between 2009 and 2014 (Eurostat 2016).

In a population of over 500 million inhabitants, that number is not very significant (around 0.17 percent). Even when looking at the citizenship acquisition rate among the resident foreign population (a standard measure of the relative societal impact of the number of naturalisations), only 2.6 in a hundred resident non-nationals were granted citizenship in one of the EU's member states in 2014 (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Annual rate of acquisition of citizenship per 100 resident foreigners, 2014



Source: Eurostat (2016: Figure 5)

\* These numbers may include naturalisations both by persons resident in the territory of a state and by persons resident abroad.

More meaningful estimates of citizenship acquisition rates among the foreign-born population are available based on micro-data from comparative surveys. For example, on the basis of data from the 2008 Labour Force Survey Ad Hoc Module on the labour market situation of migrants and their descendants in the EU15, we find that an average of only 19% of the immigrant population had acquired citizenship after 10 years of residence (Table 1). Nevertheless, there is significant variation, with up to 60% of the immigrant population having naturalised in Sweden but only 2% in Luxembourg. After twenty years of residence the average acquisition rate increased to 45% (and 85% in Sweden). Among the population resident longer than 20 years, on average 63% had naturalised in the EU15. While this is a significant percentage, it still means that there was a group of nearly 40% of immigrants (and 80% in Luxembourg) who had not naturalised after residing over 20 years in a country.

Table 1. Cumulative rate of acquisition of citizenship among foreign-born population in EU15 (per cohort of years of residence), in %, 2008

	Years of residence		
	6 to 10	11 to 19	20+
AUSTRIA	18.90	41.60	62.76
BELGIUM	24.07	50.40	55.52
DENMARK	14.36	52.13	61.86
FRANCE	18.54	36.91	60.55
GERMANY	28.72	56.97	46.38
GREECE	7.57	25.61	56.77
IRELAND	12.01	32.78	56.44
ITALY	7.98	17.66	60.19
LUXEMBOURG	2.05	8.22	19.61
NETHERLANDS	36.70	70.22	80.23
PORTUGAL	3.93	31.45	58.55
SPAIN	13.26	31.77	54.46
SWEDEN	60.94	85.40	79.18
UK	26.30	51.70	66.51
Mean	18.81	45.40	62.70

Source: Vink and Prokic-Breuer (2012)\*

\* Data from LFS Ad Hoc Module 2008. No data available for Finland

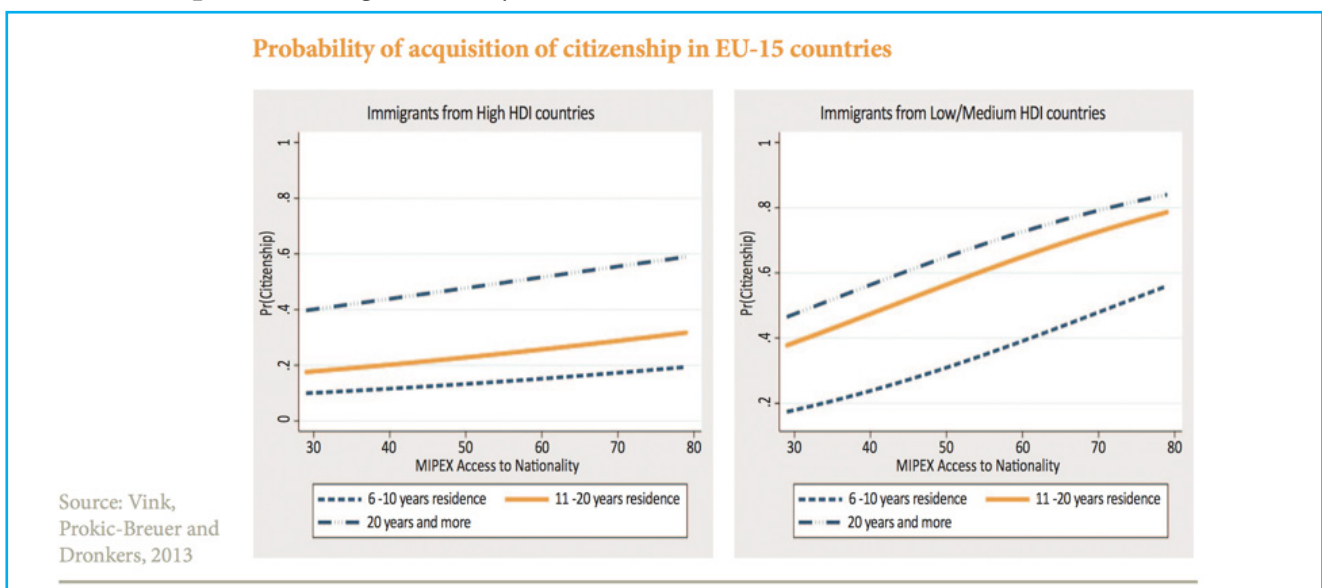
Analysing micro-level survey data also allows a better understanding of the relevance of individual-, origin country- and context-level factors to the acquisition of citizenship by migrants. The following paragraphs summarize the results of a comparative study by Vink, Prokic-Breuer and Dronkers (2013) on the effects of citizenship policies in European countries on the propensity to naturalise, taking into account not only characteristics of individuals, but also their origin country features. In particular, the study looked at the relevance of destination country policies *in the context of origin country features*, such as the level of development of the origin country, and dual citizenship policies. The study was based on a sample of 7,489 foreign-born residents in 16 European countries collected by the European Social Survey. The study was innovative because where any comparative research had been done on the effects of destination country policies the conclusion had been that indeed ‘policy matters’ (Bloemraad 2002; Reichel 2011; Dronkers and Vink 2012) but few scholars had investigated the question of *to whom* citizenship policy matters most (if at all).

Vink *et al* (2013) first look at typical factors, such as origin country and individual-level variables. The level of human development of countries

of origin accounts for much of the difference among the propensity of immigrants to naturalise. Immigrants in Europe coming from medium and under-developed countries are on average 2.5 times more likely to have citizenship than those originating from highly developed countries, including EU member states and other OECD countries. These findings are in line with the literature and can be understood in terms of the perceived payoff attached to citizenship (Jasso and Rosenzweig 1986: 303; Bueker 2005; Logan et al. 2012). Acquiring destination-country citizenship has a much higher potential pay-off for immigrants originating from low-income countries than for those coming from developed and more prosperous societies.

Crucially, because large differences exist between immigrants in their motivation to naturalise, Vink *et al* (2013) show that the impact of citizenship policies varies for the above two groups (Figure 6). As discussed previously, the legal frameworks set by the citizenship laws in destination countries account for different naturalisation rates, but only for immigrants from less developed countries. In fact, not only are these immigrants twice as likely to naturalise in countries with very open citizenship policies, but they are also the ones particularly affected by these policies.

**Figure 6. The relation between citizenship policies and immigrant naturalisation rates, EU15 (by level of development of origin country)\***



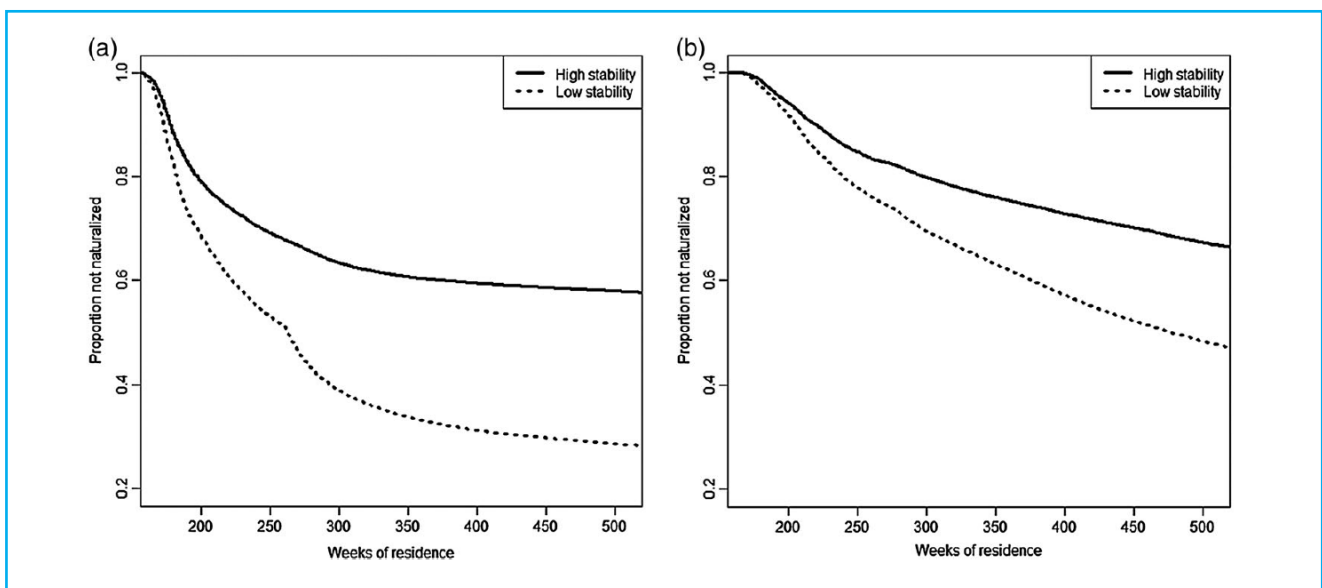
\* HDI = Human Development Index

Vink *et al* (2013) demonstrate the relevance of policy by introducing an indicator that captures the openness of citizenship policy in the destination countries for first-generation immigrants with regard to residency and integration requirements for naturalisation (MIPEX Access to Nationality). They observe that an increase of 1 unit on the MIPEX scale leads to a 2.4 percent increase in the likelihood of having destination country citizenship. However, only in the case of immigrants from under-developed countries do they observe a sharp increase in citizenship take-up rates. In other words, immigrants who are highly motivated to naturalise, in particular refugees or migrants from politically unstable countries more generally, are especially strongly affected by restrictive access to citizenship. For immigrants from highly developed and politically stable countries the positive relation between citizenship policy and naturalisation rates is weaker and not significant.

and Hans Schmeets, we analysed population register data from the Netherlands for the period since 1995. In this analysis, we looked at foreign-born residents in the Netherlands and included statistical controls for the country of origin and the individual characteristics of immigrants (Peters *et al*, 2016a). We found that a restriction of the Dutch citizenship law in April 2003 had a significantly negative impact on immigrant naturalisation rates. Among immigrants who arrived in the Netherlands in 1995, 1996 or 1997 on average 58 per cent were naturalised after 10 years. However, among the cohorts from 2000, 2001 and 2002, only 42 per cent were naturalised after a similar period. These differences are even greater if you look at the groups who are most in need of citizenship, such as immigrants from less developed countries or those from politically unstable countries (Figure 7).

We compared immigrants from cohorts that could

**Figure 7. Cumulative acquisition rates (proportions not naturalised or foreign) among migrant cohorts 1995-1997 (a) and 2000-2002 (b), by political stability of origin country, in the Netherlands**



Source: Peters *et al* (2016), Figure A1

We find a similar differentiated impact of citizenship laws on naturalisation rates when looking in more detail at longitudinal data from the Netherlands. In research with Floris Peters

still naturalise under the pre-2003 legislation and those who could only do so under the stricter 2003 law. We found that for immigrants from politically stable countries the propensity to

naturalise is virtually the same for the pre- and post-2003 cohorts. However, for immigrants from politically unstable countries the difference is significant: immigrants from cohorts that fall under the stricter 2003 legislation naturalise later *and* less often. In other words, we see that policy does matter, especially for those immigrants who are most interested in acquiring the citizenship of the country in which they live. It is not just that under the 2003 law these immigrants postpone naturalisation, but they seem to be put off altogether. As a result of the demotivating effect of the restrictive measures, we expect that the still high cumulative naturalisation rates measured in the Netherlands in 2008 (Table 1) will gradually decrease over time.

## 5. Pathways to Citizenship and Socio-Economic Integration

In this section I provide some brief evidence from ongoing research with Peters and Schmeets on the relationship between citizenship acquisition and socio-economic outcomes, in particular having paid employment, among migrants in the Netherlands.

### *Anticipating citizenship (Peters et al, 2016b)*

Can citizenship improve the economic integration of immigrants? In this paper we develop the argument that migrants anticipate the rewards of citizenship by investing in their human capital development, such as by acquiring language skills. In line with a life-course approach to immigrant naturalisation (Peters and Vink 2016), we hypothesize that this anticipation mechanism is reflected in improved labour market outcomes, not so much – or certainly not only – after naturalisation, as assumed in most of the literature, but already *before* the acquisition of citizenship.

To test this argument, we use micro-level register data from Statistics Netherlands from 1999 to 2011 (N = 94,320). To analyse these data in

further detail, and in line with contemporary studies in the literature, we use individual fixed-effects regression methodology (Bratsberg et al. 2002; Helgertz et al. 2014; Steinhardt 2012). The main reason for this approach is that it addresses the potential bias resulting from self-selection inherent in the naturalisation process by controlling for differences between individuals in terms of unmeasured characteristics.

The results show that immigrants who naturalise enjoy a one-off boost in the probability of paid employment after citizenship acquisition, constituting an increase of 12 and 13 percent for men and women respectively, everything else remaining constant. However, consistent with the notion of anticipation, their labour market performance already improves before the year of naturalisation and we observe a steep increase in the probability of having paid employment as migrants approach the moment of naturalisation. Labour market performance peaks in the year of naturalisation for male immigrants, and the year after naturalisation for female immigrants. At that point, both male and female immigrants are more than twice as likely to have paid employment compared to more than three years prior to naturalisation. This confirms that naturalisation is attractive to immigrants who struggle in the labour market.

These findings contrast with the traditional causal theory of the citizenship premium in the literature, where positive labour market outcomes are assumed to be the direct result of citizenship acquisition (OECD 2011; Helgertz et al. 2014: 344). The increase observed in the probability of having paid employment in the period leading up to the moment of naturalisation shows that immigrants anticipate the reward of citizenship and that employers recognize and respond to the developing skills of potential workers, rather than citizenship acquisition itself. As such, naturalised immigrants enjoy an accelerated integration process rather than a sustained long-term advantage in the labour market.





*The faster, the better (Vink et al, 2016)*

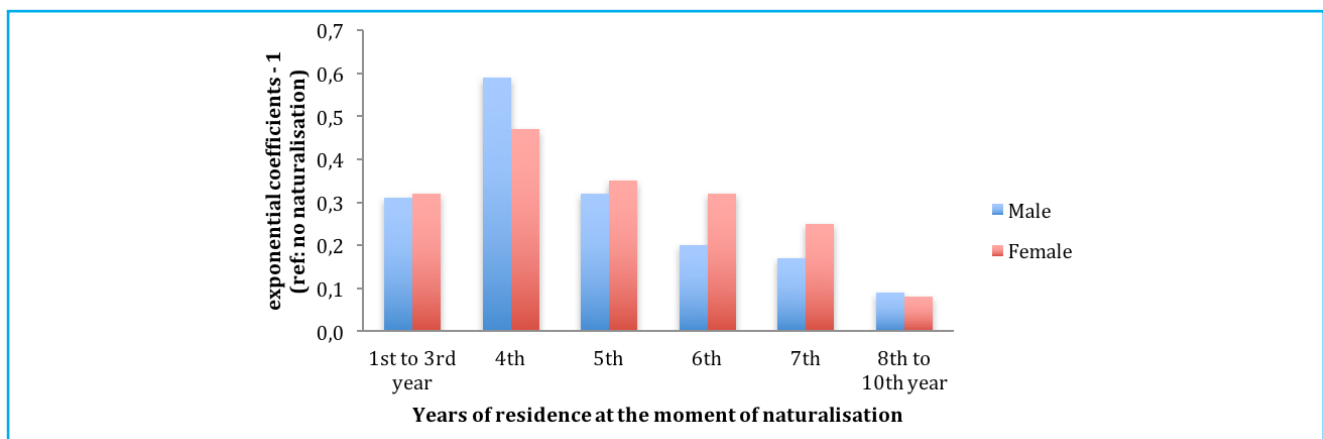
In a second paper, we argue that the potential positive impact of citizenship acquisition on labour market outcomes is conditioned by the *trajectory* into the acquisition of this legal status, and we test the hypothesis that the longer the waiting period the smaller the impact of citizenship (cf. Bevelander and DeVoretz 2014). In line with a life-course perspective on naturalisation, the idea behind this hypothesis is that acquisition of citizenship no longer positively affects the labour market outcome after an immigrant has already resided in the destination country for a significant period. This is not to say that citizenship will not have specific benefits at that stage (e.g. it will offer more flexible mobility and may facilitate return migration) but we would not expect it to affect a migrant’s human capital development in the way that it would if the migrant naturalised after just a few years of residence (when it may encourage a fast-track integration trajectory through anticipation mechanisms, as demonstrated above).

To test this argument, we use micro-level register data from Statistics Netherlands from 1999 to 2011 (N = 197,245) and apply a logistic regression method to analyse the probability of having paid employment. We include a 1-year lagged dependent variable in the module to control for otherwise unobserved personal characteristics.

We show that the positive impact of citizenship is especially visible in the early years of residence in the new country, but that after seven years the rewards diminish significantly (Figure 8). Migrants who naturalise within ten years of having arrived in the Netherlands have a higher propensity to have paid employment. However, this propensity is significantly higher when migrants naturalise relatively early on, especially in the fourth year after arrival (59 per cent for men; 47 per cent for women).<sup>16</sup> However, men who naturalise after five years of residence in the Netherlands (thus in the sixth year) still have a 20 per cent higher chance of having paid work compared to those migrants who do not naturalise at all; among women this propensity is even 32 per cent higher. From the eighth year of residence, naturalisation has a much lower impact (9 and 8 per cent for men and women respectively). From this perspective, there is no empirical evidence to support the current legislative proposal (approved by the Lower House, pending discussion in the Senate) to increase the residence requirement from five to seven years (or even to ten years, as some parties are proposing in their current electoral manifestos). These findings chime with evidence from Hainmueller et al (2016), who find that lengthy asylum processes

<sup>16</sup> Under Dutch legislation, these will be migrants with a Dutch partner, who are allowed to naturalise after 3 years of marriage or civil partnership. We include a statistical control for having a Dutch partner, either foreign-born or native-born, which has an independent significant positive impact on having paid employment.

**Figure 8. Relative propensity of paid employment among naturalised immigrants in the Netherlands, cohorts 1999-2002, by years of residence at the moment of naturalisation**



Source: Vink et al (2016)

Graph based on analyses controlling for years of residence, age at migration, partner status (foreign partner, foreign-born Dutch, native-born Dutch, no partner), having young children in the household, country of origin (EU vs. third country) and a 1-year lagged dependent variable.

decrease employment among refugees. For newly arriving refugees, what matters for their societal integration (through employment) is thus a clear pathway toward inclusion, both through a speedy asylum determination procedure and an accessible trajectory towards citizenship.

## 6. Concluding reflections

How can these findings inform targeted policy decisions aimed at maximizing the settlement success of immigrants and their children? Both the studies discussed in the previous section illustrate that citizenship status relates significantly to integration outcomes for immigrants, in this case with regard to paid employment, but that we should start thinking about the relevance of legal status beyond seeing it as some kind of ‘magical device’ that may provide struggling migrants with, e.g., better access to the labour market. Migrants actively plan their lives and anticipate the potential rewards and opportunities of naturalisation by investing in their own futures. However, approaching citizenship as a ‘reward for integration’, as is often heard in political circles, from this perspective is a self-defeating prophecy, as integration is not a clearly defined end-state but rather a process, and making citizenship conditional on ever-stricter criteria makes ‘becoming more accepted in society’ an elusive ambition instead of a realistic goal.

Analysing how and under which conditions status transitions affect migrant life-course trajectories allows us to better inform policymakers on the outcomes of immigrant naturalisation policies. These policies have been characterised by two developments over the past three decades: on the one hand, citizenship has become increasingly instrumentalised as part of a broader immigrant integration agenda; on the other hand, these policies have also become increasingly politicised (Vink and De Groot 2010). These two trends clearly have contradictory effects in terms of whether they make citizenship more or less accessible to migrants and their offspring.

While researchers have provided significant input for evidence-based policy-making in this domain, in Europe (OECD 2011) existing research does not facilitate informing decision-makers for two main reasons. First and foremost, by focusing research on the binary question of *whether* citizenship matters for immigrants, the literature overlooks significant heterogeneity and misses out on identifying *why*, *under which conditions* and *to whom* citizenship matters. In other words, whereas heterogeneous outcomes are often seen as undermining the overall significance of citizenship for immigrants, scholars should recognize and communicate to policymakers that what matters is the pathway into citizenship, not just the acquisition of the status as such. Researchers should also invest further efforts not just in sophisticated methodological strategies to deal with ‘the causality problem’ in citizenship and integration, but also in theoretical models that allow us to hypothesize these differential pathways in a broad range of life-course domains. The examples presented in Section 5 illustrate such an approach in the most commonly investigated domain, of labour market integration, but as was outlined in the literature review in Section 2, these models can and need to be applied in other fields too.

Second, partly driven by the high demand for longitudinal data, the most advanced research in the field focuses on single countries or at best includes limited comparisons. As a result, existing research does not facilitate drawing conclusions on the question most relevant to policymakers, that of the variable impact of policies on naturalisation outcomes. This is partly because suitable longitudinal data are scarcely available (although data derived from population registers as in the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries provide a promising starting point) or are under-used (intra-country variation over time is not currently optimally utilised to analyse the impact of policy changes). Moreover, whereas much of the research focuses on the symbolically – and arguably in practice – most relevant legal status



transition, i.e. that towards citizenship, there is much less evidence on the relevance of other types of legal status transitions, such as from asylum seeker to recognized refugee, or from 'dead-end' statuses only offering temporary protection to being an immigrant with permanent residence and eventually a citizen of the host country. Again, this is partly a reflection on the available data (e.g. in surveys and population registers information on citizenship status is often included, yet information on other types of statuses is mostly lacking). Whereas increasingly better comparable data exist on citizenship and integration policies, how such policies affect the relevant outcomes still leaves much to be investigated.



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# CITIZENSHIP, DIVERSITY AND MOBILITY

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Maarten Vink's paper clearly illustrates how a new methodological approach to an old question can produce new insights. Vink's longitudinal 'life course perspective' and his combination of information from different sources allow him to go beyond the old debate about the causal relationship between naturalisation and integration resulting from the more limited data used in the traditional binary approach to this issue. His research also produces results that are highly relevant in the current political debate in several EU Member States. I mention two examples. His findings that the labour market participation of migrants peaks before and not after naturalisation is highly relevant in the debate in states where politicians propose extending the residence requirement for naturalisation. In the Netherlands, a bill is pending in the Senate which would extend the current five-year residence requirement (in place since 1892) to seven years. In its electoral programme for the March 2017 parliamentary elections, the largest current government party (VVD) announced plans for a further extension to ten years. The justification for these proposals is that they would support immigrant integration. The results from Vink's research illustrate that the extension would have negative effects on the labour market participation of those immigrants who are most interested in acquiring citizenship. Moreover, his paper makes it clear that five to ten years after their arrival considerable numbers of refugees are still living in the country of refuge, however much both they and the receiving societies would prefer an early return to their countries of origin.

My first question is whether by presenting aggregate data the author does not underestimate the diversity within the population researched. The migrant population in his data is composed of refugees, nationals of other EU member states, spouses of nationals, economic migrants and in some cases co-ethnics. The differences within and between these categories remain invisible in aggregate quantitative data. For instance, the data presented in Figure 8 of Vink's paper result from widely different behaviours between refugees and nationals from other EU member states, the former category having high naturalisation rates and the latter generally having much lower rates. Vink points to the large differences in the perceived payoff from naturalisation between the different immigrant groups. However, within certain groups the payoffs and the actual naturalisation practice also vary considerably. In the Netherlands, the naturalisation rates of nationals of southern and eastern Member States are far higher than among EU nationals from the northern and the neighbouring Member States.

Second, I doubt whether naturalisation generally reflects a deliberate choice by the migrant to remain and integrate in the society of his country of residence. In his introduction, Vink presents naturalisation as "a deliberate choice by immigrants to link their future with that of the host country." This image often dominates the political and public debate. It may be true for the majority of applicants, at least at the time of naturalisation, but the reality is more diverse. The paper mentions out-migration *after* naturalisation. Recent data on the Netherlands give a first impression of the size and diversity of that out-migration. In 2009-2013 a total of 44,000 persons originating from nine refugee-producing countries were naturalised. Within two years of their naturalisation 14% of these new Dutch nationals left the Netherlands. Some returned to their countries of origin, while others migrated to other EU Member States. Within two years of their naturalisation almost 40%



of the naturalised former-refugees from Bosnia, Iran, Iraq and Sudan returned to their countries of origin. Among former refugees from Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Somalia the return rate was considerably lower (below 10%). The former refugees, who used the right to free movement within the EU attached to their new nationality, migrated from the Netherlands primarily to the UK (40%), to Belgium (9%) and to Germany (7%). More than half of the 6,000 new Dutch nationals who left the Netherlands within two years moved to these three EU Member States.<sup>1</sup> Naturalisation enhances the mobility of new nationals, both to their countries of origin and within the EU.

Apparently, refugees' acquisition of the nationality of their country of refuge enables their return to the country of origin, because it reduces the risks in returning through the protection attached to the new nationality. It also grants the right to come back to the country of the new nationality if the country of origin turns out to not yet be safe or the prospects of successful re-integration in that country is not yet positive. From anthropological research, it appears that out-migration to other EU Member States may be triggered by various factors: better labour market chances (perceived or real), easier access to self-employment in the UK, the presence of family members, or a larger and stronger community of co-ethnics.<sup>2</sup> Naturalisation may be a liberalisation for those asylum seekers who did not intend to migrate to the Netherlands but were trapped in the Dublin system. In these cases, naturalisation functions as a correction to that system, which almost completely disregards the well-founded wishes of persons seeking protection to go to a specific country in Europe.

These data indicate that it may be promising to

1 Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Migatiegedrag van personen met een specifieke herkomst die in de periode 2006-2013 de Nederlandse nationaliteit hebben verkregen, [www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl), visited 27 September 2016, and B. Meindersma, Deel vluchtelingen wacht op paspoort en vertrekt weer snel, <http://nos.nl/artikel/2134178>.

2 Jill Ahrens, Melissa Kelly, Melissa and Ilse van Liempt, (2014) *Free movement? The onward migration of EU citizens born in Somalia, Iran and Nigeria, Population, Space and Place*. ISSN 1544-8444.

extend the life course perspective with a focus on the labour market position of new nationals who left the country during the first few years after their naturalisation. Moreover, information from longitudinal quantitative data should be combined with the results of empirical research focussing on the migrant perspective, rather than on the state perspective that is implicit in the data collected by government bodies.

In order to explain the naturalisation patterns of immigrants, Vink's paper looks both at variables in the country of residence and in the country of origin. With regard to the latter variables, the focus is on the political stability and the stage of economic development. But I would suggest that nationality law and practice in the country of origin may be another relevant variable explaining the inclination of immigrants to apply for naturalisation. In the 1970s and 1980s the Dutch rule requiring immigrants who could renounce their first nationality to do so had the effect that Moroccan immigrants applied for naturalisation because they could not renounce their nationality and thus were not obliged to do so, whilst immigrants from Turkey rarely applied because under the Turkish nationality law they could renounce that nationality and were therefore required to do so according to Dutch nationality law. The difference between the naturalisation practices of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants became even more pronounced when in special broadcasts directed at Moroccan immigrants the head of the naturalisation department of the Ministry of Justice explicitly stated that acquiring Dutch nationality did not imply that applicants had to abandon their religion. Only after the renunciation requirement was de facto abolished in the 1990s did large numbers of Turkish immigrants start to apply for naturalisation, causing a peak in the Dutch naturalisation statistics in 1996. Naturalisation practice thus often results from the interplay between the nationality rules of the two countries concerned.





In the final part of Vink's paper it is rightly suggested that much research focuses on the effect on immigrant integration of transition towards citizenship and less so on other types of legal status transition, such as from asylum seeker to recognised refugee or from temporary migrant to migrant with permanent status. I would suggest that the latter status transition is the most promising focus for future empirical research. The many legal barriers to integration attached to the status of asylum seekers (limited access to the labour market, to language courses and to family reunification) and their relatively short length of residence in the country of refuge will make it hard to identify the effects of granting the stronger status that, on paper, allows free access to the labour market. Empirical research on the transition from temporary to permanent residence status will offer a better possibility of identifying the effects of status transition on integration. Moreover, it will allow testing of the hypothesis that the transition towards citizenship "arguably in practice [is the] most relevant legal status transition." Here, I repeat my plea for longitudinal quantitative research to be combined with qualitative research focussing on the immigrant's perspective.<sup>3</sup> When the focus of research is on the effects of transition from one legal status to another, we should not forget that a stronger legal status does not always result in a better social position. In her interesting comparative study of different groups of Polish immigrants in the Netherlands, Cathelijne Pool found that before Poland's EU membership immigrants with both Polish and German nationalities, who due to their status as EU citizens had the strongest legal status, nevertheless in practice had a clearly less secure labour market and social integration position due to their lack of knowledge of a language that was understood by the majority population (English

3 Jill Ahrens, *Suspended in Eurocrisis: new immobilities and semi-legal migrations amongst Nigerians living in Spain*, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* (22) 2013 22, pp. 115-140. ISSN 1016-3476.

or German)<sup>4</sup>, their reliance on family contacts and their dependency on private employment agencies.<sup>5</sup> Legal status is only one among many variables influencing the integration of immigrants.

4 For a long time Poles with German ancestry living in Poland could acquire German nationality without being proficient in the German language.

5 Cathelijne Pool, *Migration van Polen naar Nederland in een tijd van versoepeling van migratieregels*, Nijmegen 2011 (Boom Juridische Uitgevers).



# TOWARDS A LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE ON NATURALISATION FOR REFUGEES

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According to the life course perspective on nationality acquisition developed by Maarten Vink, naturalisation rates can be understood as the outcome of interactions between national citizenship legislation on the one hand and individual decision-making based on a person's life course on the other. Drawing on Elder's (1974) sociological life-course paradigm, Floris Peters and Maarten Vink (2016: 368) explain that "trajectories are periods of time in life domains or institutions, such as education, work or health, in which transitions are embedded." And "since migration and integration are life-course processes, the act of citizenship acquisition can be perceived as an important transition – from non-citizen to citizen – within this trajectory". The precise shape of these trajectories, they argue, is influenced by "societal institutions, such as educational and occupational systems" (Peters and Vink 2016: 367). Thus, the researcher's first task when trying to predict citizenship acquisition should be to identify the different life course trajectories that a particular individual is engaged in or has concluded. As Peters and Vink (2016: 367) argue, "The key assumption here is that there is a temporal dynamic to life events, where past experiences and resources, as well as opportunities and ambitions for the future, promote or stifle certain choices and developments." Thus, a person's citizenship acquisition may be more likely in some moments of the life course than in others. The

researcher will have to identify these particular moments where citizenship acquisition could become a relevant transition within a trajectory, while also dealing with less predictable "turning points" in life and its social character, captured in the notion of "linked lives" (Peters and Vink 2016: 368). Thus, the life course approach to citizenship acquisition is able to relate the influence of nation-specific institutions to individual decision-making that takes into account changes in the individual's life over time (Peters and Vink 2016: 365).

In what follows, I will start to think through a life course perspective on the specificities of citizenship acquisition by refugees. On average, refugees differ from most other migrants in terms of their higher naturalisation rates (e.g. for Germany, see Statistisches Bundesamt 2016). The most obvious explanation – which does not adopt a life course perspective but rather a utility perspective, as Peters and Vink (2016: 363) name it – is that refugees' citizenship of origin is of little value. For example, it may be of little value for travelling to the country of origin, where the receiving country's passport may be the safer choice (only, of course, if the origin country respects the rule of law). For refugees who oppose the political regime in their home country, acquiring a new passport and thus devaluing their origin country citizenship may also be an act of political expression. Moreover, in slightly more abstract terms, origin citizenship may have less value for refugees because they have fewer hopes of ever returning to their home country than other groups of immigrants. Whether these hopes are low or almost non-existent certainly depends on the individual, but it may also depend on the situation in the country of origin, and specifically on whether this country is involved in an international conflict, is undergoing a long civil war, or has had an abrupt and successful change of political regime. Hopes of returning may also depend on the position that a particular group of refugees has on a conflict. For example, attitudes may differ between those



fleeing from a successful regime change (e.g. the Iranian Revolution, or the unification of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam) and those fleeing a civil war but harbouring at least some sympathy for the independence movement (which may have been the case for some Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka). Hope of returning might also vary as a function of the length and stage of the conflict in the country of origin. However – and this is where Peters and Vink's perspective comes in – if hope for return materializes too late in the refugee's life course in the receiving country, the refugee may decide to settle and acquire citizenship even if the situation in the country of origin improves.

Generally speaking, and despite the fact that naturalisation rates may vary across groups of refugees as a function of these origin-country-related differences (different countries, or same country at different moments in a conflict), the generally witnessed phenomenon is that refugees are more likely than many other groups to acquire host country citizenship. Given the above, this is logical but it is also surprising if we consider that citizenship acquisition is a somewhat demanding process. Thus, the structural motivation for refugees to acquire citizenship must be so much higher than that of other migrants that they are more likely to start and finish the naturalisation process even though they may have fewer resources at hand.

Going through the procedure of citizenship acquisition may be more cumbersome for refugees, first because the life course of refugees is likely to be more disordered than that of many other individuals. Refugees often come from countries where the state does not function well and does not provide an infrastructure that institutionalizes educational and professional trajectories. If refugees have engaged in educational and professional trajectories, these are usually interrupted by their flight. Without much doubt, the flight and the events that force an individual to leave his or her country can be classified as a

turning point after which an individual's life has to be thought through and rationalized anew. This reorientation of one's life can be a long and difficult process, and can be slowed down further if psychological trauma is involved. After arriving in a receiving country, refugees often wait for months without work and individual housing. This waiting period also involves the insecurity of not knowing whether refugee status will be obtained, which Stewart and Mulvey (2014: 1028-1030) aptly describe as a struggle by refugees against a sense of temporariness. It does not need much imagination to understand that a long period of inactivity is detrimental to the integration process, which is a necessary condition for citizenship acquisition. Peters and Vink (2016: 368) also underline the relevance of the concept of "linked lives" to citizenship acquisition. This entails that naturalisation decisions are often taken collectively or in view of the collective (e.g. to support children). In cases where refugees are separated from family members, this could result in increased efforts to integrate as the only activity that can help to prepare for the arrival of the family, but worries about the well-being of close family members can also easily lead to a loss of focus on the integration process in the receiving context. Studies have shown that on average refugees are less proficient in the host country language than labour and family migrants (Chiswick and Miller 2001; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2005) and a study on refugees in the Netherlands found that "language skills are better among refugees who only lived in a refugee reception center for a short while, who completed an integration course, who received post-migration education, who intend to stay in the host country, and who have fewer health problems" (van Tubergen 2010: 515). In addition, after arriving in the receiving country refugees usually do not have a large amount of money at their disposal. This may be necessary for a costly integration and naturalisation procedure. Moreover, their labour market integration is slow – studies on Germany predict at least ten years



before the majority of the refugees arriving will have integrated in the labour market (Brücker et al. 2015). Thus, refugees will find more value in the acquisition of host country citizenship as an important (since permanent) transition into a new professional, educational and maybe political trajectory in the receiving country, but the particular difficulties that they face as refugees might slow down the process of settlement and integration which is usually required for acquiring citizenship.

Citizenship acquisition is a somewhat demanding administrative act. Beyond the fact that the candidate needs to be willing and able to go through a long bureaucratic procedure, there are many conditions that have to be met. Usually, candidates need to have resided in the receiving context for a certain number of years, sometimes they need to have a specific type of residence permit to request citizenship, and usually they should have no criminal record. Candidates for naturalisation may also have to meet income requirements, speak the language and/or pass a language test, pass a citizenship test and pay naturalisation fees. Peters and Vink (2016: 365) suggest that restrictive citizenship regulations disproportionately affect citizenship acquisition among more vulnerable groups. Similarly, Kibreab (2003) finds that citizenship rights which are often granted to refugees in developed countries increase the likelihood of refugees settling in these countries, whereas the denial of such rights that often occurs in developing countries increases the likelihood of refugees returning after the end of a conflict. Maarten Vink examines the efforts of EU member states to alleviate the citizenship acquisition procedure for refugees by means of special conditions. His findings from the EUDO Citizenship Observatory show that among the 28 member states eight have no specific provisions for refugees (Vink 2016: 15) while facilitation often remains modest in the other cases. One of the most substantial forms of facilitation in the

EU 28 is a reduction of the number of years of the residency requirement from an average of 7 years for regular migrants to 4.5 years for refugees. In addition, some countries reduce naturalisation fees or waive an income requirement for refugees. Vink mentions no facilitations in terms of integration requirements but Morillon (2001: 52) found a French administrative directive asking for benevolent treatment of refugees' naturalisation applications.

However, beyond these explicit facilitations for citizenship acquisition, other institutional conditions might also impact the citizenship acquisition of refugees and interfere with their life courses. Here, the contradictions regarding the legal regulations for the reception and integration of refugees come to mind. In Europe, refugees usually arrive as asylum-seekers and until a decision on their status is made it remains unclear whether they will settle in the country or be obliged to leave it. This is a difficult policy problem for liberal democracies, since any achievement in terms of social integration reduces the legitimacy of future expulsions. Short procedures of a maximum duration of three months would be the way out but are not easy to achieve. And while states want to impede the social integration of asylum-seekers during the asylum procedure, they seek to foster the social integration of recognized refugees. If we think of the importance of social integration for citizenship acquisition it might be relevant to take into account how long an individual has been maintained in 'non-integration-mode'.

A look at the recent changes brought about by the new German Integration Law of 31 July 2016 illustrates this trade-off between migration control and social inclusion. The German government has found a more refined answer compared to its response to the last arrival of large numbers of refugees in the early 1990s. In fact, some 20 to 25 years ago Germany, together with other European countries, tried to deter asylum-seekers from settling down permanently by denying all asylum-



seekers the right to work, the right to move freely in the country and the right to participate in publicly-financed language courses. In the new 2016 law, the old logic of preventing the integration of asylum-seekers whose claims might be rejected and who might have to leave the country has not disappeared. However, German law now officially distinguishes between asylum-seekers from countries classified as producing asylum-seekers who have good chances of acquiring a right to stay (*gute Bleibeperspektive*) and those without such chances, thereby anticipating its own asylum decision, which is delayed by lengthy procedures. It is current administrative practice that asylum-seekers from countries with a previous recognition quota of above 50% are considered to have good prospects (Thym 2016: 244). Since this group receives privileges and is officially “allowed to integrate,” the non-inclusion of Afghani refugees, whose previous recognition rate has been just below the cut-off mark, has been the subject of lively debate (e.g. Lehner 2016). An additional difficulty for this group is that in early 2016 the average asylum procedure for them lasted for over a year, meaning that those who were finally allowed to settle in Germany were excluded from any proactive state-funded integration measures for the entire length of this period. This is easily perceived as an injustice. On the other hand, in 2016, refugees from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea and Somalia were allowed to participate in state-funded integration measures even while their asylum procedures were still ongoing. Nevertheless, this is an important improvement in the legal framework for refugees in Germany as compared to the 1990s. In a way, one of the central beliefs that has been introduced to European integration policies since the turn of the century – namely the idea that integration has to start as early as possible – has finally made its way into regulations for refugees in Germany.

Another element of 21st century integration policies has also made it into refugee integration

measures: the work-for-welfare principle. This was initially introduced into German integration policy with the 2005 immigration law, which obliged new immigrants in Germany to participate in language and civic education courses that are provided by the state (Michalowski 2009). Thus, refugees who are considered to have a good prospect of staying in Germany are offered 600 to 900 hours of language tuition plus 100 hours of civic education (40 more hours compared to those offered to other immigrants) even if their asylum procedure is still ongoing. Because of their lack of income, most refugees and asylum-seekers are exempted from the contribution of €1.95 an hour to the cost of these courses. Moreover, each year 100,000 refugees can participate in a work for welfare programme which is ‘remunerated’ at a rate of 80 cents an hour for a maximum of 30 hours a week and a maximum duration of six months. These measures are exclusively offered by state-run organizations and are mostly located in refugee camps, which raises questions as to their capacity to transfer to the real labour market. If a refugee fails to comply with the work for welfare measures and/or language and civic integration measures, the monetary support from the government can be cut entirely and the state will only guarantee for the individual to be able to eat, wash, dress and live in a heated place. To further facilitate the labour market integration of refugees, most German federal states have abolished the labour market test for refugees, but some of the 16 federal states have decided to impose a three-year residency requirement even for recognized refugees in order to better distribute the costs associated with refugee reception. However, there is an obvious trade-off in terms of the degree of free movement that might be necessary for labour market integration (Brücker, Möller and Wolff 2016: 21). To address these concerns, a somewhat bureaucratic system of discretionary case-by-case decision-making has been introduced. Finally, contrary to the 2005 regulations, permanent residence can only be acquired after a period of





three years if the refugee demonstrates German language skills at the C1 level of the Common European Reference Framework. To acquire permanent residence after 5 years, refugees need language skills at the A2 level. Research findings from the UK suggest that even after physical safety is acquired, refugees long for emotional and psychological safety and stability, which can be undermined by future revisions of their residence status (Stewart and Mulvey 2014: 1033-1034).

From a life course perspective, the German example raises several questions. Does the preferential institutional treatment of refugees who are considered to have good prospects of staying have a positive influence on citizenship acquisition? Here, a comparison of refugees who fell under the two different regimes but were both granted refugee status would be very interesting. A comparison with the refugees from the 1990s might also be of interest. To get closer to the life course perspective, a very detailed analysis could try to answer the question of whether specific groups of refugees – e.g. according to marital status, age, educational and professional background, number of children, or duration of separation from family members – are particularly affected by a long waiting period after arrival in terms of later citizenship acquisition.



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# BEYOND THE NATION STATE? GLOCAL CITIZENSHIP AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR INTEGRATION

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In September 2016, the mayors of Paris, London and New York wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* calling on “world leaders assembling at the United Nations to take decisive action to provide relief and safe haven to refugees fleeing conflict and migrants fleeing economic hardship, and to support those who are already doing this work.”<sup>1</sup> In making this plea for inclusivity, they set out how they were already doing their part, providing services and programmes to all those residing in their cities, including diverse immigrant populations. One example put forward was that of the municipal ID programmes in Paris and New York, which provide every city dweller – whether undocumented, homeless or otherwise – with certain rights and access to services. This instance illustrates the central point that I wish to make in response to Maarten Vink’s paper on citizenship and legal statuses – the importance of considering the role of local authorities as well as the nation state in shaping citizenship, and thus the type of integration that citizenship status leads to.

Vink’s insightful analysis of why, how and for whom citizenship transitions matter adds nuance to citizenship studies but departs from a relatively binary understanding of citizenship – as a door to pass through to have access to full social, economic

<sup>1</sup> De Blasio, B., Hidalgo, A. & Khansept, S. (2016, 20 September 2016), Our Immigrants, Our Strength., *New York Times*.

and political rights. This point of departure does not recognize the degree to which citizenship as a legal status with specific related rights and responsibilities is increasingly given its formal content within other polities than the nation-state alone.<sup>2</sup> There is the ‘world community,’ which bestows rights upon all individuals via an ever-expanding system of international human rights treaties and monitoring mechanisms, thus giving meaning to cosmopolitan citizenship. There is the European Union and European citizenship, with a wide variety of rights attached that it has formally created and which makes the added value of national citizenship differ considerably for those who do or do not possess it. Additionally, although this has received less recognition in the literature to date, local authorities increasingly formally bestow rights upon those living within their borders, creating a type of urban citizenship. All this leads to an interplay between local, national, regional and international layers of government in defining and recognizing migrant rights. This is called ‘multilevel constitutionalism’ by lawyers and ‘constitutional pluralism’ by anthropologists, adding a spatial dimension to citizenship that is critical to understanding of its relation to migration.<sup>3</sup>

Of all these polities shaping citizenship, the focus here will be on local authorities, such as cities. Over the recent years, cities have increasingly been given and have claimed formal powers to both recognize and give meaning to the rights of those residing within their boundaries, resulting in a wide range of divergent practices impacting directly upon the main markers of integration set out by Vink – the

<sup>2</sup> See, among a wide range of literature on the topic, Isin, E. F. & Nyers, P. (2014), *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies*: Routledge; and, for instance, Benhabib, S. (2008), Investigating Citizenship., in E. F. Isin, P. Nyers & B. S. Turner (Eds.), *Citizenship between Past and Future* (pp. 18-35), Abingdon: Routledge.

<sup>3</sup> Pernice, I. (2015). Multilevel Constitutionalism and the Crisis of Democracy in Europe., *European Constitutional Law Review*, 11(03), 541-562; Walker, N. (2002). The Idea of Constitutional Pluralism., *Modern Law Review*, 65(3), 317-359.



labour market, education, political participation and access to housing. The following sections will briefly discuss the rise of local authorities as self-acclaimed key players in the field of integration, and will subsequently set out how this also affects the legal status of migrants and their integration. One interesting aspect of this development is the interplay between cosmopolitan and local norms – leading to a type of *glocal* citizenship. This leads to a final reflection on how these developments could and should be taken into account in research on citizenship and migration.

## CITIES AS KEY ACTORS IN INTEGRATION

Over recent years, policy makers, scholars and – most importantly – cities themselves have come to recognize and explicate their key role in welcoming and integrating migrants. Where it concerns refugees, for instance, movements all over Europe such as the International Cities of Refuge Network, the Cities of Sanctuary, the Save Me campaign and the Eurocities network specifically assert the independent role and responsibility of cities in welcoming refugees. The Global Parliament of Mayors, initiated by Benjamin Barber, author of the widely influential *If Mayors Ruled the World*, explicitly chose the notion of ‘Cities of arrival: Migration and Refugees’ as the theme for its first plenary session during its inaugural conference in September 2016.<sup>4</sup> More widely, the policy network of Cities for Local Integration Policies (CLIP) unites 30 European cities working on the social and economic integration of migrants.

The reasons for this rise of local authorities in the field of migrant integration are manifold. One is that a general trend towards decentralization has led to more local government autonomy, and more direct responsibility for a variety of social and economic challenges heightened by austerity measures. As for *cities* as such, there

4 Barber, B. (2013) *If Mayors Ruled the World: Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities.*, Yale: Yale University Press.

is also the general influx of urban population. Currently, more people live in the city than in the countryside, and cities are more diverse than ever. Scholars have also come to emphasize the degree to which cities are best suited as loci for migrant integration, be it because of the pragmatism of local policy-making (the local pragmatist thesis) or because of the differences between localities (the localist thesis).<sup>5</sup> In all, recognition of the relevance of local authorities in migrant integration has led to a general local turn in migration studies, and a departure from ‘methodological nationalism.’<sup>6</sup>

One key finding in this general literature on local governments and migration is the degree to which local governments seek to depart from national policies, a ‘decoupling’ between national and local policies.<sup>7</sup> As national migration policies throughout Europe become more and more restrictive, cities often have both principled and pragmatic difficulties with such policies and seek ‘room for manoeuvre’ to steer towards more inclusive policies.<sup>8</sup> Simultaneously, other local authorities witness protests against migrant influxes, particularly involving refugees, and yield by, for instance, refusing to take part in refugee reception. One result of the way in which local authorities increasingly claim the autonomy to make these choices is a variation in the degree to which migrants can meaningfully access political, social and economic rights, irrespective of their legal citizenship status.

5 Emilsson, H. (2015) A national turn of local integration policy: multi-level governance dynamics in Denmark and Sweden., *Comparative Migration Studies*, 3(1); Scholten, P. & Penninx, R. (2016) The Multilevel Governance of Migration and Integration., *Integration Processes and Policies in Europe* (pp. 91-108): Springer.

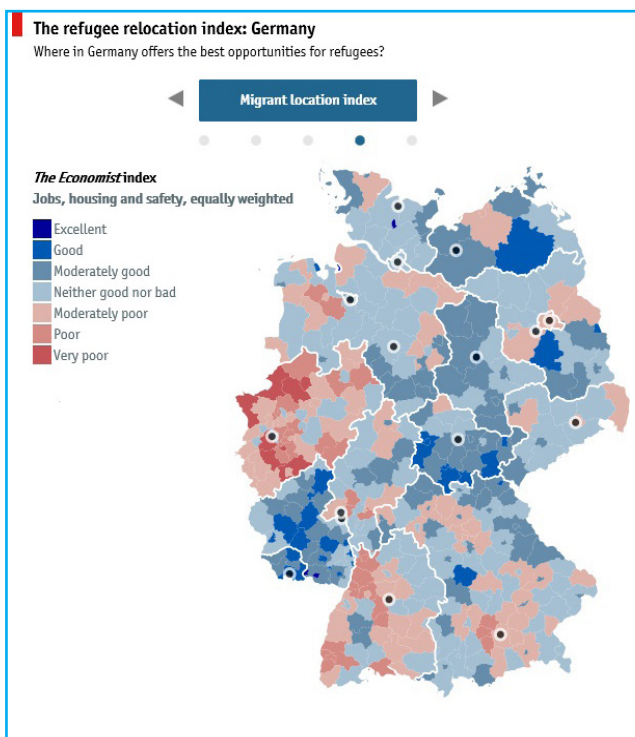
6 Schiller, N. G. & Çağlar, A. (2009), Towards a comparative theory of locality in migration studies: Migrant incorporation and city scale., *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(2), 177-202.

7 De Graauw, E. & Vermeulen, F. (2016), Cities and the politics of immigrant integration: a comparison of Berlin, Amsterdam, New York City, and San Francisco., *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(6), 989-1012.

8 Gebhardt, D. (2016). Re-thinking urban citizenship for immigrants from a policy perspective: the case of Barcelona., *Citizenship Studies*, 1-21; Eurocities (2016), *Refugee reception and integration in cities.*, Brussels: Eurocities.



An illustration of the variation in access to the labour market, to housing and to safety in general between local authorities is offered by the ‘migration location index’ put together by the Economist.<sup>9</sup> The index is based on an equal weighting of job, housing and safety data from different German local authorities, and thus identifies the localities most suitable for newly arriving refugees. Whereas the jobs, houses and general security available to migrants in a given location result from a variety of factors, it is safe to assume that local policies pertaining to migration partially determine the variation that is revealed.



## THE FORMAL DIMENSION OF LOCAL POLICIES

Cities thus form the space in which the citizenship that “gives substance and meaning to legal standing” practically takes shape.<sup>10</sup> Additionally,

<sup>9</sup> The Economist Migration Location Index, “Refugees might be seeking asylum in the wrong places”, published on 25 April 2016, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2016/04/daily-chart-8>

<sup>10</sup> Staeheli, L. A. (2003), Cities and citizenship. *Urban*

there have been more and more recent examples of cities actually expanding the rights that come with a particular legal status, for instance by granting refugees certain rights before formal recognition of their status. The city of Utrecht, for instance, seeks to connect asylum seekers to the city from the day of arrival.<sup>11</sup> By offering them language lessons, lessons in entrepreneurialism and general education, the city departs from the general Dutch policy of only offering education to those who have already received a formal status. The city of Münster, to give another illustration, has rejected the notion of centralized asylum centres and immediately provides decentralized housing to those waiting for formal status.<sup>12</sup>

Even more far-reaching are developments towards the creation of a formal urban citizenship explicitly destined to all living in the city, thus breaking down the divide between citizens and non-citizens. Paris, for example, recently introduced a *carte citoyenne* which gives all Parisians access to municipal services, and which “carries the values of Paris, liberty, diversity and tolerance and connects Parisians to municipal life.”<sup>13</sup> The card is modelled on the NYCID, the New York City ID card that is recognized for interactions with the police (such as reporting crimes), for opening bank accounts, and that gives all city dwellers – including undocumented migrants and the homeless – access to public services and also to museums. New York is only one of the ‘cities of sanctuary’ in the US that through such practices enable those without citizenship status to still exert political, social and economic rights.<sup>14</sup>

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*Geography*, 24(2), 98.

<sup>11</sup> Huisman, C. (2016). Utrecht: asielzoeker direct binden. *De Volkskrant*, 27 April 2016.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.stadt-muenster.de/zuwanderung/startseite.html>

<sup>13</sup> “Paris lance une carte de citoyen”, *Europe 1*, 10 February 2016, <http://www.paris.fr/cartecitoyenne>

<sup>14</sup> Lippert, R. & Rehaag, S. (2012), *Sanctuary Practices in International Perspectives: Migration, Citizenship and Social Movements.*, Routledge. See, for instance, [www.citiesofmigration.ca](http://www.citiesofmigration.ca)





## GLOCAL CITIZENSHIP

One interesting aspect of the way in which cities shape citizenship, also in a formal sense, is the degree to which they often refer to cosmopolitan norms, such as international human rights law, in setting out and defending their positions. The mayor of Palermo, for instance, is a strong advocate of the recognition of mobility as an inalienable human right.<sup>15</sup> Palermo's 'International Human Mobility Charter' serves as the basis for migrant welcome and integration in this Sicilian city facing a large influx of refugees.<sup>16</sup>

More widely, these policies are in line with a trend of increasing numbers of human rights cities, which base their urban policies on international human rights law, often taking a more progressive stance than national governments.<sup>17</sup> In Europe, for instance, 400 cities have signed the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City. Forerunners, such as Graz, Barcelona and Nuremberg, have human rights offices and engage in human rights monitoring, thus basing their urban policies on cosmopolitan norms. The way in which citizenship in a given locality and the rights that it has to offer become shaped in the permanent interplay between international, national and local authorities can be called 'glocal citizenship'.<sup>18</sup>

## CITIES, CITIZENSHIP AND INTEGRATION

The examples quoted, and the developments mentioned show how the actual benefits associated with 'national' citizenship depend on its relationship and interplay with regional (EU), international and also local understandings of citizenship. For a variety of reasons, reaching from the general strengthening of cities as political actors to local discomfort with national policies, there is an increasing divergence between local policies with regards to migrants in general and refugees in particular. This divergence impacts on all the main markers of integration – from access to housing, education and work to political participation – and thus also affects the added value of citizenship status. This means that any understanding of how, why and for whom citizenship transitions matter should also include a spatial understanding of where – at the subnational level – this is the case. It could well be, after all, that the advantages of acquiring citizenship differ more between, for instance, Paris and Perpignan than between France and Belgium.

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15 Citta di Palermo, International Human Mobility Charter of Palermo 2015.

16 Kirgaessner, S., (2015), From mafia city to a haven for refugees: Palermo moves on from its criminal past, *The Guardian*, 27 December 2015.

17 Oomen, B., Davis, M. & Grigolo, M. (2016). *Global Urban Justice: the Rise of Human Rights Cities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

18 See, for instance, Papisca, A. (2011), Relevance of human rights in the glocal space of politics: how to enlarge democratic practice beyond state boundaries and build up a peaceful world., in K. De Feyter, S. Parmentier, C. Timmerman & G. Ulrich (Eds.), *The Local Relevance of Human Rights* (pp. 82-108), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.





## SECTION 2 EDUCATION



# NO LOST GENERATION? EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN. A COMPARISON BETWEEN SWEDEN, GERMANY, THE NETHERLANDS AND TURKEY

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“Despite broad agreement on the fundamental role of schools, varied standards of reception for newly arrived students, which result from a lack of policy, guidelines, and resources, are undertaken, and they seem to be an endemic problem that transcends national borders”

(Jenny Nilsson and Nihad Bunar, 2016, 400)

## Introduction

The research debate covering the so-called ‘refugee crises in Europe’ has largely been addressing issues like border control, EU policies – or the lack thereof – and the political backlash in the form of anti-immigrant sentiments. Follow-up questions about the integration of refugees and

<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Alireza Behtoui for helping us find relevant English language literature on Sweden for this paper.

their children into society, education and work are now slowly appearing on the agenda too.

Although the current attention to the issue of the integration of the children of refugees into education is recent, several researchers in Europe have addressed the question for previous waves of refugees. The findings of one of the largest European studies on the topic, *Integrace*, a comparative study which includes Sweden and the Netherlands among other EU Member States, will figure prominently in this paper. Next to this study there are smaller national and local studies that are often descriptive or evaluate examples of so-called good practice in cities and schools. We do not claim to have a full overview of the studies conducted, but our first impression is that compared to the huge number of studies on the education of the children of immigrants, attention to refugee children in education has been somewhat limited and often refugee children are not distinguished separately (Bloch et al. 2015). While, for instance, data on the school results of the children of immigrants are usually readily available at a national or city level, this sort of data is lacking for refugee children. Sometimes groups can be identified because of their national origin, knowing that most of the people in that particular group came as refugees. The limited data show that refugee children usually face more barriers than the children of immigrants (Mc Brien 2009; Bloch et al. 2015; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2011).

A further observation is that most studies on refugee children fail to differentiate between those who are born in the country of migration and those who came during the compulsory schooling period (the in-between generation). However, education research has shown time and again that this distinction is important when seeking to explain variations in outcomes, both within groups and between them (Bloch et al. 2015, 15; Crul et al. 2012; Heath and Brinbaum 2007; Holdaway et al. 2009; OECD 2010). Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of attention to the development of school



careers over time. Often researchers take a snapshot of the treatment of refugee children in so-called *welcome, introduction* or *submersion classes*. Of course, this is a crucial element for these children to be able to successfully start in education, but it only tells part of the story. What happens after these classes is equally fundamental. Into what sort of educational track are they admitted? Do they still get second language support or other additional support? Are they allowed to continue their studies after compulsory education? An overview of the literature shows that most studies do not answer many of these crucial questions.

Furthermore, this paper is an attempt to draw away from what Nilsson and Bunar (2016, 401) call singular factors, such as trauma or individual background factors. Instead, we will focus on institutional factors that influence the opportunities that refugee children have in education at the macro, meso and micro levels (for studies on the children of immigrants, see Crul et al. 2012; Crul et al. 2013; Keskiner 2013; Schnell 2012). We analyse institutional educational arrangements comparatively across countries as formulated in Integration Context Theory (Crul and Schneider 2010; Crul and Mollenkopf 2012; Crul et al. 2012; Crul et al. 2013; Crul 2016). This theory has its roots in research into the effects of differences in school systems on the educational and labour market careers of the children of immigrants. We make a cross-country comparison of seven important institutional arrangements that we identify as having an influence on the school careers of refugee children: (1) entrance into education; (2) so-called welcome, submersion or introduction classes; (3) pre-school arrangements; (4) second language instruction; (5) additional support; (6) tracking; (7) education after compulsory schooling.

We identify both similar and different institutional arrangements at work in the case of refugee children. Institutional arrangements differ because of differences in school systems, the time lapse

before entering formal education, the specific legal arrangements in terms of accessing pre-school, and the options for attending school after reaching the age when compulsory schooling ends.

For our analysis of the impact of these institutional arrangements we make a literature overview, looking specifically at Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey. We choose the three European countries because they have received the highest numbers of refugees and thus also have the highest numbers of refugee children entering their education systems. In addition, they have very different institutional arrangements for integrating refugee children in education. This makes it interesting to compare them. We additionally choose Turkey because we wanted to broaden the perspective beyond Europe by including a country that has also received thousands and thousands of refugee children over the past few years. It is important to note that *most* refugee children that fled Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea or Iraq reside outside Europe, and are entering – or not – the education systems in Jordan, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Turkey. Whether Turkey is able to cater for the educational needs of refugee children is of crucial interest to a European audience considering the Turkey-EU deal, which enhanced Turkey's responsibility as a receiving country.

This chapter addresses the importance of the seven institutional arrangements we have identified as key in separate sections. In the discussion at the end we try to tie together their effects on the school careers of the children of refugees.

The challenges that the four countries face are very different in scope. The numbers of refugees entering Turkey and Germany are much higher compared to those arriving in Sweden and the Netherlands. To exemplify this with some numbers on the Syrian refugees in Turkey, according to a report by HRW (2015) as of October 2015 more than 1.9 million Syrian asylum seekers/migrants were registered in Turkey, of whom nearly 1.7 million reside outside the refugee camps. Children



from 5 to 17 years old make up around 780,000 of this population.<sup>2</sup> While in the refugee camps 90 percent of the children attend school, these children only represent 13 percent of the Syrian children of school age living in Turkey. The huge influx has resulted in much greater demands on the existing school facilities and in many temporary solutions to deal with the reality on the ground.

Different refugee populations have come to the four countries, creating different challenges for education. In Sweden, for instance, an additional challenge is that about half of the refugee children are unaccompanied minors (Rydin et al. 2012, 185; Çelikaksoy and Wadensjö 2015). Children from different countries of origin also differ because some children have not been going to school for two or three years before reaching Europe. Integrating these children into schools requires additional measures. In addition to learning a new language of instruction and adapting to a new curriculum, they also need to adapt to being in a school environment again. Furthermore, they often lag behind in school subjects relative to their own age cohort, which means that they have to be in classes with children that are sometimes up to two or three years younger.

A proper comparison would therefore require a comparison of similar groups that arrived in the same time period with similar educational histories in the countries of origin. Such detailed studies are not yet available for the countries studied in this paper.<sup>3</sup> We are aware of these limitations but at the same time we think this should not prevent us from looking into differences across countries in terms of both the opportunities and the barriers that school systems and legal regulations present.

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2 Before the war in Syria broke out, the primary school participation rate was 99 percent, for secondary school the rate was 82 percent. Participation was equal for male and female students. Today, according to UNICEF, approximately 3 million Syrian children in and outside Syria cannot go to school.

3 See Bloch et al. (2015) for a comparison of the same refugee group in France, the UK and Switzerland.

## Entrance into Compulsory Education

Compulsory schooling covers different age groups in the four countries under comparison. In the Netherlands, compulsory schooling targets four- to sixteen-year-olds, but if students at the age of sixteen have not obtained a minimum lower post-secondary vocational education yet they have to stay in education until the age of eighteen. In Germany and Sweden compulsory education covers the age range between six and sixteen. The right of entrance into compulsory education in all three European countries is guaranteed by law. All three of these countries have a policy that children of compulsory schooling age should have access to education as soon as possible. European regulations stipulate that children should be included in education within three months (article 14 paragraph 1 European Regulations 2003/9/EG). Sweden has put a further time limit of one month after arrival as the legally binding limit for entrance into school (Rydin et al. 2012, 193). In Germany and the Netherlands no such further legal binding limits exist. In practice, the time lapse between entering the country and entering school ranges from three months to even half a year in all three countries (for Sweden, see Rydin et al. 2012, 199). Especially in the last two years, when many refugee families have been housed in temporary shelters and camps and people have had to move several times before being housed in more permanent asylum seeker centres, education for children of school age has often been arranged in an improvised manner.

In the Netherlands, participation in education is compulsory for refugee children of compulsory school age regardless of their status. In Sweden and Germany, however, there is no obligation to attend school for those who are still in the process of status definition and who therefore do not yet have a residence permit (Rydin et al. 2012, 191; Bourgonje 2010, 47), although in Germany language courses in the reception centres are in





theory obligatory. This results in small groups of children not attending school in Germany and Sweden (for Sweden, see Rydin et al. 2012, 193) but it also affects the quality and amount of schooling children receive in these two countries (idem). In Germany, for instance, in some cases children will receive language education for only a few hours a day in the asylum seeker centres rather than going to a regular school for regular school hours. Nilsson and Bunar report that also in Sweden children who are still in the asylum procedure are often offered 10 to 50 percent less schooling, and often only for a more limited number of school subjects than regular school children study (Nilsson and Bunar 2016, 403).

Turkey is also legally bound to provide schooling to refugee children, irrespective of their status.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, in October 2014 a new regulation was published called the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR), which became the main domestic law governing Turkey's *de facto* temporary protection of Syrian refugees in the areas of education, health and social protection. TPR should ease the process of enrolment in schools, allowing refugee children who are registered in Turkey to enrol in public schools and in temporary education centres established for Syrian children (ÇOÇA 2015).<sup>5</sup> However, research shows that most of the Syrians are not well-informed about their children's right to education (idem). Furthermore, the registration procedure does not always run smoothly due to a lack of infrastructure and many refugees are not able to register themselves. Because of lack of financial

4 Turkey is party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, where article 22 obliges the signatory countries to provide protection and schooling to all asylum seeking and refugee children. In addition, Turkish law (5395) obliges the Turkish state to provide education and protection to minors, irrespective of their nationality.

5 Local authorities are held responsible for monitoring the registration of Syrian refugees in public schools to ensure their access to education (ÇOÇA 2015). In order to enrol, the children have to be registered with the local police office or the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, the state institution running the majority of the refugee camps for Syrians.

support, the majority of the Syrian refugee families experience severe economic hardship, which forms one of the major impediments against Syrian children participating in education (HRW 2015). The fact that Syrian refugees do not have permission to work has created a huge black labour market in Turkey, and this, in combination with the poverty of the families, has resulted in a situation where child labour has become common among Syrian children (Mutlu et al. 2015).

## Welcome, Submersion, Preparation, International or Introduction Classes

As the title of this section reflects, the names used for the classes in which refugee children are placed before going to regular classes differ between countries and, over time, also within countries. The actual pedagogical practices also differ greatly. When the children enter education they usually do not yet have any command of the national language. In all three European countries special provisions allow them to learn the second language, either in special classes or in special schools.

In the Netherlands, during the period when the children are still in the asylum procedure, they are often taught in a special elementary school established on the premises of an asylum seeker centre (Ingleby and Kramer 2012, 263). Depending on how long they are in the procedure for being granted legal status as recognized asylum seekers, this can take up to two years. In other cases, for instance in the case of small-scale asylum seeker centres or when the centre is not located in a remote area but within a city or larger village, they will attend a regular elementary school. Depending on the number of refugee children in the school, they will first go to an immersion class for one year, although for some children, depending on their second language progress, this can be extended to two years. The timing of entering education is crucial, as in the Netherlands children are selected



for different school tracks at age twelve. Children older than twelve are directed to international transfer classes (ISK) in a local secondary school for one or two years (Ingleby and Kramer 2012, 263; Stavenuiter et al. 2016, 7).

In Germany, children attend so-called preparation or introduction classes for one or two years before they are transferred to regular classes. Depending on the *Land*, city, or even the school, this can be followed by more assistance with German as a second language if their German proficiency still lags behind. There are some preparation classes attached to *Gymnasiums*, but in general pupils attending preparation classes in secondary school are in *Hauptschule* or *Realschule*, i.e. lower- and middle-level vocational education. In Germany in the past two years, the sheer number of refugee children has been overwhelming and the task at the *Länder* and city levels has therefore been gigantic. In Hamburg, for instance, about 400 additional young children had to be placed in education each month up to the summer of 2015. Also at the level of secondary vocational education, every month four to five new classes had to be added in Hamburg alone. Over a period of about a year, 143 new teachers had to be hired to teach the children in these new vocational classes (Pressestelle Senat Hamburg, November 2015).

The situation in Sweden varies between schools. However, the general policy in Sweden is to keep children in international or immersion classes for only a very short period. Examples of schools keeping children in such classes for only two or three weeks are described as ideal cases (Rydin et al. 2012, 204). Pupils are then transferred as quickly as possible to regular classes, often with additional courses in second language education. This is partly enabled by the fact that Swedish schools offer second language education as a regular subject from elementary school up to the end of upper-secondary school, making it easier to incorporate students with a migration background – both refugees and others – into regular classes after a short period of time.

In Turkey, *temporary education centres* have been established to provide education to Syrian children both inside and outside the refugee camps (HRW 2015). Although these centres began as private initiatives, some have signed a protocol with the Turkish government and receive financial support and are free of charge, while others remain private with low fees, which are nevertheless unaffordable for many Syrians struggling with economic hardship. Furthermore, the temporary education centres are insufficient in number and capacity to cater for migrants' educational needs. Of the 81 municipalities where refugees are registered, the centres only exist in 19 cities. According to the HRW report (2015), in the academic year 2014-2015 there were 34 centres inside and 232 centres outside the refugee camps. Operating at the primary and secondary school levels, in 2014-2015 more than 170,000 students were enrolled in temporary education centres, as opposed to only around 36,000 in Turkish public schools. This shows that the majority of Syrian refugee children receive their education in these centres. However, due to lack of sufficient funding many centres face closure, since the Syrian refugee population is not able to pay for the courses. For example, 19 schools opened in Reyhanli in 2014 but only three were left by August 2015 due to lack of funding (Amos 2015). The centres follow an almost identical curriculum to that of Syrian schools – and the pupils receive classes in Arabic – which is prepared in cooperation between the Syrian Interim Government's Ministry of Education and the Turkish Ministry of National Education (HRW 2015). It is unclear how the students who attend these centres will be integrated into the Turkish education system to further their education.

## Pre-school Arrangements

For very young refugee children it is important how access to pre-school is arranged. Compulsory schooling starts at different ages in the three European countries: in Sweden at seven; in



Germany at six; and in the Netherlands at four. Especially in Sweden and Germany, access to pre-school is therefore very important because of the larger age group – and thus larger numbers – of young refugee children affected.

In Germany, the development of pre-school facilities for disadvantaged children and the children of immigrants has been strongly stimulated in the last decade. However, as far as we know there are no figures available on the inclusion of refugee children in pre-school facilities. As soon as parents receive official asylum status they are treated like other parents in Germany and have access to pre-school under the same conditions. Costs for child care differ between Länder and even between cities. A special effort is made to include children in the last year before compulsory school starts at age six. In some Länder you can enrol your child in pre-school during this last year without any cost.

In the Netherlands, pre-school education is generally organised very differently to that in Sweden or Germany. Middle class families with both parents working usually send their children to either private or publicly founded pre-school facilities five days a week for the full day. The considerable costs of attending these pre-school or so-called crèche facilities are paid partly by the parents and partly by the employer. Children from disadvantaged families, many of them with an immigrant background, can attend special subsidized pre-school facilities with an emphasis on second language learning three mornings or afternoons a week. This means that they spend many fewer hours a week in day care and are also mostly segregated from children whose first language is Dutch. Places in these subsidized pre-school facilities, which also only exist in the larger cities, are limited. It is not known how refugee families can secure places for their young children in these facilities.

In Sweden, refugee children of pre-school age, regardless of their status, are treated equally to

children who have Swedish citizenship (Niemeyer 2014, 17). This is interesting, since in Germany and the Netherlands access is linked to legal status. If a pre-school age child arrives in Sweden, he/she may attend what is called *open pre-school*, which is free of charge. In the larger cities with a high proportion of children with a mother tongue other than Swedish, there are special pre-schools focusing specifically on Swedish language acquisition (Rydin et al. 2012, 197). However, not all refugee parents are aware of this option to send their children to pre-school without paying.

In Turkey, pre-school is mostly private and in our literature review we have not been able to find any provisions for refugee children.

## Second Language Instruction

The provision of regular second language instruction is, again, very different across countries. In the Netherlands, refugee children in elementary school attend welcoming classes and children in secondary school in international classes get intensive training in Dutch as a second language for one or two years (Stavenuiter et al. 2016, 7). In most cases, this takes place in small classes (15 children) and the teacher is trained in second language education and special teaching material is used. When the children are transferred to regular classes in elementary school, some extra second language instruction is often still provided by the regular teacher. In regular secondary education, however, second language instruction is not available. This obviously has negative consequences for the further school career (Van Hasselt and De Kruyf 2009, 9).

In Germany, there is second language support in elementary school (up to age ten or twelve, depending on the Land). Niemeyer (2014, 57) emphasizes that “*it is nowhere stated that German as a second language has to be taught in school.*” The Mercator Foundation recently released a report saying that teacher training in second



language education is still insufficient in Germany (also see Niemeyer 2014, 47). Study methods and techniques for second language education were often lacking in the past (Niemeyer 2014, 48). In some German schools there is a separate second language teacher available; in others, school teachers are given additional training in second language teaching but this training usually lasts for only one day (idem). In daily practice, it is these regular teachers with little training that provide additional second language instruction in the classroom (Niemeyer 2014, 57). However, new programmes of second language education are quickly expanding. In 2014, second language teacher training was only compulsory for school teachers in one Land. Today, this is true for five Länder.

In Sweden, Swedish as a Second Language (SSL) is offered in both elementary and upper-secondary school (up to age 18). The head teacher decides which students need to study SSL (Rydin et al. 2012, 196). The fact that second language education is also offered in upper-secondary schools is particularly important for refugee children who arrive aged twelve or more. This age group attends regular classes with extra support in Swedish as a second language very soon after entering the education system. Because regular second language instruction is absent in secondary education in Germany and the Netherlands, these pupils are taught in special submersion or introduction classes, which sets them back with their academic options. It is important to note that in Sweden Swedish as a second language is a subject with separate teaching materials (syllabus) and instruction, equal to teaching Swedish as a first language (Bourgonje 2010, 48 and 50), and SSL is taught by specially trained teachers (Nilsson and Bunar 2016, 409). Some reports, however, stipulate that the status of these teachers is considered lower than that of regular teachers of Swedish as a first language (Bourgonje 2010, 50; Nilsson and Bunar 2016, 409). However, one can

choose to take Swedish as a second language as an exam subject in Gymnasium and the mark for the subject is counted as a normal entrance mark for university (Rydin et al. 2012, 196). In Germany and the Netherlands, second language instruction is seen as additional to regular language instruction. As a result, the extent to which extra materials are used and the quality and number of hours of second language instruction differ from school to school and from teacher to teacher.

For Turkey, our literature review shows that, next to economic hardship forcing many children into the black labour market, lack of language proficiency is the main obstacle Syrian children face in accessing education. While the Turkmen ethnic minority speak Turkish, Syrian refugee children do not; the most common languages among them are Arabic and Kurdish. The only possibility of receiving education in Arabic is at the temporary education centres discussed above. For the rest, the Turkish education system is highly centralised and leaves no room for public schools to cater for the urgent need for Turkish language training. Some Turkish language courses seem to be provided at the local level through initiatives by municipalities or NGOs, but these efforts remain very limited. In theory, Syrian children have the right to enrol in public schools, but there is no infrastructure for them to learn Turkish or attend any form of transition classes. In a report by the Istanbul Bilgi University Children Studies Department on the educational situation of Syrian children in Istanbul (where more than 300,000 Syrians reside), the researchers found three schools in three districts where no Turkish language courses were provided for the limited number of Syrian children attending the schools (ÇOÇA 2015). This situation also leads to differential results for younger and older children. In its 2015 report, HRW underlined that younger Syrian children learn Turkish faster (and hence do better at school and are integrating faster), while the lack of language proficiency of older children





leads to their isolation in classrooms, dropping out of school, or even not being accepted for enrolment in the first place. Many of these older children end up entering the labour market working in very poorly paid and difficult conditions. Therefore, the HRW 2015 report called for more flexible administration procedures to cater for the needs of refugee students (such as enrolling a 10<sup>th</sup> grader in 9<sup>th</sup> grade) and emphasized the urgency of launching Turkish language courses on a national scale.<sup>6</sup>

## Additional Support

Most educational research has focused on gaps in the cognitive and language skills that the children of refugees suffer from because of the disruption of their school careers in their countries of origin and during their – sometimes long – travels to the destination country. They need to learn a new language, adapt to a new curriculum and sometimes also to a new learning style. Additionally, refugee children have often experienced traumatic events and sometimes lost close relatives and friends. A recent study showed that 79 percent of the Syrian children in a Turkish refugee camp had lost someone in their family in the war, and more than 60 percent had seen someone being kicked, shot or otherwise physically hurt. Nearly half (45 percent) of the children surveyed experienced PTSD symptoms (Sirin and Rogers-Sirin 2015, 13). Emotional and psychological help is often provided on an individual basis through the regular health care system, both within and outside schools (for the Netherlands, see Ingleby and Kramer 2012, 266).

It is important that there are staff members in schools that act as confidants for refugee children to help and support them. This person can be the assigned class mentor, a specially assigned member of the school staff, a social worker or a guardian in the case of an unaccompanied minor. In all three European countries, a person performing

this particular role can usually be identified. These people usually intervene when school results drop or fail to meet expectations, when pupils show emotional or psychological problems, when important decisions need to be made about school or subjects in the curriculum need to be chosen, or, most importantly, when legal factors hinder access to schooling opportunities.

In Germany and the Netherlands, there is no obligation for schools to assign such a support person to refugee children. Support therefore varies and is dependent on the regular existing support structure in schools. In Germany, it seems that this role is often taken by a teacher (Niemeyer 2014, 47), while in the Netherlands it is either the school mentor, someone from the school's support staff or, in the case of an unaccompanied minor, the guardian.

In Sweden, a person is assigned to support pupils that have attended an international class. Schools are obliged to allocate this additional support in the form of a support teacher. The support teacher starts giving support once pupils are transferred to a regular class (Bourgonje 2010, 48-50; Niemeyer 2014, 23 and 55). This could be individual support or support in a small group or even in the regular class (Niemeyer 2014, 23). Although this comes across as the ideal situation, reports note that in practice support teachers often lack the time to give proper guidance (idem).

In Turkey, counselling facilities are available in public schools, but these facilities do not seem to be equipped to support Syrian children who have suffered serious traumas. The study by Istanbul Bilgi University Children Studies Department shows that the language barrier and a lack of motivation or qualifications of the already overloaded student counsellors are the major reasons for lack of support (ÇOÇA 2015). While school staff stated that they expected such help to be provided outside the school by NGO groups, none of the Syrian students who participated in

6 ..... HRW 2015





the study mentioned receiving any support outside school. Nevertheless, focus groups with Syrian children and students underlined the necessity of psychological support because of the serious war traumas experienced (idem).

## Tracking

The way the various school systems track pupils in secondary school is very different across the three countries. The effects of tracking have been extensively documented for children of immigrants (see Crul et al. 2012; Crul et al. 2013). The strongly stratified German school system with early selection makes it much more difficult for children of disadvantaged immigrant origin to pursue an academic track which prepares for higher education. The more open meritocratic school system in Sweden with its late selection and less selective tracking system offers many more possibilities of continuing into some sort of post-secondary or higher education. The Netherlands lies in between, with rather early selection at age twelve and a tracking system that is comparable with the German system, but with ample opportunities to move from a vocational track to an academic track through alternative routes. Turkey has a comprehensive education system, slightly similar to the Swedish one, where there is no overt form of tracking in the compulsory education system. However, there are differences in prestige between selective and non-selective educational institutions in both the public and private domains which act as a covert stratification system with regard to access to higher education.

The starting situation of refugee children is crucial because of the effects of tracking and early selection. In general, it can be said that age at arrival determines how much these children are blocked by the general institutional arrangements of early selection and tracking. Students who arrive in the Netherlands at age twelve or later have already missed the crucial national test that determines their tracking advice. They are placed in an ISK

submersion class for one or two years (Dourelijn and Dagevos 2011, 95; Stavenuiter et al. 2016, 7). By the time they are admitted to regular classes they often lag far behind in terms of their level of instruction in subjects in the academic track. Regardless of their intellectual capacities, this will *de facto* mean placement in one of the vocational tracks in year 3 or 4. Year 4 is the exam year. Because of the short period they spend in regular classes, most of these pupils are then assigned to one of the lower levels of vocational education. According to a recent survey, 70 percent of the children attending ISK submersion classes go from there to the lowest forms of vocational education. For the average student of Dutch descent, the proportion is the inverse: only 30 percent attend this lowest track (VO raad 2016; for similar results on ISK classes from an earlier period, see Van Hasselt and De Kruijff 2009, 6). These levels only give access to short one- or two-year post-secondary vocational tracks aimed at making the transition to manual jobs in the labour market. In the Netherlands, children with learning or behavioural problems are commonly assigned to these tracks and they are known for high levels of disruptive behaviour in class and high dropout rates. In certain tracks, the dropout rates reach 40 or 50 percent. This school climate is hardly conducive for refugee children, who often have to deal with trauma and whose intellectual capacities often far exceed those of the other children in these tracks. Among those who are already older than 15 or 16 and cannot enter secondary education, 80 percent enter the lowest forms of post-secondary vocational education (VO raad 2016; for similar results on ISK classes from an earlier period, see Van Hasselt and De Kruijff 2009, 7). These one- or two-year tracks aim at direct transit to unskilled jobs in the labour market. One of the factors related to poor educational outcomes is a lack of second language teaching after the students have been transferred from the international classes to the regular classes (Van Hasselt and De Kruijff 2009, 9). Another problem is that the international



classes continually take in new students, which disrupts the learning environment (idem, 11). A broader study on refugee groups, not only those who have been to an international class, shows the same poor educational outcomes for refugee groups. Less than half of the young Iraqi and Afghani adults between the ages of 20 and 34 studied obtained a diploma for short post-secondary vocational education. The majority of the remaining students did not even manage to obtain what are considered the lowest vocational certificates. Of the Somali refugees in this age group, only about a quarter attained this very low level of education (Dourelijn and Dagevos 2011, 93), making their prospects in the labour market very bleak. The good news is that the younger cohorts who started their educational careers in the Netherlands in elementary school (after an introduction class) do much better. Children of Afghan and Iraqi origin are now almost on a par with children of Dutch descent when it comes to attending academic tracks (idem, 98). This only goes to show that it is particularly refugee children entering the Netherlands around or after age twelve who are getting crushed between the tracking wheels of the Dutch school system.

In Germany, the situation is similar to the Netherlands, with the exception of some Länder where selection happens even earlier at age ten. Most of the refugee children arriving after elementary school age will be placed in *Hauptschule* or *Realschule*, the two vocational tracks. A brochure for unaccompanied minors in Germany is quite telling:

*“In Germany all children and teenagers under the age of sixteen have the right and duty to go to school. This is called compulsory attendance. Usually you would start off with the “Hauptschule” where you have the possibility of getting a “Hauptschulabschluss” (secondary school qualification).*

Only a small proportion of pupils of German descent go to *Hauptschule* and many German parents will avoid this school at all costs. In the case of refugee children, however, for many teachers and policymakers this seems to be the highest aim (see also Niemeyer 2014, 46).

At age sixteen, and in some cases even a year earlier, *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* pupils should enter an apprenticeship track. However, second language difficulties often impede refugee children from finding an apprenticeship. For children of immigrants who were born in Germany (the second generation), discrimination in finding an apprenticeship has already been clearly established (Crul et al. 2012). For refugee children, who are mostly not born in Germany, the chances of finding an apprenticeship place are often even lower because of German language weaknesses, lack of experience with the system and the resulting poor grades (Niemeyer 2014, 16). Furthermore, there is competition for apprenticeship places among students who have diplomas at different levels. It comes as no surprise that those who have a *Gymnasium* diploma are most favoured by employers, followed by those who have a *Realschule* diploma. Children with a *Hauptschule* diploma have the least chances of getting an apprenticeship position (Crul et al. 2012). The negative consequence is that students who leave school without doing an apprenticeship, in a system that relies so heavily on apprenticeships, also have great difficulties in entering the labour market and finding a steady job. More often than not, apprenticeships are the door to the first paid job.

In Sweden, the first selection point is at age fifteen, when students choose, or are recommended to take, different programmes within *Gymnasium*. Although the choice made here limits options in further education, all programmes give access to higher education. However, the students who at fifteen go to more vocationally oriented programmes often continue a form of post-



secondary vocationally oriented education which is not part of the higher education system at age eighteen. A report by Çelikaksoy and Wadensjö focusing on unaccompanied minors presents some educational outcomes of refugee children. The group of unaccompanied minors is more at risk than children who came with their parents. Nevertheless, even for them the educational results for refugee children far exceed those in Germany and the Netherlands. Among 19-year-olds, 77 percent of females still follow education in Sweden and 88 percent of males (Çelikaksoy and Wadensjö 2015, 15). Even among 21-year-olds, about half of this group are still in education. Among men aged between 24 and 27, about 40 percent are in undergraduate training and another third are in adult education. Among women, about a quarter are in undergraduate education and about a half in adult education (idem, 16). These figures show that a considerable proportion of these refugee children, who are to be considered highly at risk, reach higher education in Sweden.

Since the Swedish system is geared towards getting as many students as possible into higher education by keeping opportunities open until the age of eighteen, those who do not manage to get into higher education, or fail in higher education, often find themselves in a precarious situation. They have two options to choose from: either continuing in adult schools (Komvux) or participating in some of the courses provided by employment offices to learn some practical skills to enter the labour market. In Germany and the Netherlands, many of those unable to access an academic track are able to follow apprenticeship tracks offering them entrance to the labour market. They can show a potential employer their apprenticeship track record. And, again, many indeed get their first paid job via an apprenticeship.

In Turkey, the newly adopted 4+4+4 system, requires young people to go to school until the age of eighteen. While the system has no specific tracking moment as in the Netherlands

or Germany, there are significant distinctions between selective and non-selective educational institutions and the quality of education, both in the private and the public domains. These distinctions become crucial when gaining access to higher education. The studies reviewed for this chapter only mention participation by Syrian children in non-selective public education and in temporary education centres (ÇOÇA 2015; HRW 2015; Mutlu et al. 2016). While the experience of Syrian children varies in individual cases, younger children seem to have a more positive experience as they learn Turkish faster than older children, who seem to suffer more from the lack of Turkish language courses and problems of adaptation (ÇOÇA 2015). The studies underscore how Syrian children suffer from serious stigmatization and discrimination by other pupils, and also occasionally by school staff and other parents. The studies call for increasing awareness that education should be perceived as a 'right' for Syrian children rather than a 'favour' (Mutlu et al. 2015) and that school staff need further assistance in dealing with conflicts between pupils and providing a more peaceful school environment. Given these harsh conditions, the very few Syrian children who manage to attend a non-selective public school might face serious difficulties in accessing higher education.

## Education after Compulsory School

The three European countries differ when compulsory schooling ends (at sixteen or eighteen), but they also differ in terms of rights and opportunities to continue studying. The Netherlands provides an extensive loan system for studying after compulsory schooling. The right to a study loan applies to all whose asylum request has been granted and who have official refugee status. For others who do not have an official status yet, the right to study ends at age eighteen. Those who do not yet have the (temporary) residence



permit granted with refugee status at age eighteen cannot start to study in post-secondary or higher education. The process of obtaining this status takes up to a year or more, depending on the country of origin, after requesting asylum. Many of the refugees who started late in the Dutch education system are in level one of a two-year post-secondary vocational track, finishing it when they are around eighteen years old. If they have not obtained their status yet, they lose their right to further education. Even if they obtain the right to study again in the near future, it disrupts their studies and prospects. Another potential obstacle is the Dutch system of study loans. Youngsters get a study loan when they attend post-secondary vocational training. By the time they can finally climb up from post-secondary vocational training to higher vocational education (four or five years later) their student loan credit is already mostly or completely used up, meaning they can only continue their studies by relying on their own resources. In practice, this means they have to work at the same time as studying, which increases the chances of dropping out.

Students who want to study in higher education first have to complete four language courses to obtain a Dutch language certificate at the level of academic Dutch (B2). This means that on average students can only start their studies after two or more years (Ingleby and Kramer 2012, 266). Taking into consideration that much of the curriculum nowadays is in English, especially in Masters' programmes, this seems an obstacle the students could do without.

In Germany, compulsory schooling ends at the age of sixteen. For those who arrive later and do not have a high school diploma, most of the possibilities are in the field of vocational training. In most Länder there are now programmes to open more opportunities for these youngsters to be included in vocational education. The most problematic part is finding enough internship and apprenticeship places in the private sector, since

this practical part is an important element in the so-called 'dual system' of vocational training in Germany.

In Sweden, compulsory education ends at age sixteen, but pupils who are still in upper-secondary school when they turn seventeen or eighteen have the right to continue their education like regular students, even when they do not have recognized asylum seeker status. This is important, because particularly unaccompanied minors often arrive between the ages of fifteen and seventeen (Çelikaksoy and Wadensjö 2015, 14). Young adults arriving after the age of eighteen can attend general adult education or Swedish for Immigrants (FSI), i.e. classes for adults to learn basic Swedish.

Adult education is an important route to educational qualifications for students who arrive at a later age. In the Netherlands, this route is often used by students who are too old to thrive in common secondary education but need a diploma from an academic track before they can enter higher education. Adult education in the Netherlands is quite marginal compared to mainstream education. Many refugee children and students are therefore not aware of the possibilities it can offer them. The big advantage is that in adult education they are often the younger students in the class, instead of being much older, and they meet people who are equally motivated to succeed.

In Germany too, there are plenty of possibilities of programmes for adult education, including ones leading to school qualifications and language certificates. The main problems in the German system are a lack of information and costs. In the face of the refugee crisis, many adult education institutions have started to offer free courses, at least at the basic level, but sometimes the costs are also covered by the government. Especially the state-owned *Volkshochschulen* have played an important role in this – as they did before for previous waves of immigrants and refugees. There has been a quite new initiative by universities





to offer free language courses to refugees (often organized by student organizations), to provide voluntary help to refugees as internships, and to establish mechanisms for the recognition of foreign diplomas and school certificates.

In Sweden, adult education is a much more mainstream institution than in the Netherlands and Germany. Awareness of this option is therefore much greater. In the past too, adult education was an important entrance route into the education system for migrants. Many first-generation Turkish and Yugoslavian migrants went to adult education to learn Swedish as a second language. Therefore, adult education in Sweden is now very much attuned to the needs of new arrivals. An adult education diploma can be used to enter higher education or a form of post-secondary education.

In our literature review, we have not come across adult education opportunities for Syrians in Turkey since the existing research concentrates mainly on the pressing situation concerning (the lack of) education for Syrian children. Regarding higher education in Turkey, there are provisions which allow Syrian university students to enrol in seven higher education institutions near the Syrian border with a 'special student' status. According to the Turkish Higher Education Institutions (YÖK), in the academic year 2014-2015, 3397 male and 2163 female Syrian students were enrolled in a higher education institution (Mutlu et al. 2016, 42). Participation by Syrian university students in Turkish higher education is, however, not widespread and these developments are merely seen as first steps, despite difficulties.

## Conclusion and Discussion

This overview of the differences in these seven key institutional arrangements and their effects on school outcomes shows a clear distinction between favourable and less favourable institutional arrangements. High quality continuing second

language instruction offered at all school levels – by properly trained teachers and using specifically developed teaching materials – is probably the most important institutional arrangement. Apart from this, accommodating access to all types of educational tracks (regardless of the age you enter education) is important. As we have seen, in Germany and the Netherlands only vocational tracks are open to many refugee children. For very young refugee children, immediate open and free pre-school arrangements are especially important. For refugees in the age group around the end of compulsory schooling, adult education – which also gives access to pre-academic secondary school diplomas and thus to higher education – is especially important.

In a way, the most difficult group to integrate into the education system of the host country are pupils arriving at the end of elementary school or during secondary education. This is the time when important tracking decisions are made. School systems characterized by early selection and a strong stratification seem to waste much talent, because they direct the majority of these pupils along a vocational route. Because of second language problems, these children are often streamed towards the lower end of the vocational training system – a track that hardly suits the majority of these students given their intellectual capacities. Also in comprehensive systems, such as in Turkey, a lack of second language training denies children the full participation in the education system they need to realize their potential.

To evaluate the impact of different institutional arrangements it is important to see them in relation to each other, for instance the more poorly organized second language instruction in Germany and the Netherlands (compared to Sweden) in relation to the early selection and tracking that results in an over-representation of refugee children in vocational tracks. These factors in combination create an accumulation of disadvantage. This also means that the Swedish





good practice of limiting the time in immersion classes cannot be transplanted as such to Germany or the Netherlands. In Sweden, the transfer to regular education is combined with continued instruction in the second language. Since this is not offered in Germany and the Netherlands, children would be destined to fail if they were transferred to regular classes too quickly.

It seems that there is also an important difference across countries in terms of their *vision* of what it takes to include newly arrived refugee children in education. In Sweden, it is clearly stated that the ambition is to give refugee pupils an equal chance to reach school outcomes on a par with children of native descent. This means that the aim should be for refugee children to also reach higher education, of course depending on their intellectual capacities.

In Germany and the Netherlands, the aim seems much more limited and short-term. Most policy measures are aimed at, and limited to, the transition or immersion phase. The fact that most refugee students end up in the (lowest) vocational tracks as a result of how things are organized within the school systems seems to be more or less accepted as a given. In Germany, however, there is a hopeful recent development of also accommodating refugee children in immersion classes in *Gymnasium* schools.

In Turkey, an excruciating two thirds of refugee children do not participate in education. Among those who do, the majority attend temporary education centres where they follow a Syrian curriculum. This shows that Turkey does not yet wish to see the refugees and their children as long-term inhabitants who must be enabled to build a future. Of the 780,000 Syrian refugee children, only around 36,000 attend public schools. Studies on these public schools show that education is seen more as a 'favour' to these children, rather than there being the aim of providing them with equal chances to participate in education.

The Swedish example, although not perfect, shows that support has to be given throughout the school career – the clearest example being second language instruction. Sweden has formulated ambitions for second language learning in the standard curriculum starting at pre-school and continuing all the way up to the end of upper-secondary school and even into adult education. In the Netherlands and Germany, the ambitions are much more limited, with only a little amount of additional training in pre-school, elementary school and during the immersion or introduction year in secondary school. However, to learn a language to an academic level, one or two years of additional instruction are usually not enough.

To expect governments to fundamentally change the school systems they have in place because of this relatively small group of pupils is, of course, unrealistic. Both in Germany and the Netherlands, alternative scenarios have to be developed to accommodate this particular group. Adult education could, for instance, play a much more prominent role in preparing talented students for high school exams. In post-secondary vocational education, shorter and faster routes could be offered to accommodate students that have the ambition to continue into higher education. Pre-school education should be made available to the very youngest group (0-4) of refugee children immediately, regardless of their status, so that they are already fluent in Dutch or German before entering elementary school. Secondary schools should be offered the opportunity to extend the time they give additional second language instruction to bring it up to the level of academic Dutch or German. These measures can be taken keeping some of the Swedish good practice in mind.

A last observation is that more researchers seem to be working on the topic of refugee children in education in Sweden than in Germany or the Netherlands, and they are also more critical of the specific educational policies developed in



Sweden than their German and Dutch peers. Swedish researchers critique, for instance, the segregation of refugee children and the fact that not all pupils who have the right to mother tongue teaching receive it (see, for instance, Nilsson and Bunar 2016). The irony is that in Germany and The Netherlands mother tongue teaching is simply unavailable and therefore also mostly remains undiscussed in research. In Germany and the Netherlands, refugee children are far more often segregated from regular pupils and for a much longer period than in Sweden but researchers seem far less critical about it than in Sweden. What is considered normal in a country's policy also seems to extend to what researchers find normal. In Turkey, the studies we have been able to find on Syrian children are critical of the government. These studies do acknowledge the difficulty in accommodating the sheer numbers of Syrian refugee children, but nevertheless they also critique the gaps and provide concrete policy suggestions to improve the schooling situation. By comparing the four countries in detail both gaps and successful interventions become apparent. This is precisely why comparisons across countries are so valuable.



**Table 1: Overview of Educational Institutional Arrangements for Refugee Children in Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey.**

	Sweden	Germany	The Netherlands	Turkey
<b>Access to school</b>	Within 1 to 3 months and unlimited access regardless of status	Within 3 months and limited to compulsory schooling age	Within 3 months and limited to compulsory schooling age	Mostly for primary school children. Most children, however, are not able to attend
<b>Pre-school</b>	Open and free of cost	Limited	Limited	Unknown
<b>Separate classes</b>	Short	1-2 years	1-2 years	Mostly in separate Arabic language schools
<b>Second language instruction</b>	Prolonged and from pre-school until upper-secondary school	For a limited period and varying between Länder	For a limited period	Mostly no second language instruction
<b>Second language teachers</b>	University trained teachers and specific subject materials and exams	Only short training and not all teachers are trained	Special but limited extra teacher training. Specialized materials available	Not applicable
<b>Extra Support</b>	Special support teacher	Mostly regular teacher support	Support staff in school and/or regular teacher	Psychological health support organizations
<b>Tracking</b>	Late tracking and sustained second language support results in more access to higher education	Early tracking and limited second language support results in tracking into vocational tracks	Early tracking and limited second language support results in tracking into vocational tracks	Limited second language support results in early school leaving
<b>Access after compulsory school age</b>	Unlimited access to upper secondary school, adult education and university training	Limited access to apprenticeship training programmes (depending on Länder) and access for university students with refugee status	No access after age 18 if refugee status not yet obtained. Access to universities after Dutch language exam	Limited access to secondary school and universities



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# EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECENTLY ARRIVED MIGRANTS<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

The large number of people arriving in Europe from the Middle East and Africa in 2015 represented a serious political and policy challenge. With around 1.25 million arrivals, the number of first-time asylum applications in the EU in 2015 was twice the numbers of 2014 and about three times higher than in 2013. Due to the uneven distribution of migrants among Member States, the countries which received the highest numbers of asylum applications in 2015 registered figures around 1% or even 1.5% of their populations in only one year.

However, despite the 2015 crisis in which a high number of refugees arrived in a short timespan, it should be recalled that during recent decades migration has become an important characteristic of most European societies. There are currently 20 million non-EU nationals residing in the EU, which corresponds to 4% of the Union's total population. Migrants come to work, study or for family reunification. The international protection of refugees and asylum are only a part of the migration phenomenon, and in most Member States migration is not a new phenomenon either. There has been notable migration for decades and we have also already seen large numbers of refugees arriving before, such as during the Balkan wars in the 1990s.

Over the years, policymakers and practitioners

<sup>1</sup> This chapter reflects the personal views of the author. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use of the information contained herein.

have identified many examples of successful policies and practices (OECD 2015). Nevertheless, decision makers and key stakeholders in European education systems are still struggling with the inclusion of migrants in education. Similarly, most discussions on the implications of the 2015 refugee crisis for European education systems have highlighted the challenges, the need for particular efforts and the difficulties to be overcome.

The chapter in this ebook by Crul et al. also emphasises institutional obstacles to integration, in particular in the case of Germany and the Netherlands, while it sees the institutional conditions as particularly favourable in Sweden. Their analysis of the traditional institutional framework conditions in these countries is certainly correct. This chapter, however, argues that policy learning based on decades of past experience with more or less successful practices in education policy has created a basis for policy change. This, together with the nature of the policy challenge – the sheer size of the recent inflow of migrants and refugees in need of education – has led to policymaking on the ground that is more innovative and flexible than traditional institutional frameworks suggest. The most recent developments may eventually also accelerate changes in institutional settings as we know them.

In the next section, this contribution sets out the nature of the education policy challenge related to integrating the recently arrived migrants. It then presents the European Union's policy response and an analysis of recent policy developments in Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, before finally discussing the role of traditional institutional settings and the incidence of policy change.

## 2. The policy challenges

The first key point characterising the policy challenge discussed here is the strong increase in the number of first-time asylum applications between 2013 and 2015. The numbers also



remained high in the first eight months of 2016, despite a lower number of new arrivals, which may partly be explained by the fact that some people who arrived during the second half of 2015 only filed their asylum applications in 2016. Germany received 35% (442,000) of all EU first-time applications in 2015, Hungary 14% (174,000), Sweden 12.4% (156,000), Austria 6.8% (85,000), Italy 6.6% (83,000) and France 5.6% (70,500). The share compared to the overall population was the highest in Hungary (1.8%)<sup>2</sup> and Sweden (1.5%), followed by Austria (1%), Finland (0.6%) and Germany (0.5%). The share in the Netherlands was 0.25% (European Commission 2016: 21; Eurostat, online code [*migr\_asyappctza*], 2015).

A second characteristic of the policy challenge is the prevalence of young people of school age and prime working age among the newly arrived migrants. Almost every fifth newly arriving person was younger than 14, another 10% were between 14 and 17, and 53% between 18 and 34 years old (European Commission 2016: 21). In Sweden, in particular, the number of unaccompanied minors rose sharply from 7,000 in 2014 to more than 35,000 in 2015.

Third, the prospects of the recently arrived refugees from the Middle East and certain African countries of being recognised as asylum seekers are very good. In Germany, for example, between January and October 2016 the great majority of the asylum requests from Syrian (98%), Eritrean (94%) and Iraqi (71%) citizens were accepted. In contrast, almost all the requests by citizens of the western Balkan countries were rejected. The rate for Afghan citizens stood at 51% (IAB 2016).

Fourth, national studies conducted by the public employment services in Germany and Austria (IAB 2016, AMS 2016) show a polarisation of the

2 The high number of first-time asylum applications in Hungary has, however, not translated into a major integration challenge in the country as many of the refugees were registered in Hungary and then travelled on to other countries, and because about 85% of the asylum applications in Hungary in 2015 were rejected (Eurostat figures).

education and skills levels of the newly arrived migrants. According to a recent survey carried out in Germany, a significant share have attended school for ten years or more, i.e. a level comparable with upper secondary education in Europe (55% among refugees compared to 88% of the German population). Almost one in five have participated in higher education (19%), and 13% have acquired a higher education degree. At the other end of the spectrum, 10% have only attended up to six years of primary education, 9% have never gone to school, and 26% hold no school leaving certificate.

According to the above study, the greatest difference with respect to the host population can be found at the medium qualifications level. Only a few of those who have worked in technical professions or crafts also hold formal qualifications, which can mainly be explained by the fact that the respective countries of origin have not developed vocational education and training systems delivering such qualifications. Another challenge in this area is that due to different levels of economic and technological development, the types of skill acquired in such work may not match what is required in similar professions in advanced European economies. At the same time, the German survey found a high level of motivation to participate in education among refugees (IAB 2016).

Finally, it is important to stress that the policy challenge is not only defined by the characteristics of the incoming migrant population, but also by European experiences in dealing with past migration. Empirical data show that people with a migrant background have greater difficulties in making their way through European education and training systems than their native peers. The early school leaving rate is higher for the foreign-born population than the native-born in all EU Member States except the United Kingdom and Ireland.<sup>3</sup> In addition, young people from outside

3 The ratios between native- and foreign-born youths are 1:2 in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Spain, France, Italy,



the EU have a higher early school leaving rate than those with an EU migrant background in Belgium, Greece, Italy, Austria, and Sweden (European Commission 2016b: 40). Similarly, in the OECD's PISA studies the results of immigrant students also lag behind those of non-immigrant students. The performance of immigrant students is correlated with their socio-economic status, which explains some of their disadvantage, but not all (European Commission 2016f: 20). In addition, even after decades of migration, in international surveys such as the OECD's TALIS and national studies a high share of teachers respond that teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting is among the areas where they have a most critical need for continual professional development (European Commission 2014: 63, Mercator/SVR 2016).

Taken together, the characteristics of the incoming migrants combined with knowledge of the difficulties that European education and training systems have in providing migrants with equal opportunities to succeed have made policymakers recognise a strong challenge and a need to act in order to deal with the consequences of this recent influx.

### 3. Policy response at the EU level

During the first months of the 2015 refugee crisis, the main attention was on providing shelter to the newly arrived, border control, fighting human trafficking and relocation. The European Agenda for Migration (European Commission 2015) set out immediate actions for saving lives at sea, targeting criminal smuggling networks, relocation, resettlement and partnership with third countries. The Agenda also announced support to Member States in promoting integration – primarily financial support through European funds – but at this stage did not yet set out specific measures.

In the European Union, both integration and education are Member State competences. Member

.....  
Luxembourg and Sweden, 1:3 in Austria and 1:4 in Greece, Cyprus and Slovenia.

States have to respect the minimum standards for newly arrived asylum seekers laid down in the Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU), such as the obligation to grant minors access to the education system no later than three months after the lodging of an asylum application. However, actual policymaking on integration happens at the national, regional or local levels.

The EU nevertheless supports Member States in this area. Common basic principles on immigrant integration policies in the EU were adopted by the Council in 2004. Moreover, in the context of the recent crisis the European Commission set out its priorities in its Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals of June 2016 (European Commission 2016). This action plan includes education as one of its pillars, alongside pre-departure measures, employment, access to basic services, active participation and social inclusion.

The action plan emphasises the importance of immediate action being taken as early as possible upon arrival (e.g. providing support in language learning and assessing skills). It stresses the need for measures allowing refugees and migrants to succeed in education on an equal footing with the native born in the medium term (e.g. teacher training, promoting participation in early childhood education and care). Finally, it sets out actions promoting active participation and social inclusion (including informal learning and sports). The action plan announces EU support to Member States through policy support and funding, the implementation of which has since started. Policy support mainly takes the form of peer learning (e.g. about welcome classes and language assessment) and the development of guidance tools (e.g. for early childhood education, and the recognition of skills and qualifications). EU funding is provided by the Erasmus+ programme (e.g. for online language courses and policy cooperation between countries and education institutions) and the European Funds (ESIF and AMIF). In sum, EU actions promoting integration through education



put a strong emphasis on mutual learning across Member States, which can provide a basis for policy innovation and development.

#### 4. Comments on the situation in Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden

Crul et al. emphasise the institutional differences between Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden and argue that these explain the much better chances refugees have of success in Sweden as compared to the Netherlands and Germany. More recent developments and data may, however, give rise to some optimism that the institutional obstacles in Germany and the Netherlands can be overcome. At the same time, Sweden also seems to be struggling with the integration challenge despite its favourable framework conditions.

In Germany, empirical data show a strong influence of socioeconomic status on education results, but an important improvement over recent years, and in particular an improved performance by low achievers (OECD 2016a). Generally, both the participation rate and the education outcomes of those with a migrant background have improved over the last decade. About 90% of 4- to 5-year-olds with a migration background participate in early childhood education and care (ECEC), an increasing proportion which is getting close to that of the native population. Participation in ECEC by those under 3 with a migrant background has doubled to 22% since 2009. This is also positive, even though native-born children of the same age still have a significantly higher rate (38% in 2015). An important factor in this increase has been the establishment of a right to a place in early childhood education and care, in a first stage as of age 3 and now as of age 1. A German national education report emphasises that students with a migrant background are not a homogeneous group and that the participation in education of students with a migrant background very much varies according to country of origin and socioeconomic

background. One of the key challenges is creating sufficient opportunities for learning German as a second language, with the system facing a shortage of teachers who are competent in this area (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2016, Massumi 2015, European Commission 2016).

From a European comparative perspective, the Netherlands perform well when it comes to ensuring equitable outcomes in its education system. The participation rate in early childhood education and care is higher than the EU average and the early school leaving rate has been declining, while the impact of socio-economic background on PISA results is similar to the German results in PISA 2015. The national authorities identify challenges to the participation of low-income families in early childhood education and care, and related to educational inequality. As in Sweden, the municipalities are largely responsible for the education provided to asylum seekers and they work with schools to deliver it. The trend is to provide part-time introductory classes focused on learning Dutch as a second language combined with part-time mainstream education. Schools with asylum seekers are eligible for various types of financial assistance and can apply for additional funds from the Ministry when these do not suffice (European Commission 2016d).

In Sweden, the performance gap between foreign-born and native-born students continues to be large despite the positive institutional setting. In PISA 2015, 41% of students with an immigrant background performed below the baseline level in science, as compared to 17% of the native population. The proportion of low achievers is even higher for first-generation migrants (50%), but second-generation immigrants partially catch up (33%, also see OECD 2016b). The transition between compulsory and upper secondary schooling is a particular hurdle for many foreign-born students. While the national average for students who qualify for a 'national programme'





at upper secondary level is nearly 90 %, only 52 % of students who migrated after the age of seven qualify. The age at arrival is crucial, as the above-mentioned figure drops to 28% for those arriving in the last four years of compulsory schooling (aged 12-15).

Since 2006 school outcomes have steadily deteriorated among those born abroad. The Swedish national agency for education attributes this to a higher proportion of students arriving in Sweden at an older age and to the fact that those who immigrated after the age of seven have increasingly come from countries with a weaker school system. Research evidence also suggests that their performance has been negatively affected by physical and organisational separation from mainstream education, poor mapping of students' previous knowledge and a lack of individualised support (European Commission 2016e).

School segregation is also a challenge in Sweden. A two-year limit for introductory classes was introduced through legislation in early 2016 because too many students stayed in separate classes too long, and because physical separation of integration classes from mainstream classes strengthened educational segregation. Residential segregation adds to the challenge. Sweden has taken many actions to tackle this problem, such as obliging municipalities to take socio-economic background into account in school financing and the new government regulation that came into force on 1 January 2016 reforming the process of receiving and schooling newly arrived students (European Commission 2016g). In addition, following the disappointing 2006 to 2012 PISA results, significant measures were taken to support the continual professional development of teachers such as a series of "Boost for Teachers" programmes, "Boost for Mathematics", "Boost for Reading" and a career development reform, which contributed to a reversal of the trend in PISA 2015 (European Commission 2016f).

More generally, as regards the pros and cons of organising so-called welcome or introduction classes as compared to immediate integration into mainstream classes, the policymakers who participated in a peer learning event organised by the Swedish Ministry of Education jointly with the Commission in April 2016 found that organisational models were less important but that emphasis should be put on the individual needs of newly arrived migrants, i.e. quick skills assessment, language and literacy support, etc. The participants found it important to have high expectations and that integration was not only seen as an issue to be accomplished by second language teachers but by all teachers and the school community at large (i.e. including support staff, parents, municipalities, youth services and civil society). Like Crul et al., the participants in this peer learning event referred to the transfer to mainstream education and the continued availability of support in mainstream education as a main point of attention (European Commission 2016e). In practice, the decision on the model to follow (direct integration or introductory classes) has recently seemed to depend less on pedagogical preferences than on the number of newly arriving children to be taught. In Germany, the pattern seems to be that the federal states (*'Länder'*) which have received lower numbers of refugees opt for direct integration while integration classes are chosen where there are many.

As for tracking, it is indeed often seen as an institutional obstacle to the educational mobility of socially disadvantaged children. However, it is not clear to what extent it explains the comparatively lower performance of refugee students arriving at the age of twelve compared to those who arrive at younger ages. The earlier a child arrives in a host country, the greater his or her chances are to learn the language of the host country and to start a successful education pathway. This fact is also true in systems which do not foresee early tracking in lower secondary education. As mentioned above,





during the last few years Sweden has also seen a downward trend in the education results of migrant children, which national experts have attributed to a higher proportion of students arriving in the country at an older age and to the characteristics of the school systems in the countries of origin.

In terms of defining educational success, Crul et al. put great emphasis on access to higher education. In countries such as the Netherlands and Germany, vocational education and training can, however, also be the start of a successful education pathway and professional career. Children arriving at a young age should indeed have the same opportunities to succeed as natives, including in terms of their chances to gain a qualification providing access to higher education. Nevertheless, for young migrants arriving at an age of 12, 14 or 16 who, in addition, might have only been to school in their home country for a few years, other education pathways should also be considered a success. Some of these teenagers will make their way to higher education if adequately supported. For others, the priority will be to ensure that they reach a school education certificate and that they acquire the skills necessary to succeed in an apprenticeship, instead of ending up as unskilled workers in low paid and insecure jobs. In countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and Austria, the successful completion of vocational training provides good access to the labour market and opens opportunities for further learning. This is all the more true since for demographic reasons vocational education and training programmes in Germany are currently facing problems in filling all the available apprenticeship places with suitable candidates.

## 5. Conclusions

For countries like Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany, immigration is not a new phenomenon. Nevertheless, migrants still tend to have worse education results and some of the challenges identified 20 years ago are still relevant today. For

example, a recent study in Germany found that neither in teachers' initial training nor in their continual professional development is teaching in multilingual and multicultural classrooms systematically provided or demanded by students and teachers in all federal states ('Länder,' Mercator/SVR 2016). While this is disappointing, the good news is that policymakers know very well what needs to be done. Among experts and policymakers in the field there seems to be broad agreement on the appropriate policy solutions, notably early access to education, language learning and support, skills assessment, individualised support, teacher and staff training, and approaches involving actors in and around the school in school development (European Commission 2015, 2016a; OECD 2015). Some of these measures have already been implemented in recent years, such as promoting access to early childhood education and early language support. The PISA data illustrate that such measures can indeed produce positive results in the medium term. Finally, the 2015 crisis also led to a strong mobilisation of policymakers, practitioners, and civil society. In the countries most affected, for example, the number of schools involved in integrating newly arrived migrants is unprecedented, also including schools on the academically oriented education tracks.

It is still too early to judge, but in this perspective the recent influx of refugees and the pressure it has created on education systems to provide viable solutions is also an opportunity to innovate and to overcome traditional obstacles. The extraordinary pressure that European societies, policymakers, schools, and teachers are faced with, on the one hand, combined with the knowledge about viable policy solutions, on the other hand, provides the basis for policy development in all the countries discussed in this paper even under divergent institutional conditions. This dynamic may eventually also spur the development of more inclusive education systems in the medium to long term.



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# SECTION 3

## LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION



# REFUGEE AND MIGRANT LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION: EUROPE IN NEED OF A NEW POLICY AGENDA

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## 1. Introduction

Until recently, many Europeans had only seen images of large refugee camps and desperate families trying to cross borders on TV screens. However, the unprecedented influx of refugees into Europe over the last two years, the largest since World War II,<sup>1</sup> has made refugee scenes a reality for many European neighbourhoods. Feelings of empathy and shock have been increasingly accompanied by worries about the consequences that the refugee crisis will have for society, welfare institutions and labour markets. In almost all the EU member states these worries have influenced public opinion and political action, causing temporary closings of Schengen borders and resistance to a fair allocation of refugees across Europe.

The refugee crisis soon became a political crisis that gave rise to populist parties. The topic was increasingly conflated with other migration issues: economic or educational migration, welfare migration and even internal EU labour mobility. Brexit, the unexpected vote of the British to leave the European Union, was also apparently

<sup>1</sup> See, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/global-migration-hits-highest-level-since-world-war-ii.aspx>.

influenced by migration concerns. The migration topic is suddenly determining the results of elections in EU member states and resulting in strong disagreements about how to deal with the crisis. Hence, the migration issue is acting like a catalyst in the European Union's endgame, although it is only misused in the face of weak political structures.

The current crisis can be seen as a crisis of Europe and its institutions rather than one of European migration. Refugees and internal labour mobility have not been the cause of the crisis. On the contrary, scientific evidence demonstrates that most of the current worries are unfounded. Recent empirical studies (Kahanec and Zimmermann 2009 & 2016; Zimmermann, 2014a; Blau and Mackie 2016) point to the economic opportunities provided by immigration and suggest how Europe could achieve a fair and effective allocation of migrants that would preserve European principles and European unity. These empirical findings should be taken into account by European political actors in a spirit of evidence-based policymaking in their efforts to establish a functioning integration policy.

The following considerations will therefore put the so-called European migration or refugee crisis into perspective. On the one hand, there are undoubtedly enormous challenges which affect core values of the European Union that are the basis of the European idea. But on the other hand, the current crisis also offers great opportunities for a shrinking and aging Europe – especially in terms of enhanced labour mobility – as a basis for future growth and welfare. The analysis will mainly focus on the employment aspect of migration. To what extent are migrants, whether they are workers or refugees, able to find jobs or become self-employed, finance their lives and contribute to the economic success of their host country? Are they harmful or beneficial for native workers? And which policies can foster and manage the inflow effectively?



In Section 2 the chapter first investigates the challenges (and opportunities) related to migrant and refugee inflows. Section 3 then reviews some of the labour market effects, both for the migrants and for natives. Finally, Section 4 studies major policy approaches to ensuring the best performance of the host labour markets in Europe.

## 2. Challenges to face: those present and those to come<sup>2</sup>

Who should be taken care of? From a legal, political and social viewpoint, work migrants, family migrants, educational migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are quite different categories.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, all of these categories may have a strong interest in seeking work, either through employment or self-employment, for at least some time. Hence, we cannot rule out economic motives for any type of migrant and neither should this be an argument for excluding them from a debate about optimal integration into labour markets. The current practice of many countries of limiting asylum seekers' access to their national labour markets is problematic.<sup>4</sup> Under the 1951 Refugee Convention recognized refugees are allowed to work immediately. However, since all EU member states have their own migration policies, the labour mobility of third-country nationals between EU countries remains restricted, including for those who have official refugee status.

2 Also see Hinte et al. (2015); Zimmermann (2014a).

3 Asylum seekers and refugees are both special types of migrants, whereas in a legal sense asylum seekers or asylees are those who have formally filed an asylum application and refugees are those who have been granted refugee status (Constant and Zimmermann, 2016). These terms are often used much more broadly in the public debate, with refugees being considered to include all those fleeing unpleasant conditions in the home country (not necessarily applying for asylum, still waiting or preparing for the application, or not receiving formal status but still staying in the country) and asylum seekers those who plan to file an application. Here, we follow the more general interpretation while making it clear in the context when we focus on the legal terms.

4 See Constant and Zimmermann (2016) for a detailed analysis of the current labour market access rights of legal asylum seekers in the EU member countries.

Some argue that an early integration of asylum seekers into the labour market would make it harder to maintain the distinction between economic migrants and refugees since it would incentivize migrants with purely economic motivations to apply for asylum. However, it is the current system itself that has corrupted this distinction. It could be made more successfully if there were (i) a well-defined Europe-wide economic immigration channel outlined in an immigration law and (ii) a rigorous and effective asylum application system with early profiling, fast decisions and deportation when necessary.

Why is labour mobility economically beneficial? It contributes to an optimal allocation of resources, and therefore generates higher and better output and more welfare. It supports a quick adjustment of labour markets, particularly after asymmetric regional shocks, and hence reduces unemployment. For a long time, visionary European leaders have been pushing to complete the Single European Labour Market, but it is still incomplete.

Free movement of labour represents a core value of the European Union, as established in the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. Already in 1951, the Treaty of Paris allowed for free movement of workers in the coal and steel industries, and in 1957 the Treaty of Rome established the right of free movement of workers throughout the European Economic Community. Since then, the consensus in the European Union has been that by fostering growth through a more efficient allocation of labour between countries with labour surpluses and those with labour shortages, the free movement of labour can create greater economic welfare, increase European social-cultural integration, and strengthen a shared European identity.

However, recent developments clearly demonstrate that this consensus, if not already broken, is in imminent danger. Even before the current situation, EU states tended to view any large-





scale international migration as a threat to the sovereignty of their national and regional borders, their economies and their societies. Most member states have reacted in a backward-looking way to influxes of refugees by tightening controls on irregular access to their territories and, in some cases, on legal channels. However, as one might have expected, the increasing restrictions have not been effective in avoiding or controlling the influx of refugees and other migrants. Instead, they have resulted in migrants making increased efforts to reach Europe, which in turn exposes vulnerable migrants to greater risks.

The rising concerns about mobility in the political debates before and after the Brexit vote in many European member states demonstrate insufficient understanding of the substantial benefits of migration to the performance of the economy and a convoluted understanding of the value of a European Union of 28 member states. Despite the refugee crisis, it is still not too much labour migration but too little mobility of workers that is at the core of the European migration challenge. Both migration across regions within a country and between countries within Europe has been declining over recent decades. Interregional migration has played a much smaller role in economic adjustments in Europe than in the United States, where it has been an important component of the relative success of the American economy for many years. It is only recently that Europe has become more flexible, while the United States labour market has become less flexible. This has been partly a consequence of the EU Eastern enlargements and, more recently, a consequence of the economic divergence of European countries during and after the Great Recession. Migrants from outside the EU are typically more mobile and they also play a significant role in internal EU mobility (Jauer et al. 2016). Workers in the euro-zone countries have become more mobile than those in countries outside this zone (Arpaia et al., 2014). Nonetheless, internal mobility in the

EU is far below the optimum level that could be achieved.

On the one hand, migration reacts to economic differences, namely wages and unemployment, but only slightly to welfare benefits. Ethnic networks play a dominant role, however. Migrants often select destinations because others of the same ethnic or local origin have chosen them before and can assist them in finding jobs and accommodation. The most important cause of immobility, on the other hand, is a lack of foreign language skills. Other major causes are rising female labour market participation and less mobile double-income households, an increase in the home ownership rate, the continued existence of barriers to the transferability of social security entitlements, insufficient recognition of formal qualifications, insufficient transparency of the European job market and online search engines, and persistent long-term unemployment, which leads to the increased relevance of social networks in overcoming individual and cultural barriers.

A further European challenge is demography and the shift in demand from low-skilled to highly-skilled workers. The UN's Population Division currently estimates that 3% of the world's population are international migrants – a number that has been very stable for decades, but all developed economies face a strong and increasing excess demand for skilled labour. This is brought about by technological change, population aging and, in the case of Europe, by a substantial future decrease in the native European workforce.

Europe as a whole is thus increasingly drawn into a competition to provide the institutional settings for its companies to attract skilled international labour to fill the gaps. However, unlike traditional immigration countries, such as the United States, Canada and Australia, Europe has no standing in the international labour market for highly-skilled people. Phenomena like immigration, return migration, onward migration and circular



migration are new challenges that Europe will rapidly need to learn to deal with in this phase of the internationalization of the labour market. How do refugees fit into this picture? Refugees can help alleviate Europe's demographic disruptions, at least in the long run.

Can we manage migration and control our borders effectively? The correct answer is probably negative. The potential for migration is enormous. For instance, about 86% of the 14 million refugees in 2014 live in developing countries (World Bank 2016) and few have so far migrated to highly developed countries. One obvious approach is to impose immigration restrictions: through legal measures, by tightening border controls or even by building fences and walls. A better approach would be to reach agreements with neighbouring states to collaborate on monitoring and managing migration flows. Such measures are being discussed in the context of protecting borders in southern Europe. However, if the factors that contribute to migration persist, political and geographical realities suggest that it will be difficult to control external borders sufficiently in the long run.

Furthermore, a common empirical finding in many countries is that imposing immigration restrictions often achieves opposite outcomes (more or different migrants) to those that were intended (fewer or other migrants).<sup>5</sup> This is because efforts by immigrants to enter countries illegally tend to increase: if legal entry becomes difficult, workers who are highly motivated by push or pull factors will try to enter illegally. In addition, once they are in a country, workers will tend to stay or stay longer because returning is so difficult. As a result, return and onward migration collapse. And migrants who cannot easily move into and out of the host country are more likely to bring family members with them when they migrate, or to bring them in later when they realize that they cannot move back and forth.

5 For an analysis of border control issues, see Massey and Pren (2012), Orrenius (2014), Massey et al. (2016) and Zimmermann (2014b).

There are numerous examples of immigration restrictions that have backfired. A prominent example in the United States is the Bracero programme. Under this free labour mobility programme, which began in 1942, workers from Mexico, mainly men, could travel into three US states along the border for temporary jobs – working primarily for growers in California and agricultural employers in Texas. The immigrants relied heavily on social networks that connected workers in Mexico with employers in the US. Although the programme was an effective system of circular labour migration aimed at temporary work, it was officially terminated in 1964 amidst the rise of the civil rights movement. As a result (and due to other restrictive immigration and border policies), Mexican workers and their families started to migrate into the US ‘illegally.’ Massive and costly increases in border enforcement had little deterrence effect on undocumented migrants. On the contrary, return migration decreased because the militarization of the border increased the costs and risks for Mexican migrants, so they stayed longer once they had managed to cross the border. In addition, they brought their families and began settling permanently throughout the US. Thus, barriers that were installed to reduce labour migration from Mexico to the US backfired and transformed a successful temporary migration scheme into a flow of a similar number of undocumented migrants, who eventually became *de facto* permanent residents in the US.

Some recent research confirms these earlier findings. For example, a study that examines the period after the 1986 adoption by Congress of the Immigration Reform and Control Act finds that for every million-dollar increase in the border patrol's budget, the odds that a migrant would return home to Mexico in any given year dropped by 89% (Massey et al 2015).

As Zimmermann (2014b) shows, similar effects could be observed in Europe when guestworker recruitment ended in 1973. Turks, unlike most of



the other recruited ethnicities that originated from other member states of the European Economic Community, did not enjoy free mobility. While for other guestworkers whose countries became EU members the stock of immigrants decreased or stagnated, the numbers of Turkish nationals rose substantially. This occurred because the guestworkers stayed, brought their families to Germany, and had high fertility.

From a global perspective, additional long-term challenges arise. With the inescapable progress of globalization in general, and given the advances in human mobility in particular, labour markets will inevitably become more integrated. In many countries the impending demographic disruptions will set in with full force in the coming years. Climate change, natural disasters and the rise of the BIC countries (Brazil, India and China) will pose additional labour market challenges. Expansion of the resources available to the developing world and a strong increase in human capital will generate more opportunities for global mobility. All of these factors will eventually require a global reallocation of resources. This will force international and domestic labour markets to undergo major adjustment processes. A strong demand for skilled workers together with the fight against extreme economic inequality, the creation of 'good' jobs, and increased employment of specific groups (such as the young, the old, females, low-skilled and ethnic minority workers) will need scientific monitoring and evaluation and a rising interest on the part of policymakers.

### 3. Work integration experiences

There is now a large literature about the labour market consequences of immigration for all parts of the world, including Europe. Here, I provide a brief but focused overview. The questions of interest are: How do migrants integrate into the labour force and how quickly do they begin to perform in the education and economic systems

of the host country? Do they affect the jobs, wages or educational chances of natives? And what is their take-up of welfare benefits?

Some state of the art is covered in the handbooks by Chiswick and Miller (2015) and Constant and Zimmermann (2013). Assimilation to the economic status of natives has been shown to be very slow, and it is sometimes not even achieved by the second generation. Although theoretically possible, migrants typically do not take jobs away (Constant 2014), do not depress the wages of natives (Peri 2014) and do not abuse the welfare system (Giulietti 2014). The 'natural experiment' of the EU's Eastern enlargement in 2004 broadly confirmed these findings (see Kahanec and Zimmermann, 2009, 2016). Migrants from the new member states mostly found work without having a relevant negative impact on the labour market outcomes of natives. In spite of the negative public migration debate in the context of the Brexit campaign, these findings were also confirmed for the UK. Labour migration induced by EU enlargement was also beneficial for this country (Wadsworth et al. 2016), which received the largest additional inflow of migrant workers after immediately opening up its labour market to the new EU member states. A recently published report by a highly ranked commission of the National Academies of the US (Blau and Mackie 2016) confirms the same positive outcome there: in general, migrants are good for the US economy and seldom harm the natives.

How do refugees fit into this picture? A number of studies have investigated the labour market integration of refugees or have compared their chances across different types of entry categories.<sup>6</sup>

6 For Denmark and Germany, see, e.g., Constant and Zimmermann (2005a, 2005b), who look at entry categories and also study self-employment. See Devoretz et al. (2005) for Canada; Cobb-Clark (2006) for Australia; Aydemir (2011) for Canada; Bevelander and Pendakur (2009) for Sweden; Hartog and Zorlu (2009) for The Netherlands; Foged and Peri (2016) for Denmark; and Ceritoglu et al. (2015) and Balkan and Tumen (2016) for Turkey. Hatton (2013) and Tumen (2015) provide insightful literature reviews covering some of these studies.



Asylum seekers and refugees may be younger and better motivated than other non-economic migrants, but they integrate slowly, have problems finding employment, have more difficulties in organizing self-employment and hence also suffer from lower earnings. This is mainly a result of insufficient or lack of schooling and low host-country language proficiency. A recent OECD (2016) report on refugees supports this general picture for 25 EU countries using the pre-crisis 2014 AdHoc Module of the European Labour Force Survey. According to the report, 80% of all refugees are clustered in four member states (Germany, the UK, Sweden and France). A remarkable 20% of the working-age refugees have tertiary education. However, their allocation varies much across Europe and the size of this group has decreased with recent cohorts. About 42% have at most lower secondary education. In general, “refugees represent one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants in the labour market.... It takes refugees up to 20 years to have a similar employment rate as the native-born” (OECD 2016, pp. 5-6).

Refugees and asylum seekers often perform comparably to, but generally still worse than, migrants who came as family members. Immigration through a work status mostly leads to a superior integration path thereafter. These findings suggest that there are long-lasting effects of the legal status at entry into the country on the labour market potential of immigrants (Constant and Zimmermann, 2005a, 2005b). Hence, a selective immigration policy might be helpful to ensure individuals who can be more successful in the labour market are attracted. Such a selection might even be possible for asylum seekers and refugees when executed in a European context (see Section 4 of this chapter).

The allocation of migrants and refugees within countries and among EU member states is an issue of substantial concern. Countries like Germany have for a long time had an internal quota system to allocate refugees and asylum seekers across

states (*‘Länder’*), a strategy also applied in other countries, such as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK (Hatton, 2013). Migrants were often placed outside major cities in local areas, which could cause social tensions and keep them away from attractive labour markets and ethnic networks. These regulations entailed no work permit being issued until refugee status was recognised. As a consequence, the medium-term employability of refugees was likely to be negatively affected since major integration mechanisms were excluded.

These policies were questioned and only recently have they been somewhat relaxed (Constant and Zimmermann, 2016).<sup>7</sup> Early integration policies should be able to ensure a much better labour market integration of refugees. Such policies also need to deal with the fact that by their very nature many refugees are at first only temporary migrants and may wish to return to their home countries after the situation there has improved, or to move to another country for family or labour market reasons. Moreover, refugees move in ethnic and family networks and pursue economic interests when searching for a place to stay. This creates an opportunity to mobilize the diaspora for integration. Thus, refugees can also help moderate Europe’s demographic disruptions and meet the needs for mobile workers. However, this is much more difficult to achieve than is sometimes suggested in public debates and will take much more time and many more integration efforts. The main advantage of refugees is that they are typically young and highly motivated.

Given the slow labour market integration of refugees, it is obviously unlikely that they will offer much competition to native workers. At worst, it is the group of the low-skilled natives and other migrants that can expect a negative impact. Tumen (2015) studies some of the major publications on the labour market consequences of refugee inflows

7 For an overview of the current legal details of the labour market access of asylees, see Constant and Zimmermann (2016).





from the perspective of ‘natural experiments.’ The argument he finds is that, unlike normal labour demand-driven migration that is endogenous and selective, a strong, fast and unexpected inflow of refugees may be considered exogenous and hence can more convincingly identify the true impact of migratory movements on the labour market outcomes of native workers. A counter-argument is that refugees may not be close enough in their profiles and reactions to labour migrants for it to be possible to learn much about the topic in general. Typically, the key empirical studies find no effects on wages and a negative, albeit small, effect on employment, largely in the unskilled sector.<sup>8</sup>

The actual impacts of large refugee inflows depend on local institutional settings. For example, a study analysing the effects of the recent inflow of Syrian refugees into southeast Turkey shows that while wage levels were unaffected, the influx did in fact increase unemployment among the Turkish residents (Ceritoglu et al. 2015). However, a closer look reveals that the locals who lost their jobs mainly worked in Turkey’s large informal sector. There, the refugee inflows reduced the informal employment ratio by approximately 2.2%. The authors conclude that the prevalence of informal employment in Turkey amplified the negative impact of Syrian refugee inflows on native labour market outcomes. For unrecognized refugees, the informal sector is the only place where they can find work, as the Turkish government has not provided them with work permits.<sup>9</sup>

The Turkish case therefore shows the importance and necessity of considering granting immigrants access to local labour markets. Many refugees

8 See Card (1990) for Cuba to the US; Hunt (1992) for Algeria to France; Carrington and Lima (1996) for Angola and Mozambique to Portugal; Friedberg (2001) for the Soviet Union to Israel; Maystadt and Verwimp (2014) for Burundi and Rwanda to Tanzania; Foged and Peri (2016) for Denmark; and Ceritoglu et al. (2015) for Turkey. See Borjas and Monras (2016) for a recent confirmation of these findings.

9 In the meanwhile, the Turkish government has relaxed labour market access for Syrian war refugees.

have usable skills and professional qualifications, and are committed to work. Nevertheless, until not so long ago they were effectively barred from seeking employment. Germany has also recently eased its restrictions on labour market access for asylees (Constant and Zimmermann 2016). This gives them a chance to earn their own living, to develop their professional skills further, and to achieve social integration.

Foged and Peri (2016) take up another important aspect of the refugee-native relationship. They study the massive influx of refugees to Denmark during the period 1991-2008 and its impact on the labour market outcomes of low-skilled Danes. Contrary to popular belief, they do not find an increase in the probability of unemployment for the unskilled Danish population. Instead, the findings suggest that the immigrants, who were mainly refugees from former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq, caused an ‘occupational upgrading and specialization’ of native Danish employees.

The story behind these results is quite similar to what happened in Germany when the ‘guest workers’ arrived in the 1960s (Zimmermann 1996). While immigrants are initially restricted to occupations and jobs consisting of manual tasks because of language problems, natives leave these jobs by specializing into more complex occupations with a primarily interactive task content. Accordingly, the influx of guestworkers had a positive effect on wages and the mobility of the native low-skilled population, who climbed up the job ladder.

## 4. Policy approaches

The above review has shown that, according to global evidence, migration is largely beneficial, although there may be significant differences between different types of immigration channels. Roughly speaking, economic migrants, in particular when they are screened by immigration





policies, are naturally easier to integrate into the labor market than refugees and asylum seekers, who are forced to migrate abruptly. But destination countries do not have much choice between the two kinds of migrants. International laws and the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951 (signed by 144 nations) specify humanitarian obligations to refugees and asylum seekers. It outlines the obligations of the host countries to protect refugees and provides for non-refoulement, meaning that refugees should not be returned to a country in which their lives or freedom would be threatened. In the absence of clear international norms for “burden sharing” in the admission of refugees, foreign policy needs to achieve an earlier and better allocation between Europe and the world and within the EU. This is obviously not an easy task. A closed border policy for real refugees and asylum seekers is not only inhuman but also largely impossible to impose. It will only create misery, illegal migration and substantial economic and social costs. Similarly, there might be better policy approaches than simple border controls against illegal economic migration.

Given the substantial economic potential that migration has, the resistance against human mobility results from a misunderstanding of the facts, as well as ignorance or misuse of the topic for political purposes. Scientists certainly have a duty to share their knowledge with the broader public, the media and policymakers. Reports of Academies of Sciences like the National Academies of the United States (Blau and Mackie 2016) are important for the debate. Those who understand have to stand up against political pressures and communicate by using the media properly. To do this, one has to deal with attitudes against migrants and refugees. Negative attitudes are often concentrated in parts of a country or in countries without a large number of migrants or refugees, or among people who misjudge the true impacts on the labour market and the economy (Bauer et al. 2000; Dustmann 2007; van Noort

2016). Communication strategies to inform the public about these impacts and to profile successful individuals or contexts might help to moderate such attitudes. The inability of the political class to execute such a strategy is partly responsible for the currently perceived refugee or migration crisis. It is more a crisis of political leadership.

Managing migration is a somewhat difficult task. As pointed out in Section 2, economic research has shown that limiting labour migration does not necessarily stop immigration, particularly circular migration, as previous experiences (US-Mexico, Europe after 1973) have shown. It may even result in more migration due to a decline in return migration and induced family and social migration, which change the nature of the process. In general, the relevance of emigration is typically misunderstood and underestimated in public debates. Labour migrants mostly return or move on when jobs are no longer available or when better alternatives appear. Refugees too can either return if the situation in the home country improves or move further on when other opportunities come up. Point systems provide transparency for migrants and the host country and have been shown to be effective to screen and guide mobility. The criteria may explicitly include integration indicators, such as education, language proficiency, job characteristics and social activities. An even better, but more controversial, approach is to use the labour market as a filter for migration. Those who have a job offer can come and stay, as long as the work relationship persists. Those who can no longer find a job have to leave, at least after a transition period, if they do not obtain a permanent residence permit. Circular migration contracts between countries may ease such relationships, which are very useful to meet demands for flexibility in host countries. Those who stay illegally may lose their right to return when a new job offer arrives. After a transition period, a world-wide regime of free labour mobility would probably only result in a modest increase in



labour mobility, as migration experiences suggest. Offering successful students the option of staying if they find a job after some transition period is the most effective long-term immigration policy.

Immigration regulations on asylum seekers and refugees are partly responsible for their weak performance in the labour market, as was discussed in the previous section. For instance, a refugee or asylum seeker could receive the right to move to the employment channel in a points-based admission system as soon as she/he gets a decent job offer.<sup>10</sup> They should be allowed to work as quickly as possible and not be restricted to a particular region within the country, or after recognition as a refugee even in their initial host EU state. This would improve their long-term labour market attachment. It is a well-known fact about long-term unemployment that being out of a job is detrimental to re-entry into regular employment; this also holds true for refugees and asylum seekers.

The objections against free labour mobility for asylum seekers and recognized refugees are that asylum procedures cannot be carried out if asylum seekers can freely move to other locations, and a fair distribution of refugees across member states presupposes that secondary migration is restricted. To clarify, the asylum procedure should be carried out in the country where the application was filed. However, this should not prevent job mobility within the country, as is now the practice in countries such as Austria and Germany (Constant and Zimmermann, 2016). Otherwise, taking up work is somewhat difficult for those not allocated to vibrant economic areas. Furthermore, Europe-wide fairness comes into the initial allocation and asylum procedure. Asylum seekers can be seen as a burden, and it is considered that they should stay in the host country. However, it is in the interest of the whole EU area that refugees be able to move to

where they are most productive and can finance themselves, on the condition that they have a work contract. If non-working refugees were to distribute themselves in a substantially unbalanced way, one could introduce compensation payments between countries. The profiling of refugees and asylum seekers in special arrival centres at Europe's borders, directly organized and financed by the European Union, would take the heat out of the public debate and define a special role for countries such as Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain. The kind of profiling known from the work of labour offices can help to better predict the opportunities for migrants in host countries and their potential, in particular for the labour market. Profiling and integration need new institutions and procedures. For allocation to take place already at the borders one needs an initial temporary quota system across European member states guaranteeing a balanced distribution of asylum-seekers across the EU following acceptable criteria, such as population size, GDP, unemployment rates, and existing related diasporas (Rinne and Zimmermann 2015). European solidarity still needs to be developed to execute either such a quota system or compensation payments. Since 2015, Sweden, Hungary, Austria and Germany have registered above-average numbers of asylum applications, both per capita and in absolute sizes. In absolute terms, Germany took nearly half of the newly registered 2.3 million asylum applications from 2015 to September 2016. Other larger countries such as Italy, France and the UK have been much more reluctant. However, while the number of asylum applications in Germany further increased in 2016, restrictive policies in Austria, Hungary and Sweden led to substantially reduced numbers there. Hungary even seems to encourage registered asylum seekers to leave the country; its recognition rate in 2015 declined to practically zero (UNHCR, 2015).

As an alternative to such quotas, Moraga and Rapoport (2015) have recently proposed an EU-

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10 While refugees are temporary migrants, in special cases this could also lead to a permanent residence permit and even citizenship of the host country.



wide market for tradable refugee quotas. While offering asylum to refugees with valid claims is considered an international public good, it constitutes a significant financial burden on the particular receiving country. A market mechanism could efficiently distribute immigrants to countries with the lowest costs, including the direct costs of accommodation and administration, and also those of social and political distress. Furthermore, a market mechanism could be designed to take into account the preferences of the asylum seekers themselves, for example in terms of cultural and linguistic proximity. The resulting solution could therefore lead to a fair distribution of costs and may also increase public acceptance.

Integration courses and language classes need to be given early attention, if possible already in the profiling phase. Free mobility within the quota country should already be allowed before recognition of refugee status as early as possible; after recognition, mobility should be free across member countries provided that there is a concrete work contract. Like all migrants, refugees also generally migrate in ethnic networks. This offers the opportunity to mobilize a diaspora for integration.

Another strategy involves neighbourhood policies such as those currently developed with Turkey, Egypt and Libya. Circular labour migration contracts between the EU and African countries (like that between Spain and Morocco) could also be effective. In addition, in the long run a revitalization of the EU-Mediterranean Economic Partnership concept could create a buffer zone of prosperity that filters the migration pressure.

## 5. Conclusions

Current events clearly indicate that Europe in general and the European Union in particular have arrived at a crucial stage in their history. The refugee crisis serves as a catalyst revealing that the 'old continent' is truly at a crossroads. There

will either be more integration, coordination and common responsibility or the European Union could break apart.

At this stage, the answer to any crisis must be 'more Europe.' Recent developments have clearly shown that more integration is needed to address the economic, social and demographic problems of our time. If anything, the refugee crisis gives Europeans another opportunity to strengthen and modernize their bonds. Europe must certainly revisit its overall immigration policy; nevertheless, it must not lose its democratic ideals and the European idea.

The free movement of EU citizens and workers within the European Union is one of the cornerstones of European integration. It is enshrined in the European Treaties. In a free and integrated Europe, there is no place for first and second-class citizens. Any intentions of restricting the free movement of labour as a fundamental right stand against Europeans' well-understood interests in a dynamic and prosperous economy. Free labour mobility serves as a means to better allocate shrinking human capital capacities within the EU. In short, the free movement of labour can foster economic dynamism, promote economic growth and advance competitiveness.

Europe therefore needs to join forces to expand the European dream, rather than stifle it or narrow it down well before it has reached its real potential. It currently seems that many EU member states want a 'free ride,' but the benefits of the EU come at a price. The current refugee crisis could therefore mark the dawn of a new era, but it also has the potential to mark the end of the European idea. Europe must now act jointly and seize the chance to reinvent itself to ultimately become the 'United States of Europe.' Only this model will put it on a level playing field with the US and China in the long term.



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# EUROPE AND THE ‘REFUGEE/MIGRATION CRISIS’: STARTING POINTS FOR POLICY DEBATES ABOUT PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Global forced displacement (internal and across borders) is now estimated to exceed 63 million (UNHCR 2016<sup>2</sup>), a record high since the Second World War. The Syrian conflict alone has led to the displacement of over ten million people (just under half of Syria’s total population), including 6.5 million internally displaced people and almost 5 million refugees across borders (UNHCR 2016<sup>3</sup>). As is the case with most geopolitical shocks and displacement crises around the world, the great majority of Syrian refugees (over three quarters) are in neighbouring countries: Turkey (an estimated 2.7 million), Lebanon (1 million), Jordan (656,000), Iraq (228,000) and Egypt (115,000).

The ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and many other countries have also contributed to sharply rising numbers of people arriving in high-income countries to claim asylum, mainly

1 This chapter draws on a forthcoming working paper by the author: Ruhs, M (2016) ‘High-income countries and the global refugee crisis: Assessing alternative pathways to protection.’

2 See <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

3 For the most recent data, see <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

but not only in Europe. The legal pathways for people fleeing conflicts to reach high-income countries for the purpose of claiming asylum are either non-existent or are extremely limited. As a consequence, forced migrants who are trying to claim asylum in high-income countries must do so by engaging in illegal migration – defined here as the unauthorised crossing of national borders – which often involves dangerous journeys across land and/or sea.

Over one million people (half of whom were Syrians and a quarter children) crossed the Mediterranean in 2015.<sup>4</sup> While this number continues to be dwarfed by the much larger numbers of refugees arriving in countries neighbouring conflict zones (e.g. only ten per cent of Syrian refugees are currently in Europe), it constitutes a very large increase in recent historical experience (e.g. 216,000 people crossed the Mediterranean in 2014 and only 59,000 in 2013). In the first eleven months of 2016, 350,000 people reached Europe via the Mediterranean (a quarter of whom were Syrian), a considerable drop from 2015. At the same time, however, the number of people dying/going missing while trying to cross the Mediterranean *rose* from 3,800 in 2015 to over 4,700 in 2016.

European and other high-income countries have struggled and, it is widely agreed, largely failed to find effective policy responses to the large inflow of refugees and migrants and to the growing refugee populations in the countries neighbouring Syria and other conflict zones. As a consequence, we are witnessing major *humanitarian refugee crises*, both in the conflict regions and in some high-income countries (e.g. Greece), and major *political crises* in many high-income countries about how to deal with the issue. The increased inflows of refugees and other migrants have been a major driver of the rise of right-wing parties in a range of European countries in recent years.

4 For the most recent data, see <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>



This short paper aims to establish realistic starting points for debates about more effective policy responses by European and other high-income countries to the displacement caused by the Syrian conflict and other global refugee crises. This may seem like a modest contribution, but given the current state of many policy debates about the protection and integration of refugees and migrants, greater agreement on basic facts and starting points would already constitute considerable progress.

## Starting points

I argue that to have a realistic chance of success any debate about new and more effective policy approaches by European and other high-income countries to what has become widely known as the ‘refugee/migration crisis’ needs to accept the following starting points.

First, the policy challenge will not go away anytime soon. The scale of the forced internal and international displacement caused by many of the world’s current violent conflicts is unlikely to decline drastically in the near future. There is no meaningful end in sight to the conflicts in the countries that are currently among the largest refugee-producing states, such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Eritrea. To deal with this ‘new normal’ more effectively, there is a clear need for policy approaches that move from ‘emergency’ ad-hoc responses to more considered and regulated responses based on a realistic understanding of the likely long-term nature of the issue, its root causes (rather than symptoms such as irregular migration and people smuggling) and the often enduring drivers of forced displacement.

A second and related starting point is that the scale and nature of the policy challenges in high-income countries and the countries in the region (‘first countries of asylum’) are closely linked. The numbers of refugees who risk their lives to seek asylum in high-income countries

depends, at least to a considerable degree, on the quality of protection and opportunities for human development provided in the countries neighbouring the conflict. While protection ‘in the region’ will surely continue to play an important and, arguably, central role in addressing forced displacement and refugee crises, unless this protection provides opportunities for employment and access to services including education (especially for children, who constitute about half of all the refugees in the world), many refugees fleeing countries experiencing protracted conflicts will choose to seek protection and ‘better lives’ in high-income countries instead.

Third, large-scale migration flows that were initially caused by conflict will inevitably lead to a ‘mixed migration’ of people with a range of different and sometimes multiple motivations from a variety of different countries (and not necessarily only from countries where conflicts are taking place). This includes refugees seeking protection but also many others whose primary reason for migration may be: ‘economic’ (e.g. to escape economic destitution or simply to access better employment opportunities that improve their and their families’ economic situations and human development); family-related (e.g. people seeking to join family members who are already in high-income countries); and/or related to education and study (e.g. people wishing to gain access to better education). Although classifying and distinguishing between different types of migrants based on fixed categories (refugees, labour, family and study) is theoretically problematic and often highly contested in practice, it is clear that a significant share of the people arriving in Europe by boat over the past few years are not moving for the primary reason of protection. This is not surprising given the huge inequalities both across and within many countries. The primary reason why only three per cent of the world’s population are migrants despite these inequalities is that the restrictive immigration policies of high-



income countries have kept most people out. Any perception of increased opportunities for legal or illegal migration to high-income countries can, therefore, encourage a range of people with different motivations and from different countries to make the journey. While this reality of mixed migration is not surprising, it does present high-income countries with important and difficult issues of selection and removal/deportation of migrants who, for whatever reasons, have not been granted permission to stay. Any realistic new policy proposal needs to consider and put in place measures that address this selection dilemma.

As a fourth starting point for debate, it needs to be recognised that the policy responses of high-income countries to people fleeing conflicts are driven by a range of objectives relating to the national interest (however defined at a particular point in time), which often take priority over the objective of protection. While international laws and norms demand that policies toward asylum seekers and refugees need to be guided by humanitarian considerations, in practice there is a 'domestic politics of protecting forced migrants' in high-income countries, which can and does vary across countries and over time. The implication is that any realistic new policy proposal needs to seriously consider its political feasibility in different high-income countries. What is and is not politically feasible at any given time in a particular country is obviously not clear and can be debated. Taking account of political feasibility does not mean simply giving in to populist arguments, public anxieties and the rise of the far right, which can be observed in some countries partly as a result of the refugee crisis; it means recognising that policy makers are operating under certain constraints that need to be considered in any realistic policy debate. Calling for greater leadership and vision by politicians without paying attention to the structural and institutional factors that can act as variable policy constraints across countries is unlikely to result

in the implementation of new, more effective and sustainable policy solutions to the refugee crisis.

Fifth, the protection provided to people fleeing conflicts and violence must remain a central criterion for assessing potential policy responses to forced displacement within and across borders. It is helpful – and important – to distinguish between at least three dimensions of protection. The first dimension is the *scale* of protection provided, i.e. how many people are protected by the policy? The second dimension relates to the *selection* of the beneficiaries, i.e. who receives protection under the policy, who is excluded and why? A third important dimension of protection relates to the conditions and *quality* of protection provided. At the most basic level, one can distinguish between temporary and permanent protection. Compared to full refugee status under the Geneva Convention, the different types of subsidiary/temporary protection status are typically associated with significantly fewer rights and more insecurity for refugees. Different policy responses may involve trade-offs between these different dimensions of protection. For example, a policy (e.g. temporary protection) may offer basic physical protection to a large number of people but the quality of protection (e.g. opportunities for longer-term human development and integration) may be limited, so there may be a trade-off between the scale and quality of protection provided.

The sixth important point is that a considerable share of the refugees who have arrived in recent years will stay in Europe permanently. The precise share will depend on a range of factors, including whether refugees are given permanent or temporary protection status. However, even many of those admitted under a temporary protection regime may not be able to return home and will therefore seek to stay in the host country permanently. All this means that the admission and protection of refugees *always* raises important questions about integration. As the contributions to this e-book discuss, 'integration' relates to a



wide range of issues and policy spheres including, for example, the labour market, education, culture and citizenship rights. The admission and the integration of refugees are not separate issues. They are interrelated policy challenges that need to be analysed and addressed together.

Seventh, cooperation among high-income countries in their policy responses to the global displacement crisis is important but cannot be assumed. The failure of European countries to agree to implement a more effective common policy approach to people fleeing from Syria and other conflict areas over the past few years shows that, in practice, the degree of solidarity and responsibility-sharing among EU countries is fairly low (at least in this area of refugee protection). This does not mean that more cooperation cannot be achieved but it cannot simply be assumed as the precondition for new policies. Countries need to be given incentives and reasons to cooperate, as appeals for greater solidarity to address this global humanitarian crisis have, at least so far, not been enough to foster greater supranational and/or global cooperation in practice.

Finally, it should be clear at the outset of any policy debate that no single policy will on its own be sufficient to ease the humanitarian and political crises and reduce the uncontrolled migration flows caused by conflict and forced displacement. More effective policy responses will require a package of policies and a comprehensive approach that includes new policy interventions in and outside the region of conflict. In this sense, any major displacement crisis such as the one we are currently witnessing in Syria requires a global solution that includes both high-income countries and the nations in the conflict region.





# FROM REFUGEES TO WORKERS': WHAT CHALLENGES?

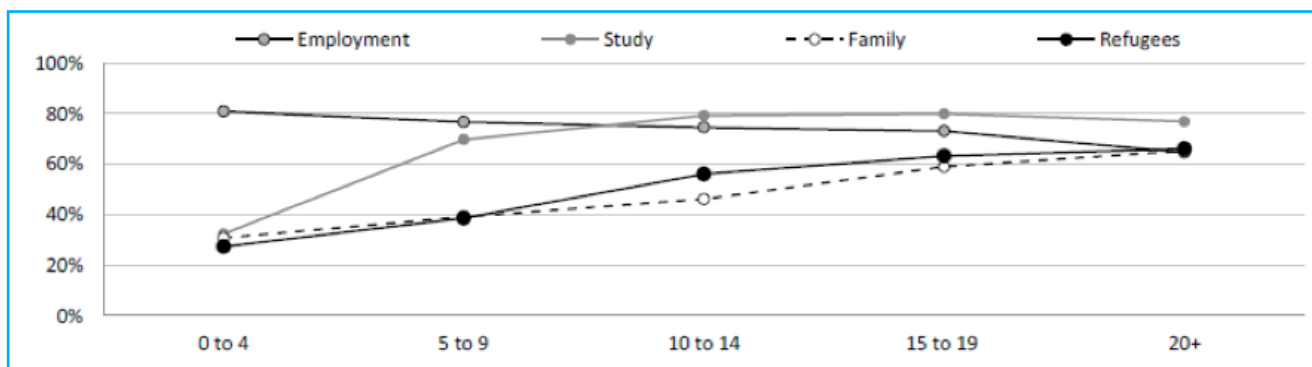
Iván Martín

European University Institute

In his keynote contribution, Prof. Zimmermann highlights the difficulties in the labour market integration of refugees. He refers to a recent OECD study<sup>1</sup> based on the 2014 EU Labour Force survey ad hoc module on the labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants. This study concludes that “the employment outcomes of refugees improve over time, as they integrate more into the labour market and society, but it takes them up to 20 years to catch up with the native-born (65%)” (page 21). Figure 1 below summarizes this statistical evidence. However, even though these labour market integration difficulties are well-researched and there is ample evidence of them,<sup>2</sup> it is still worth shedding a critical light on this statement.

First, it implicitly assumes that refugees *are* (unemployed) workers very much like the native-born of working age (15-65), but this is not the case. Because of their traumatic experiences (in their countries of origin or during their journeys to their countries of asylum), because of their lack of language and cultural knowledge of their host societies, and because of their different educational or work experiences (if any) in their countries of origin, refugees have a different psychological, social and even legal status, and they cannot be easily compared with workers in destination countries. They must first be activated, and this activation can take several years, very much as it takes several years to socialize and ‘activate’ a young European to become a young European worker. As a matter of fact, it is not pure coincidence that the labour market integration performance of refugees is only comparable to that of family reunification beneficiaries who arrive in the European Union: they too take up to 20 years to reach employment and activity rates similar to those of the native-born and other legal migrants (see Figure 1 above). This can best be

**Figure 1. Employment rate by reason of migration and years of residence in the European Union, 15-64, 2014**



Source: OCDE (2016), p. 21. The data cover 25 EU countries.

1 European Commission/OECD (2016), “How are refugees faring on the labour market in Europe?”, *Working Paper 1/16*, <https://www.oecd.org/berlin/publikationen/Arbeitsmarktintegration-von-Fluechtlingen-EK-OECD-Arbeitspapier-092106.pdf>.

2 See Martín, Iván *et alia* (2016), *From Refugees to Workers. Mapping Labour Market Integration Support Measures for Asylum-Seekers and Refugees in EU Member States*, Bertelsmann Stiftung and Migration Policy Centre, pp. 16-17, <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/43504>.

explained because they too, upon arrival, cannot be considered workers even if they are of working age. On the other hand, 53% of these recently-arrived refugees are between 18 and 34 years old, i.e. they have practically all their active lives ahead of them, so investing in their activation is also a good investment for the host societies.



Another important qualification to the ‘20-year lag’ relates to the reference year used to underpin this statement. The EU LFS ad hoc module was implemented in 2014, when there were only 1.8 million refugees having arrived in Europe over the last 25 years in the 25 EU countries covered by the survey. In 2015, 1.3 million persons claimed asylum in Europe, and there were more than 592,000 additional ones in the first six months of 2016. This means that between 2015 and 2016 European countries received the same number of asylum-seekers as over the last 25 years. Obviously, drawing conclusions on their labour market integration on the basis of how refugees arriving over the last 25 years fared up to 2014 risks comparing situations which are not comparable. Not only has the scale of the challenge dramatically increased but policies have also changed. In the very title of his keynote contribution, Prof. Zimmermann underlines that Europe is “in need of a new policy agenda.”

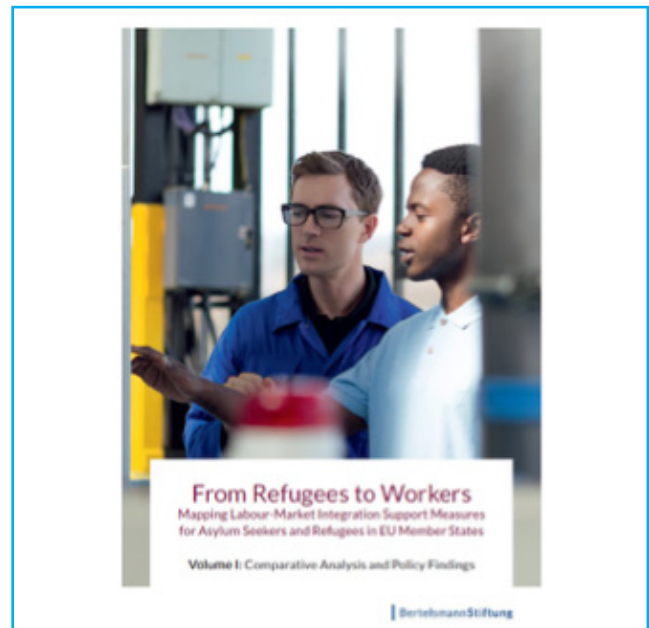
The review of national policies undertaken in the framework of the study ‘From Refugees to Workers’,<sup>3</sup> carried out by the Migration Policy Centre of the EUI, reveals a clear policy trend within the European Union (with the notable exceptions of France and the United Kingdom) to facilitate the integration of asylum seekers and refugees into national labour markets.<sup>4</sup> This is a dramatic departure from the common policy pattern before 2015, when most of the countries instead tried to prevent or delay the labour market integration of asylum-seekers.

Many of these countries are investing substantial resources in facilitating and speeding up this integration, and are designing and implementing all kinds of measures to support the process. The nine country case studies carried out for the study ‘From Refugees to Workers’<sup>5</sup> inventoried

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*, 42-43.

5 See the country case studies for Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom in Volume II of the study. [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/43505/Study\\_fromRefugeesToWorkers\\_2016\\_Vol\\_2.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/43505/Study_fromRefugeesToWorkers_2016_Vol_2.pdf?sequence=1).



94 of these measures in the fields of skills and needs assessment, skills development (including language courses), job intermediation, recognition of skills and qualifications and incentives for economic integration, together with a plethora of integrated programmes putting together many of these measures. The comparative analysis of these measures suggests the emergence of a kind of ‘standard’ labour market integration package. The four key elements in this package are: 1) early skills assessment; 2) an ‘introduction’ programme including general cultural orientation, but sometimes also socio-professional orientation and even some training; 3) intensive language courses; and 4) access to general job intermediation services. Evidence on the effectiveness and impact of these measures is not yet available. The study just managed to identify some success factors based on the perceptions of the actors involved (see pages 44-50). What is clear, however, is that there is no quick fix, that the labour market integration of refugees (precisely because they are not workers on their arrival) is a complex and gradual process, and that there is no model of success to build on anywhere in the European Union. However, assuming that the measures implemented and the resources mobilised have at least some impact over the short to medium



term, they will fundamentally change the context and process of refugee labour market integration in Europe with respect to what we knew before 2015, and hopefully they will reduce the above-mentioned 20-year period.

Nevertheless, many challenges remain, including in terms of policy interventions to facilitate the labour market integration of refugees (which we call REFISMES – Refugee Labour Market Integration Support Measures). The study ‘From Refugees to Workers’ identifies the following main ones:

### Fragmentation of REFISMES

A general overview of REFISMES in all the countries studied shows a plethora of new initiatives by all kinds of public and private actors but a high degree of fragmentation and a thorough lack of coordination in their implementation. There are too many actors taking initiatives and intervening at the local, regional and national levels without any kind of coherent strategy or actual exchange of information, and there is a desperate need for coordination across government levels and between actors.

### Need for multilevel governance mechanisms

This dispersion and fragmentation of labour-market integration support measures for refugees and asylum seekers highlights the need for powerful multilevel governance mechanisms to deal with current challenges in an integrated way (and this might also include the European level). The labour-market and more generally the social integration of refugees and asylum seekers take place at the local level, and initiatives to facilitate the process are often taken and implemented by local and regional actors. However, asylum policy is largely national, and this creates a tension that must be addressed with appropriate exchanges of information, coordination mechanisms, resource transfers and integration across actions.

### Huge administrative obstacles remain

Even once they are entitled to work, asylum-seekers and refugees face huge administrative obstacles to accessing the labour market. These are linked to the structure of the benefits they receive, a lack of long-term residence permits, a need to implement labour market tests before offering them jobs (as in the UK and France) or assignment to specific regions of residence. This is obvious, for instance, in the mismatch between the geography of labour-market demand and the territorial distribution of refugees and asylum seekers highlighted in several of the country case studies: e.g. Germany, Denmark and Austria.

### The need for specific tailor-made measures

One consensual finding emerging from the country case studies is that asylum seekers and refugees have specific needs, profiles and incentive structures which explain their systematic underperformance in the labour market in relation not only to the population in general but also to other migrants. Their labour-market integration therefore requires specific targeted support measures, in particular for specific groups such as women (often with children). ‘Mainstreaming’ refugees – i.e. referring them to the general active labour market policies and support measures offered by public institutions to national workers – is not enough, even if this is the most widespread policy implemented so far in this field.

### An increase in resources is required commensurate with the social and economic stakes

Despite the difficulties encountered in the comparative analysis, one clear preliminary conclusion for most of the nine countries studied is that more financial human and institutional



resources need to be dedicated to promoting the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Even if all the countries have approved successive budget increases in the last year or so, the resources available do not match the magnitude of the economic, social and even political stakes. Extraordinary challenges require extraordinary responses.

### More information is required

Another element common to all the country case studies is an emphasis on the gap between the available collected information on refugees (both individually and as a group) and the information required to design effective labour-market integration measures and policies. A typical example of this is the ad hoc module on migrants in the EU Labour Force Survey, which is only conducted every six years (in 2008 and 2014 so far). If no decision is taken, we will have to wait until 2020 to have some statistical overview of the labour market performance of this last wave of refugees. In order to ensure a learning curve across Europe on this key development, more systematic collection of information on actions is needed. However, there is also a need for more systematic evaluation (in terms of impact and cost-effectiveness) of all these actions and a specific follow-up on the labour market outcomes for this specific group of workers.

### Further research needs

Researchers also have an important role to play in facing the challenges set by the arrival of an unprecedented number of refugees in Europe. The 'From Refugees to Workers' study was only conceived as a first step aiming at an inventory of existing REFMISMES in a number of EU Member States and at undertaking a very preliminary analysis of them. However, there is much more that can be done in terms of research on better policies in this field:

- There is an acute need for more data and more

information on refugees and asylum seekers, on their qualifications and skills, on their personal and professional profiles, and on their spatial distribution (in relation to the distribution of labour demand across the labour market). This can only be done through representative surveys of current and past refugees; those carried out to date among refugees have been too partial and too scattered.

- There is also a need for more studies tracking refugees, following up on their professional records and their labour-market outcomes over time.
- Finally, there is a need for more (comparative) case studies of REFMISMES, with deeper and wider analysis of different kinds of labour-market integration support measures. It would be extremely useful to extend the comparative country case approach to more EU Member States, and also to non-EU countries with different but relevant experiences of integrating refugees into their labour markets.
- For the refugees who arrived in 2015 and 2016, becoming workers is certainly the best first step towards becoming new citizens and new Europeans. Therefore, although the question of labour market integration support measures for refugees and asylum-seekers and their impacts may seem technical, it will prove crucial for Europe's future.



# WHERE AND WHEN TO START THE INTEGRATION PROCESS?

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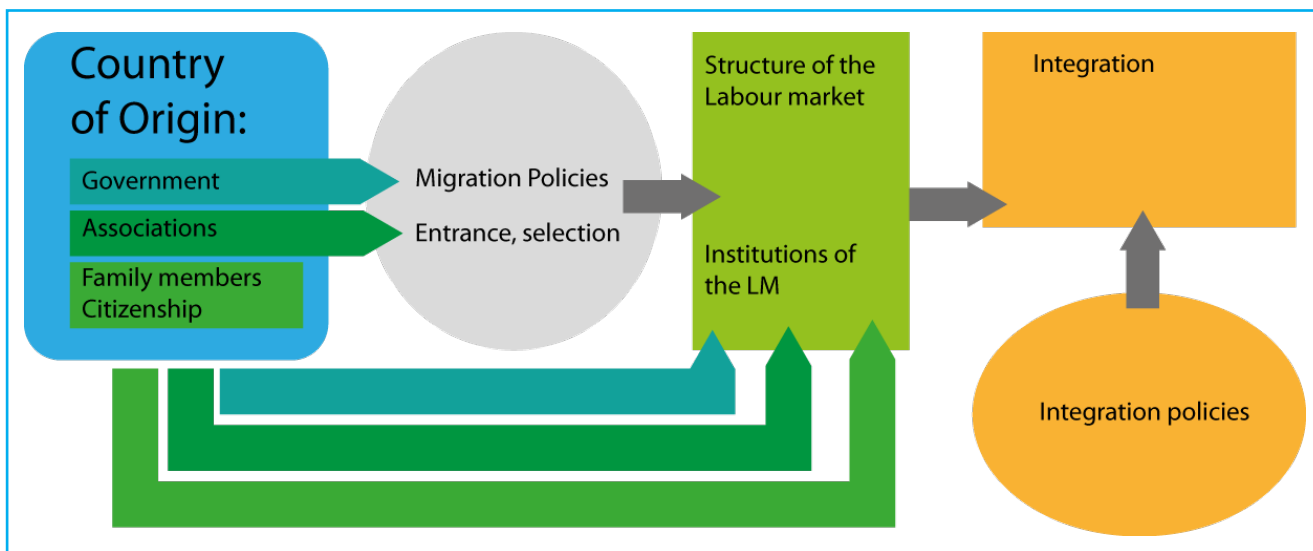
The attention of the media and politicians is focused on the integration of refugees and, more generally, on the integration of all foreign migrants. Studies looking for the most efficient policies suggest the need for better skill-matching and a rapid transition to employment to avoid periods of isolation, which reduce integration capabilities. Labour-market integration research shows, however, that migrants tend to congregate in ‘migrant jobs’ and also tend to remain there, with very little probability of exiting (Strom et al 2013). Thus, policies which advocate a rapid labour-market transition should also offer continuing training (one day a week, two days a month etc.) to help asylum-seekers and migrants really integrate

into the labour market. However, this debate only focuses attention on the last phase of the migrant integration process on the one hand, and on the asylum process, which already starts before the move, on the other hand.

The phases and actors that influence the process of integration for labour migrants are numerous but the sequence is clear. The multilateral nature of responsibilities means that the level of governance of asylum and refugee admission systems should be much broader and more complex. International coordination is needed to help nation-states face this human, economic and governance challenge.

The migration process starts in the sending country. The first actors that influence migrant performance are, therefore, the government, private organisations and associations and the families of the migrants in the country of origin. Their actions (e.g. signing bilateral agreements) can reduce the cost of migration and can favour integration by providing accurate information (not least pre-departure training) on the labour market, languages courses, and the social rules prevailing in the destination country.

Figure 1: The actors and instruments of integration for labour migrants



From INTERACT: Venturini A., 2016.





Then, in the country of destination the institutional actors who produce and implement the legislation that determines admission to the country, the acquisition of citizenship and access to welfare affect the migrant-integration process. They produce a self-selection because they affect the migration-destination choice. However, they can also produce an active selection affecting the quality of inflows. The cap on the H1B visa for STEM workers in the U.S. and the EU Blue Card Directive are examples of this.

In addition, there are also labour-market actors in the destination country. Firms, trade unions and welfare institutions all play a very important role in the labour-market integration of migrants. Their actions are not so much at the national as at the local level. If the integration process is not successful, other local-level actors provide integration policies (language courses, training, support measures etc.) which should favour a return to work.

The integration process briefly described above is impacted by all these actors and actions and varies enormously according to the laws implemented and the functioning of the labour market, in addition to the quality of the migrants. The same legislation that defines the rules for entry into a country can produce full labour-market integration in one case and low integration in another. Take Germany and Italy. The former has 4% unemployment, the latter 12% (with more than double this figure in the south and among the young). Therefore, the same selection at entry will not produce the same result in the two different labour markets. There are, however, some national groups which show very high labour force employment rates<sup>1</sup> in all destinations. Take, for instance, the Filipinos, where the efforts of the Filipino community before departure and their support at destination spur

1 We refer here to a probability of being employed equal to 1. See Di Bartolomeo A., Kalantaryan S. and Bonfanti S., 2015, Measuring the Integration of Migrants: a Multivariate Approach, Interact Research Report 2015/1 <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/34679>

employment integration. Thus, the integration of labour migrants is a long process that starts in the sending countries before departure, and the destination countries should invest in it with bilateral agreements and compulsory pre-departure training to smooth the passages in the following phases. Labour migration is thus mainly an international bilateral phenomenon which is impacted by the actions of both the sending and destination countries.

The forced migration of asylum seekers, instead, is much more complex: it is not simply an international and a bilateral problem. The move starts in an area of conflict and, depending on the management of the phenomenon, many different actors intervene. These include the countries of first asylum, the arrival countries, the countries of final destination and the countries of resettlement. Their interventions affect the final integration of the refugees in the country of destination. Thus, it is a multilateral phenomenon.

First of all, asylum seekers show up as illegal arrivals in the most proximate region. However, this is not only a regional problem because migrants go where it is easiest to arrive, typically to the nearest safe regions. The countries of destination can be divided into two groups: *countries of arrival and transit*, where migrants arrive irregularly by land or sea; and then the asylum seekers' *final destination* countries. The policies implemented by the transit countries affect the numbers, quality and timing of entries in the country of final destination. However, the policies implemented by the country of final destination (i.e. national or skill selection) affect the integration process in the arrival country too, and can transform integration into a permanent or a temporary phenomenon. In addition, the countries of arrival invest most of their public and private resources in first assistance, while the countries of permanent settlement are mainly left to deal with the integration process. This issue is in part articulated in the debate on *intra-EU solidarity* and on the mechanisms for



implementing migrant relocation among EU countries, but the strong implications for asylum integration are mostly neglected.

However, refugees are not a regional problem *but a global one*. This process is also affected by other potential countries of resettlement. If the resettlement ability of UNHCR improved and if it were settling, say, a million Syrians in 2016, instead of 100,000 as they did in 2015, things would change. The pressure on the border countries of arrival would be reduced, many lives would be saved and the *integration process simplified*. While spontaneous arrivals only affect nearby countries, resettlement policies cover distant countries too. Asylum responsibility is global because political conflicts are distributed around the world (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015). When Vietnamese boat people fled through China in 1970, it was perceived as an international problem. The Middle East refugee crisis is not only a European responsibility. The number of countries interested in the resettlement of asylum seekers could also increase and might include China and Russia, which are important actors in the international political and economic arenas. After all, many of these problems have economic roots.

The actions of countries of first asylum determine the EU asylum pressure on border countries. In the case of Syria, it is well known that Lebanon – a small country with 4.3 million citizens – hosts 1,200,000 Syrian refugees, and Jordan – another small country – hosts 850,000<sup>2</sup>.

When Lebanon decided to close its border, Turkey accumulated some 2,500,000 refugees in less than a year. During the same period, Greece received about 800,000 asylum seekers<sup>3</sup> and the flow only decreased when the EU made an agreement to finance first assistance in Turkey<sup>4</sup>.

2 IOM 2015.

3 IOM 2015.

4 [EU-Turkey agreement http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-15-5860\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5860_en.htm)

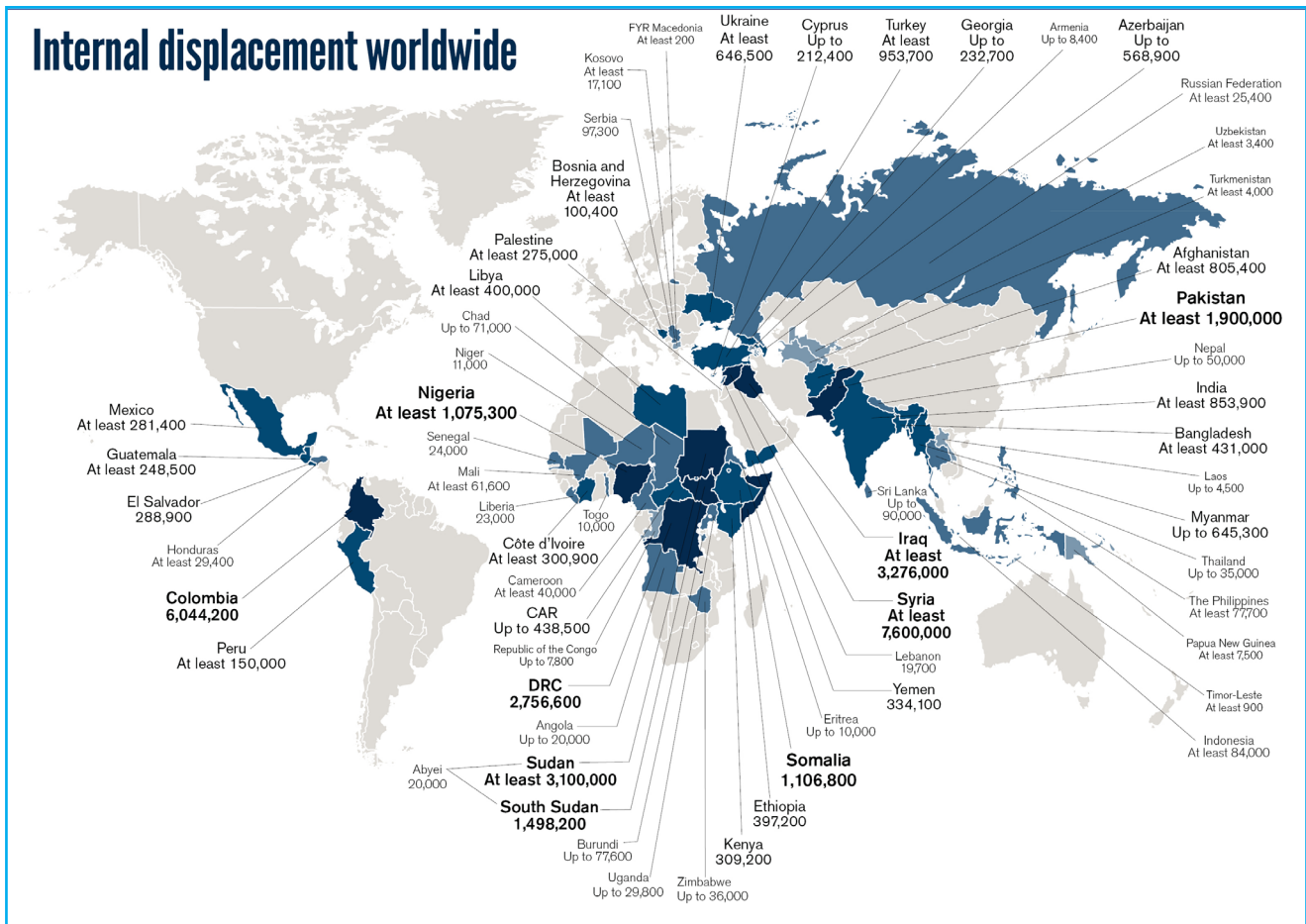
International solidarity versus putting all the burden on the countries of first asylum should be the question at the centre of the debate and at the heart of the actions of other destination countries.

EU countries concentrate on intra-EU solidarity, namely the redistribution of asylum seekers and the redistribution of the cost of first assistance, or on the best job-matching policies to spur the social and economic integration of asylum seekers in the societies and labour markets of destination countries. These problems are of a manageable size, but more attention should be devoted to the process of forced migration, to supporting countries of first asylum, and to dealing with their increased impoverishment and growing regional instability.

An important tool to favour coordination would be better forecasting of the asylum dynamic. This would help to provide timely assistance, avoid deaths on the journey to a safe land and optimize human and economic resources in the destination areas. To some extent, the modelling of future asylum dynamics is possible. The estimates by Tim Hatton (2016) of previous refugee flows are a point of departure and an attempt at forecasting should be tried. A monitoring unit could be attached to UNHCR, which is the agency best placed to understand how many internally displaced people (IDP) will move. Asylum outflows could then be forecast on the basis of IDP information (see the growth rate in Fig. 3). Bilak *et al.* (2015) estimate the global number of asylum seekers to have been 37 million in 2015. The newly displaced amount to 3.8 million in the Middle East, 3 million in Central Africa, 1.4 million in South Asia, 1 million in West Africa, 700,000 in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, 400,000 in East Africa, 400,000 in the Americas and 200,000 in South-East Asia. Therefore, the whole world has its crises and there will be others. Think, for example, of a North Korean refugee event.



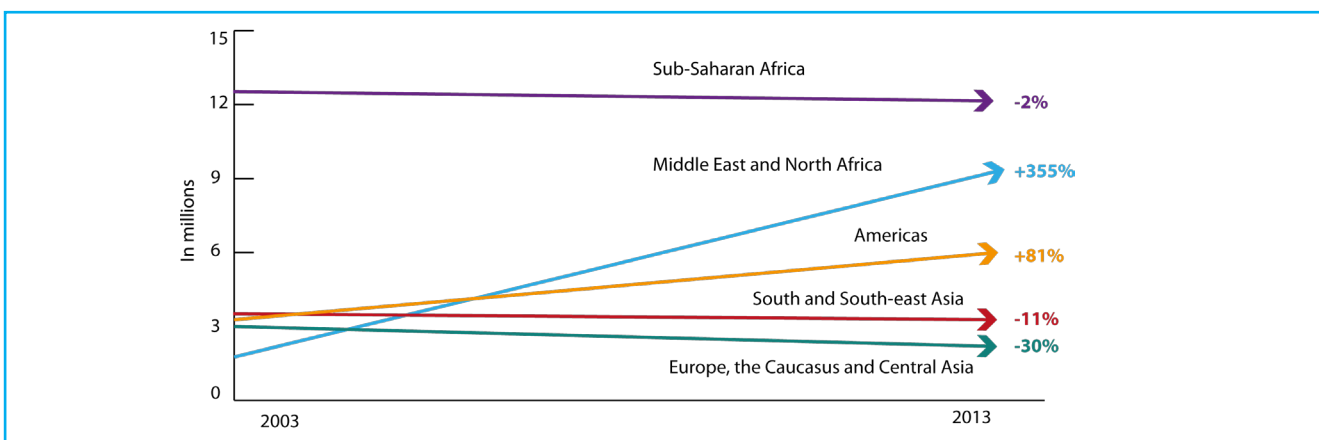
**Figure 2: Internally Displaced People in the World**



According to the IOM, 86% of internally displaced people live in developing countries, i.e. countries of first asylum, and are potential asylum seekers.

Political conflicts are by no means limited to the Middle East, although the largest increase in the last ten years took place there (see Figure 3). The rest are distributed around the world and for

**Figure 3: Changes in IDP figures over the last decade**



Ref: UNHCR, 2014

that reason our approach has to be global and governance needs to be multilateral.

Better management of the refugee process would also allow policies tailored to the needs and desires of different refugee groups to be implemented – to those who wish to stay for a short time and to those who instead want to resettle or to become citizens of the destination country. This kind of management will solve many integration policy dilemmas. What should have priority? Language courses, civilization courses, cultural courses, professional training courses or only labour-market skill matches at the lowest level? The complexity of the actors involved in the asylum process risks only emphasising labour-market integration before a minimum of social integration is assured. Without strong coordination, differentiated integration according to the country of destination's 'model' will prevail. This is because the actors who define migration policies at the national level and the functioning of the labour market, which differs from one country to another, will dominate the entire process.



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SECTION 4  
CULTURAL  
INTEGRATION



# INTEGRATION AND CULTURE: FROM ‘COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE’ TO ‘COMPETENCE IN PLURALITY’

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## 1. Introduction: Integration and Otherness

### 1.1. Integration

“Integration is a reciprocal process in which the efforts of those who are permitted to remain in Austria must without doubt be greater because the basic values of Austrian society are non-negotiable and must therefore be followed” (S. Kurz Integrationsbericht 2016, 5).

“A static and essentialist notion of culture would not do justice to the reality of a pluralistic and changing migration society. Indeed, at the “end of the road” there awaits us neither a perfectly assimilated society, nor a patchwork of diverse social groups that has become estranged from itself, but a plural togetherness that must continually be re-negotiated” H. Fassmann Integrationsbericht 2016, 85).

The two quotes taken from the same report on immigrant integration in Austria indicate two significantly different positions on a continuum from total rejection of the ‘other’ to total acceptance of the ‘other’. In between, we detect many other approaches to culture and integration: ‘integration’

understood as ‘assimilation,’ ‘integration as living in parallel societies,’ ‘integration as respect for the other’ and so forth. Importantly, the second quote, written by a so-called Austrian expert committee on integration (*Expertenrat*) consisting of an interdisciplinary group of scholars in various fields specializing in migration studies (linguists, demographers, legal scholars and political scientists), journalists, architects and urban planners, as well as various NGOs, emphasizes the danger of *essentializing culture* as static and homogeneous, as a discrete category, something which you possess or do not, something which one can acquire as an ‘entity,’ or cannot. According to Heinz Fassmann, chair of the *Expertenrat*, integration should be perceived as negotiating and co-constructing a pluralist society whose practices are always open to change. By contrast, the Austrian Minister for Integration (and Foreign Affairs), Sebastian Kurz, who commissioned the report, argues that immigrants are obviously required to invest more work in coping with the norms and values of the host society.<sup>1</sup> Thus, learning and accepting the constitutive values of the host society becomes the *sine qua non* of successful integration.

As David Miller (2016, 9) maintains, “In earlier times ... immigrants were left to their own devices so long as they did not become involved in illegal or antisocial behaviour.” Nowadays, Miller (*ibid*, 9ff.) argues,

the contemporary democratic state cannot take such a hands-off view: it wants and needs immigrants to become good, upstanding citizens. And achieving this may involve encouraging or even requiring them to shed some of the cultural baggage they bring with them.

It is obvious that such requirements cannot be easily translated into policies. Which cultural or

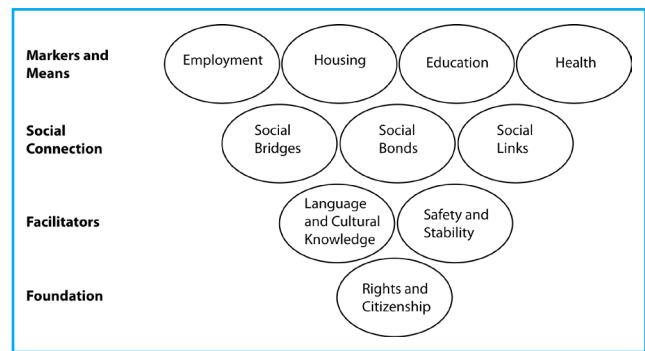
<sup>1</sup> Also see “50 Punkte Plan zur Integration” (2015) of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Integration ([file:///C:/Users/RW/Downloads/50\\_Punkte\\_Plan\\_zur\\_Integration%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/RW/Downloads/50_Punkte_Plan_zur_Integration%20(1).pdf))



religious beliefs are perceived as not being fit for Western societies or actually clash with common and widely accepted routines and knowledge? While this paper cannot address the important political and philosophical debates on this matter (but see Miller, 2016), it is important to emphasize that perceptions of rights and obligations (apart from fundamental human rights) on the part of immigrants and the host society are often strongly influenced by contextual factors (such as the number of immigrants, their countries of origin, levels of xenophobia in the host country, time since arrival, levels of education, gender politics and so forth). This is why I will first discuss some models elaborating the many dimensions of ‘integration.’ I will then proceed to the currently observable culturalisation of integration policies. Moreover, I will focus on two Europe-wide tendencies: the implementation of ever more and stricter language and citizenship tests; and secondly on the discourse about an ‘unwillingness to integrate,’ which shifts the blame for current complex socio-political problems on to the strangers arriving.

Integration can obviously not be reduced to a cultural dimension. Ager and Strang (2008) introduce a useful conceptual framework that defines the core domains of integration (pp. 169–70)<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1, below). In this model, they propose four dimensions. First, they distinguish between *markers and means* (such as employment, housing, education and health), defined as key aspects of integrating into a society.

**Figure 1: Integration Model (adapted from Ager & Strang 2008, 170).**



The second dimension in this model relates to *social connection*, i.e. investigation of the processes that mediate between foundational principles and public outcomes in the first dimension (markers and means). In other words, how do feelings of ‘belonging’ evolve, when are migrants accepted and when do they feel accepted in communities in practice? For example, while analysing data from 48 focus groups with migrants from different ethnic origins in eight European member states in the EU-funded project *XENOPHOB*, Delanty et al. (2011) were able to illustrate in much detail that foundational rights (such as having acquired citizenship), fluency in the host language and so forth do not necessarily imply access, respect and acceptance. Access to housing and the labour market remains difficult due to prejudices and discriminatory beliefs. *Social bonds*, *social bridges* and *social links* are viewed as essential mediators in transcending various thresholds and gatekeepers in the complex process of integration (Ager & Strang 2008, 179–81).

The third dimension in this model is what Ager and Strang call ‘facilitators.’ These include language and cultural knowledge and conditions of safety and stability. Such facilitators were studied, for instance, in a recent ethnography of a Pakistani family moving to the UK (Capstick, 2015). The study was carried out over several years and included the entire trajectory from applying for language tests, visas, residence permits and

2 In this context, also see Carvill et al. (2016), Delanty et al. (2011), Krzyżanowski & Wodak (2009), Messer et al. (2011), Penninx et al. (2008) and Schmiederer (2013), who all discuss different models and forms of political, legal and cultural integration. Moreover, I also rely on the *Migration Policy Index 2015* (MIPEX), but I have to restrict myself to cultural – and, even more specifically, linguistic-communicative – integration in this paper due to reasons of space and expertise.

work permits up to settling in a small town in Lancashire. Capstick (2015, 228) concludes his study by stating:

By employing the concept of ‘cultural brokerage’ to emphasize the bridge it provides between dominant and non-dominant knowledge, the decisive role of brokers in negotiating the links between individuals’ everyday non-dominant literacies and dominant institutions’ bureaucratic literacies enables researchers to explore issues of power when examining the relationship between local and global contexts in migration. This is because literacy events like completing a visa form invoke broader cultural patterns of literacy practices, such as registering marriages, and provide opportunities for migrants to appropriate bureaucratic literacy practices in order to make successful visa applications. For example, the British Pakistani immigration solicitor in Preston understands both the Mirpuri tradition of providing work for spouses of family members as well as the British government’s immigration and employment law relating to visa requirements and visa sponsors’ salaries. The literacy events which instantiate these practices, such as the completion of visa forms by a cultural broker who is able to draw on her understanding of dominant and non-dominant contexts, are shaped by the priorities of individuals who have much to lose if visa applications fail. Thus, when bureaucratic literacies have significant personal as well as practical consequences for the whole family, migrants are able to draw on wider community networks which allow them to comply with the institutional requirements which shape the family’s lives in both the UK and Pakistan.

It becomes apparent that without *cultural and literacy brokers* this family would never have been able to enter the UK legally and successfully. Alongside these cultural and linguistic facilitators, perceptions of *safety and stability* are particularly relevant if, for instance, refugees have encountered traumatic events during their flight.

The fourth and final dimension in the model is about citizenship and rights, which Ager and Strang consider the constitutive *foundation for integration*. Of course, the meaning of citizenship varies across settings, due to national traditions, policies and identity politics (p. 176). It also becomes apparent, however, that the four dimensions in the model discussed above are connected and related with each other in very intricate, complex and context-dependent ways, which have to be investigated both quantitatively (through surveys, document and policy analysis, and interviews) and qualitatively (through focus groups, ethnography, online ethnography, discourse and semiotic analysis of images and other genres, and so forth) in order to be able to assess positive and negative forms of integration.

## 1.2. Negotiating culture

When following the dominant political and media debates across Europe and the EU (and beyond), one is struck by a quite consistent hierarchy of values, which is presented as the hegemonic value system of the West. Apart from the central role of the national language which needs to be acquired (Wodak 2011, 2012, 2015a, 90ff; see below), specific areas are highlighted and perceived as salient for ‘us,’ for democratic secular European states which have signed the Human Rights Conventions and other international treaties (such as the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention) and which have also – it is assumed – implemented gender equality, anti-discrimination laws, high standards of justice and education, and so forth. Subsequently, a huge Manichean contrast emerges



between (an educated, liberal and progressive) West and (a retarded, undemocratic and uneducated) East, two solidified and homogenous blocs with nothing in between. Accordingly, we observe a *culturalization of discourse* (Yilmaz 2016, 17) through which a right such as freedom of speech is transformed into a cultural value, although rights have certainly not developed via cultural evolution but rather as a result of political struggles, revolutions and abrupt breaks with the past (e.g. Chanock 2000). Indeed, as Soysal (2009, 5) argues, culture has become the dominant frame for political issues and policies such as citizenship, security, the economy and so forth. It seems that culture can be defined as a floating/empty signifier onto which politicians, media and lay persons are able to project whatever problems or categories they choose (Yilmaz 2016, 18ff.).

It is important, therefore, to discuss culture in more differentiated terms. Miller (2016, 141ff) draws a line between public and private culture. He argues that we can distinguish, on the one hand, the culture of the wider society (i.e. its language, symbols and institutions) and, on the other hand, different religions, forms of art and literature, a variety of cuisines and respective mother tongues. But where, how and when should this thin line be drawn? Immigrants will probably wish to retain many symbols of their own culture and integrate them with the host culture. The host society, however, expects identification with its national identity and (banal) symbols (Billig 1995; Rheindorf & Wodak 2016). A problem arises most vehemently – as can be observed across Europe and beyond – in the case of religion, i.e. when specific religious beliefs and practices collide with elements of the host society's culture. Miller (2016, *ibid*, 149) concludes that

[f]ull cultural integration requires that members of the indigenous majority understand why the private cultures of immigrants need to be accommodated

and offer ungrudging support for the measures needed, and that the immigrants themselves understand and embrace the public culture of the society they have joined.

In view of the highly controversial debates about the burqa and the headscarf as metonymic tropes for Muslim and indeed Islamist religion and a related oppression of women, Miller's proposals might be considered rather utopian (Wodak 2015b, 151 ff.).

Reviewing anti-Muslim rhetoric in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century reveals that specific iconic images of the 'female' have become the ultimate 'other.' Countless political debates have surrounded and continue to surround the so-called 'headscarf' (*hijab*: a scarf that covers the hair and sometimes the shoulders) and the *burqa* and *niqab* (both of which cover the hair, the face except for the eyes and the entire body) as symbols of uncivilised barbaric Islam and of oppressed women who should be liberated by the values of Western culture. In this enterprise, interestingly, right-wing populist movements have aligned with some left-wing intellectuals and parties, together with many feminists, all assuming and presupposing that *all* veiled Muslim women are forced to cover their hair, faces or bodies and that the West faces a twofold challenge and responsibility: to protect the secular nature of the public sphere by banning ostentatious religious symbols and to liberate oppressed Muslim women. In this context, Hammerl (2016) points to many hypocritical, contradictory and fallacious arguments: the niqab is accepted if worn by rich Saudi tourists, but the burqa is not accepted if worn by poor Afghan refugees; the liberation of Muslim women is called for by right-wing populist politicians who, simultaneously, campaign against Free Choice or equal pay for women and men.

Furthermore, I argue that the debate about culture and Islam is primarily fought in an attempt to





discipline the female body (Wodak 2015b). This anti-Muslim discourse is instrumentalised to cover up other socio-political and – most importantly – socio-economic agendas. Indeed, appeals to liberate women from ‘textual-sexual oppression’ (Amin 2015) unite more voters around a right-wing populist agenda than do anti-modernisation and anti-globalisation agendas. Such a dichotomisation renders it very difficult, if not impossible, for progressive Muslim women to criticize fundamentalist patriarchal positions. Marsdal (2013) convincingly deconstructs in detail the traditional left-right cleavage with respect to a change in voting behaviour related to social class. Analysing developments in Norway, he emphasizes that votes for (moral) values have replaced votes for parties:

...[c]lass issues are shoved into the background and value issues come to the fore. Tensions over economic distribution and fairness are demobilized. This takes place, however, at the top level of party politics, and not in society. In society, economic and social inequalities and tensions have been rising over the last decades, not only in Norway or Denmark, but also all over Europe. The political demobilizing of class conflicts does not take place because most voters have come to emphasize value issues more than class issues, which they do not have, but rather because, under the neo-liberal elite consensus on class issues, confrontation on moral and cultural issues (‘values’) has become the only available means of party-political and ideological demarcation [...]. Economic policy debates are dull and grey. Then, someone says something about the Muslim veil and media hell breaks loose (ibid, 51–52).

This observation provides evidence for Yilmaz’s claim about a ‘hegemony of the cultural paradigm’

(Yilmaz 2016, 19): “[T]he culturalization of discourse has changed the understanding of politics as the site where problems caused by cultural encounters are handled” (ibid, 18).

Next to religion, language and language skills have played a major role as markers of cultural difference in contexts of immigrant integration. In contrast with religion, however, language competence is used less to demonstrate unalterable otherness and more as a test of immigrants’ capacity and readiness to assimilate.

In the following section, I first provide a brief overview of multilingualism policies in the European Union as the broad context for the subsequent implementation of national language and KoS (Knowledge of Society) tests in the form of NAPs (National Action Plans). I draw primarily on surveys conducted by the Council of Europe. I then summarise two empirical case studies which serve to illustrate some complex challenges to cultural integration. First, I present the results of a study of Austrian political and media discourse (2015/16) regarding the term *Integrationsunwilligkeit* (‘unwillingness to integrate’). This term is employed in order to legitimize punitive measures for migrants and refugees already living in Austria if they are perceived to reject ‘our values.’ This discourse emerged as a reaction to the terrorist attacks in Paris in January 2015; some politicians linked potential terrorism and radicalization to *Integrationsunwilligkeit* allegedly manifested by male Muslim adolescents. Consequently, debates about positive measures for integration became less important and less prominent in the public sphere. Second, I discuss the results of an ongoing study – INPUT – about language acquisition by children with and without a Turkish background in correlation with parental linguistic input. INPUT provides evidence that *socio-economic status overrides ethnic origin*, i.e. children who receive more support from their parents and grow up in HSES (high socio-economic status) families learn German faster than children from LSES (lower



socio-economic status), regardless of migrant background. These results put into question many school curricula designed specifically for migrants (children and adults) while neglecting other relevant socio-economic variables.

## 2. Language competence and language tests

### 2.1. EU multilingual vs. national monolingual policies

European multilingualism has been defined as an essential component of the future construction of a European identity, or of European identities in the plural, and for the preservation of national, regional, local, societal and individual multilingualism. The importance of language learning, for example, has been repeatedly stressed by various European authorities in declarations of political intent on matters of language, education and pedagogy (e.g. Article 2 of the European Cultural Convention, 19 December 1954; ‘Recommendation 814 on Modern Languages in Europe’ from the Council of Europe, 5 October 1977; the final KSZE document of 1 August 1975). In the 2000 Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties, the EU committed itself to European multilingualism. This was echoed by the Council of Europe’s Resolution from the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) ‘Recommendation concerning modern languages (98)’. The last of these warns explicitly “of the dangers that might result from marginalisation of those who lack the skills necessary to communicate in an interactive Europe” (ibid.) and states, *inter alia*, that

[S]teps should be taken to ensure that there is parity of esteem between all the languages and cultures involved so that children in each community may have the opportunity to develop oracy and literacy in the language of their own community as well as to learn to understand and

appreciate the language and culture of the other (ibid, Appendix 2.2).

The recommendations also stress that governments should “[c]ontinue to promote bilingualism in immigrant areas or neighbourhoods and support immigrants in learning the language of the area in which they reside” (ibid, Appendix 2.3.). It is important to emphasise that the Council of Europe endorses a more nuanced notion of plurilingualism than does the European Union (i.e. the Commission). Nevertheless, in a ‘White Paper on Education and Training’ issued by the European Commission it is stated that “[l]anguages are also the key to knowing other people. Proficiency in languages helps to *build up the feeling of being European* with all its cultural wealth and diversity and of understanding between the citizens of Europe” (European Commission 1995, 67, my emphasis). Between 2005 and 2007, the EU recognised the relevance of language and multilingualism to policy by adding a multilingualism portfolio to the remit of the Union’s Commissioner on Education and Culture. The key document of that period – ‘The new framework strategy for multilingualism’ (European Commission 2005) – sets out the Commission’s “commitment to multilingualism in the European Union” (ibid. 1) and its aim of “promoting multilingualism in European society, in the economy and in the Commission itself” (ibid). By arguing that multilingualism is not only good for the European economy but also for a ‘social Europe’ and the democratisation of the EU, it places multilingualism between major EU discourses: that on democratisation and that on the knowledge-based economy. In the same period, the EU also proposed – for the first time – a policy-relevant definition of multilingualism: “multilingualism refers to both a person’s ability to use several languages and the co-existence of different language communities in one geographical area” (ibid, 3). The document states that:



The European Union is founded on ‘unity in diversity’: diversity of cultures, customs and beliefs – and of languages ... It is this diversity that makes the European Union what it is: not a ‘melting pot’ in which differences are rendered down, but a common home in which diversity is celebrated, and where our many mother tongues are a source of wealth and a bridge to greater solidarity and mutual understanding (ibid, 2).

In 2007, however, in discourses related to the Lisbon Strategy of the early 2000s, we witness a (return to) rhetoric oriented towards skills and competences (Krzyżanowski & Wodak 2011; Wodak 2011a, b). The European Multilingualism Strategy has recently adopted a new and broader understanding of the social, political and economic role of languages and multilingualism. Sadly, in the wake of the 2008 crisis and because of the transfer of the Multilingualism Portfolio of the European Commission to Education, Culture and Youth in 2010, most of the key provisions of the policies elaborated above have not yet been implemented. It is, however, clear that multilingualism and support for both individuals’ and collectives’ language identities form part and parcel of European language policies.

These policies – as will be illustrated below – contradict national language policies in some EU member states in many respects. National policies, however, exert a major influence on the language requirements for migrants from non-EU countries. In fact, many national politicians endorse the so-called *Leitsprachenmodell* (a model which proposes that the language of the majority should serve for all communicative purposes), thus contradicting the European language policies mentioned above, which emphasise multilingualism, the equality of languages and diversity. As sociolinguist Michael Clyne famously stated, “[E]uropean integration was never intended to mean homogenization. One of its aims has always been unity within diversity and this should be one of its contributions to the world” (Clyne 2003, 40).

## 2.2. Language Requirements for Access to Legal Status

The current 28 member states of the European Union (EU) determine who *belongs* or *does not belong* to the European Union, and thus who remains ‘outside’ and who is allowed to venture ‘inside,’ via naturalisation regulations (e.g. Bauböck & Goodman-Wallace 2012). Naturalisation conditions pertaining to language knowledge vary enormously. In 1998, only six states had citizenship and/or language tests; by 2010, the number had grown to 18; and by 2014 to 23 (see Table 1; note, however, that the situation is constantly changing). Moreover, the requirements and the content of tests also vary. Orgad (2010, 69–70) rightly states with respect to German citizenship tests that they

...mirror not only what German culture is, but also what the Germans want it to be ... Although the Länder tests have been replaced by a federal test, they indicate an ideological concept of *Kulturnation*. By adopting these policies, Germany embraces a strict rule of forced cultural assimilation.

Many European countries are promoting a *re/nationalisation* with respect to language and culture – in spite of being part of the multilingual and multicultural EU. The concept of ‘language competence in the host country’s language’ as a salient prerequisite for belonging has become part and parcel of new citizenship laws, regulations and requirements, and is advocated or even championed not only by the far right but also by mainstream political parties in government.



**Table 1: Countries that participated in the 2007, 2009 and 2013 surveys and reported language requirements for residence and citizenship (no comparative data exist for earlier periods) (LIAM Survey Report 2014, 57)**

**Table A14: Countries that participated in the 2007, 2009 and 2013 surveys and reported language requirements for residence and citizenship**

	Residence		Citizenship	
	2007 <sup>16</sup>	2013	2007 <sup>17</sup>	2013
<b>Austria</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Belgium – French community</b>				X
<b>Czech Republic</b>		X		X
<b>Denmark</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Estonia</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>France</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Germany</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Greece</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Ireland</b>				
<b>Italy</b>		X		
<b>Liechtenstein</b>		X		X
<b>Luxembourg</b>				X
<b>Norway</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Netherlands</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>Poland</b>			X	X
<b>San Marino</b>				
<b>Spain</b>			X	X
<b>Sweden</b>				
<b>Switzerland (cantons)</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>United Kingdom</b>	X	X	X	X
<b>N = 20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>



**Table 2: Citizenship and language requirements in selected EU countries between 2007 and 2013 (and changes planned or envisaged) (A indicates a language test before entering; B a language test required for a work permit; C a language test required for citizenship) (LIAM survey report 2014, 63)<sup>3</sup>**

STATES	PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO THE COUNTRY	RESIDENCE	CITIZENSHIP
<b>Albania</b>	Since 2008 interview (students) Change planned	Since 2008 interview Change planned	
<b>Austria</b>	Since 2011 Language level A1 for certain residence permits	Since 2006 A2 for renewal of residence permits, since 2011 B1 for long-term residence	Since 2011 B1 certificate (A2 in 2006)
<b>Belgium</b>			Since 2012 A2
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>		Language requirement Level not indicated (2012)	Language requirement Level not indicated (2012)
<b>Cyprus</b>		Since 2010 A1-A2	
<b>Czech Republic</b>		Since 2009 A1 envisaged in 2015: A1 test long-term residence, A2 test permanent residence	Interview since 1993 B1 test and society in 2014
<b>Denmark</b>	Abolition of A1- introduced in 2010	Since 2012 A1- for a residence permit on the ground of spousal reunification, level A1- for religious ministers and level A2 written/B1 oral for permanent residence (A2/B1/B2 in 2003)	B1/B1 plus oral in 2013 (B2 and society test in 2006)
<b>France</b>	40h since 2008 Change planned	Since 2007 A1.1; envisaged: A1 reception and integration contract and A2 renewal residence permit	B1 oral since 2012 (interview in 1993)
<b>Greece</b>		Since 2010 courses are no longer compulsory for long term residence	
<b>Luxembourg</b>	A1.1 planned in 2009, not adopted in 2013		
<b>Netherlands</b>		Since 2010 A2 (2007: Old migrants A1/A2; New migrants A2)	
<b>Norway</b>		300h of compulsory courses As from 2014 600h (3000h possible) and test for permanent residence necessary for citizenship	As from 2014: 600h of lessons. Aiming Level B1 but A2 for exemption from courses (in 2005 300h)
<b>Poland</b>		Envisaged	
<b>United Kingdom</b>	A1 oral for spouses (2011) (points system from 2007 to 2010)	Since 2013 B1 (progression by one level up to B1 in 1971)	Since 2013 B1 (progression by one level up to B1 in 1971)
<b>Total no of changes: 18 actually in place and 9 planned</b>	<b>3 actually in place and 2 envisaged</b>	<b>8 actually in place and 5 envisaged</b>	<b>7 actually in place and 2 planned</b>

<sup>3</sup> Final Report on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council of Europe Survey 2014, *Linguistic Integration of adult migrants (LIAM): Policy and practice* ([www.coe.int/lang-migrants](http://www.coe.int/lang-migrants)), by Claire Extramiana, Reinhilde Pulinx and Piet Van Avermaet.



In the following, I summarize some results from a survey conducted in 36 European countries (thus including more than the 28 EU member states) by the Working Group Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (from the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe; LIAM) in 2013/14. This survey illustrates the variation across the countries investigated and draws a comparison between the surveys conducted in 2007 and 2009 (see Tables 1 and 2; 20 countries responded to all three surveys). The key document opens with the following mission statement:

The findings reported here, considered in the context of Recommendations and Resolutions of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, underline the constant need to reflect critically on the appropriateness and effectiveness of aspects of our language integration policies while taking fully into consideration the implications for human rights, the rule of law and participation in the life of democratic society. This is a logical and necessary step in the continuous process of ensuring that any requirements enacted and accompanying language provision actually correspond to the real needs and capacities of migrants in their diversity, and that they reinforce their motivation to develop their plurilingual profile within a continuing process of integration. While of course language is an important instrument in this process, in itself it is not an indicator of how successful integration actually is. (p.1)

More than half of the participating countries (20/36) indicated that knowledge of the language is required for purposes other than entry, residence and citizenship. For 12 countries, other purposes included obtaining a work permit/gaining access to the labour market. In six other countries a

language requirement had to be met to obtain a long-term residence permit, often in the case of family reunification. Two countries attached a language requirement to higher education and training programmes. Nine countries reported a pre-entry language requirement (usually A1, only one country requires A2).<sup>4</sup> These are Austria, Albania, Germany, Finland, France, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Poland (only in the case of certain regulated professions) and the UK.

Several states offer significantly more than others in terms of language lessons and second language acquisition: migrants are obliged to take a language course in 12 of the 23 countries that attach a language requirement to the granting of a residence permit. Of the 22 participating countries that attach a language requirement to obtaining a residence permit, 14 provide official language courses. Attendance is compulsory in four countries and optional in eight. The CEFR reference levels range from A1 to C2. The shortest course lasts 75 hours, the longest 3,000. To bring learners to level A2, one country provides a course lasting 75 hours, another 180 hours, and a third a 364-hour course. Language courses for adult migrants are provided by adult education centres, schools, institutions of HE and institutions funded by Ministries of Culture, Internal Affairs or Employment – or by NGOs or volunteers.

In 26 countries, migrants are legally obliged to demonstrate a specified level of competence in a/the language of the host country in order to obtain citizenship. Nineteen countries that attach a language requirement to citizenship also attach one to residence. In 2007, 12 of the 20 countries that participated in all three surveys indicated that they had such legislation; by 2013, 17 countries had language requirements (A) prior to entry, (B) for residence and/or (C) for citizenship.

4 Council of Europe. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. (CEFR) Council of Europe/CUP, 2001 (available in 38 languages). [www.coe.int/lang-CEFR](http://www.coe.int/lang-CEFR) and [www.coe.int/lang-migrants](http://www.coe.int/lang-migrants)



Moreover, 18 countries organise a *knowledge-of-society* (KoS) programme for migrants seeking a residence permit. Attendance is obligatory in eight countries and optional in 11. In nine countries migrants are required to take a KoS test. In almost all cases, KoS tests for citizenship are in written form. Four countries (Germany, Liechtenstein, Lithuania and the UK) have multiple-choice tests; three countries (Germany, the Netherlands and the UK) have computer-based ones. In Greece, the test is part of an oral interview with a representative of the Naturalisation Council. In Switzerland, some cantons have a written test (possibly computer-based), while others examine KoS in an oral interview. In Lithuania, the written test can be replaced by an oral test in cases of special need.

In sum, the following states require language for residence and citizenship: Austria since 2011, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France and the Netherlands since 2012, Denmark and the UK since 2013. Altogether there were 18 changes between 2009 and 2013 with no further ones planned in 2013. Furthermore, if one considers the 42 states which participated in at least one of the three surveys, 15 states have introduced a legal language requirement since 2008. In most cases, knowledge of the language is required for residence and the acquisition of citizenship. This applies to 19 countries, mostly in Western Europe. Another notable trend is an increase in the amount of legislation concerning language requirements from 2009 to 2013 compared with 2007–2009. From 2007 to 2009, 11 new laws were passed; in the period from 2009 to 2013, 18, with nine new ones planned after 2013. Lastly, a distinction exists between the so-called *interventionist countries* in northern Europe and more permissive policies in the south, but there are also less demanding countries alongside these two groups. In Eastern Europe, the issue of migration management is less important, given the low levels of immigration.

The authors of the survey conclude that

The ability of a democratic state to integrate migrants depends equally on their own willingness – which needs to be supported as regards language learning – and on the intercultural sensitivity of the community of citizens. This must be enhanced by educating all citizens in linguistic and cultural diversity, which has proven to be an invaluable source of enrichment throughout European history (ibid, 33).

The Goethe Institute (Germany) has quickly responded to the obvious necessity of teaching German to refugees from the current war zones in the Middle East. In this way, both language teachers and volunteers have been involved with children and adults aiming at level A1 immediately after the refugees have applied for asylum (see <https://www.goethe.de/en/spr/flu.html>). As advertised on the Goethe Institute's homepage,

Self-learning courses, speaking exercises, videos and information on dealing with authorities, in everyday life or in finding a job. All offers work on smartphones and tablets. An interactive vocabulary training in 16 languages, which can be used without any prior knowledge; many offers are helpful as an adjunct to classroom courses.

The British Council adapted its programmes for incoming refugees in 2016 (see <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/english-language-teaching-migrants-refugees>). In Austria, German courses are offered by the City of Vienna and the Ministry of Integration (<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/learning-german/young-people.html>). Moreover, the Ministry of Integration delivers obligatory 'value courses' (one day for 8 hours), which every refugee whose application for asylum has been accepted has to attend.<sup>5</sup> In these courses, the participants

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/the-ministry/press/announcements/2016/03/the-ministry-for-integration-the-public->



are taught Western values. Intercultural aspects related to religion, gender politics and so forth are discussed. Sweden also provides courses for Swedish language after the arrival of refugees (<http://www.thenewbieguide.se/just-arrived/the-refugee-guide-to-sweden/swedish-for-refugees/>). No numbers or statistics exist to date about the quantity of language courses available (both official and voluntary) and about their effects and success across European member states.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3. The Culturalisation of Discourse about Linguistic Integration

Detailed linguistic analyses illustrate how the term *Integrationsunwilligkeit* came to briefly dominate Austrian political and media discourse. To trace the ‘life history’ of this term, we combined qualitative and quantitative linguistic methods to show its frequency, collocates, contextualization and instrumentalization in legitimizing ever-stricter policies (see Rheindorf 2016 and Wodak 2015a for extensive analyses and discussion).

The discourse on integration is represented by a corpus of 3,200 texts compiled from 11 national newspapers in Austria (i.e. *Der Standard*, *Die Presse*, *Heute*, *Kleine Zeitung*, *Kronen Zeitung*, *Kurier*, *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, *Österreich*, *Salzburger Nachrichten*, *Tiroler Tageszeitung*, *Wiener Zeitung*) and four magazines (*Profil*, *News*, *Biber*, *Die Zeit*). In early

[employment-service-austria-and-the-austrian-integration-forum-present-austria-wide-cooperation-in-providing-values-courses-for-refugees/](http://www.esaia.org/employment-service-austria-and-the-austrian-integration-forum-present-austria-wide-cooperation-in-providing-values-courses-for-refugees/).

<sup>6</sup> Also see <http://www.eaea.org/en/policy-advocacy/adult-education-and-the-refugee-crisis.html>, <https://ec.europa.eu/eaple/en/content/erasmus-offers-free-language-courses-refugees> and

<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/austria-multiplication-of-guidebooks-and-courses-for-refugees-on-austrian-society> (accessed 20/11/2016). Obviously, official institutions largely depend on support from civil society and many people who offer their help voluntarily. Some countries allow refugees and asylum-seekers to access language classes immediately upon arrival; others demand official asylum status before access is allowed.

2015, the discourse on integration converges with two other discourses, *that on educational reform* (which focuses on teachers taking on new responsibilities with respect to the integration of children with migrant backgrounds) and *that on terrorism* (focusing on so-called Islamic State as an initially external but increasingly internal threat embodied by radicalized young adults and schoolchildren sympathizing with or joining the terrorist group). The convergence of these three discourses constitutes the immediate discursive context of the term *Integrationsunwilligkeit* in Austrian political discourse.

‘Integration’ is primarily discursively constructed as cultural and, more specifically, linguistic assimilation (Permoser & Rosenberger 2012). Among other things, this has meant that language policy in Austria regarding languages other than German and the constitutionally protected linguistic minorities (Croatian, Romanès, Slovakian, Slovenian, Czech, Hungarian and Austrian Sign Language) is somewhat restrictive (de Cillia 2012; de Cillia & Vetter 2013). For example, schools acting individually have repeatedly tried to prohibit children with migration backgrounds from speaking their L1 (mother tongue, native language) during breaks while on the school grounds (de Cillia 2012; e.g. Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999). *Disciplining* those who do not comply has been an integral part of related discourses for decades, most notably in the form of the ‘*Integration Agreement*’ – a part of Austrian residence law (since 2003, amended in 2005 and 2011). The provisions of the *Integration Agreement* only apply to immigrants from non-EU states, who must sign it if they want to obtain a right of residence. Its language requirements specify three stages: A1 before immigration, A2 within two years under penalty of deportation, and B1 within five years of residence in Austria.

The discourse on *Integrationsunwilligkeit* comprises 280 texts from the aforementioned sources, published between 20 January and 5

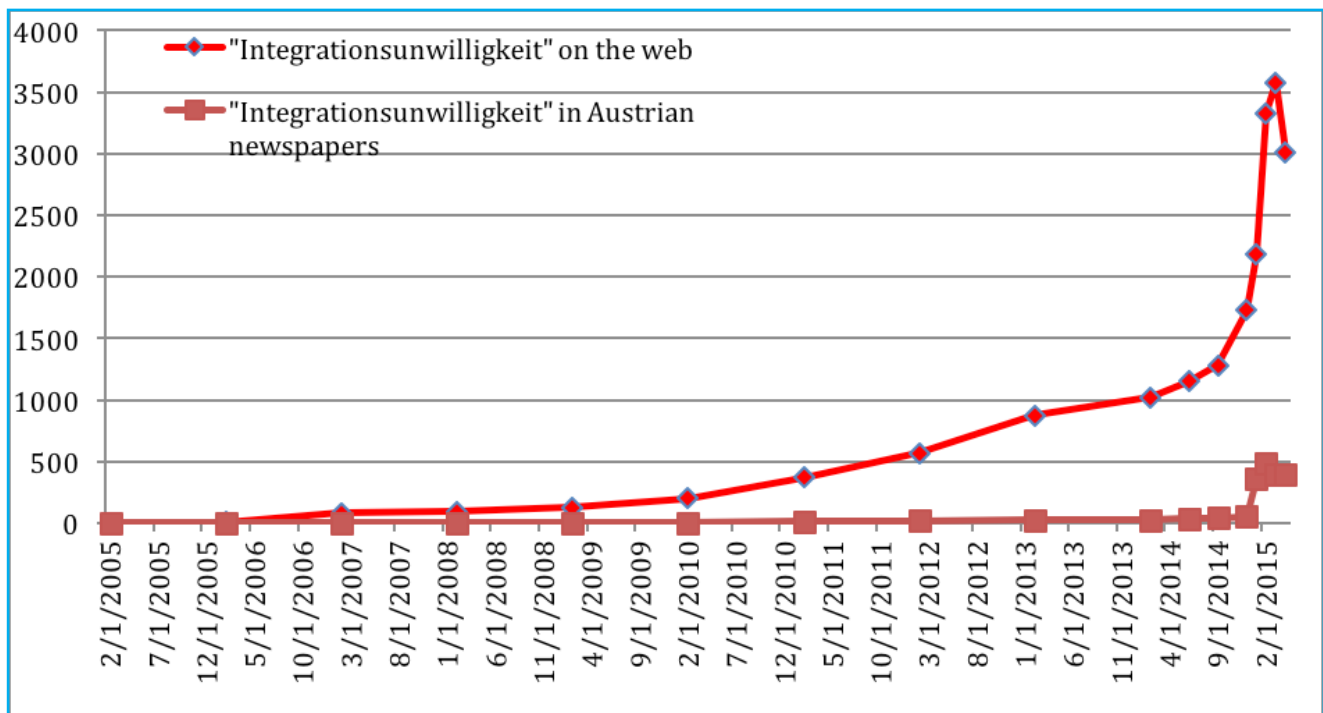


February 2015. Its onset is marked by three events: a resolution passed in the regional parliament of Styria explicitly linking the terrorist attacks in Paris to “a lack of integration” and calling for a legal definition of “*Tatbestände*,” – i.e. punishable offences under the heading of *Integrationsunwilligkeit* (Resolution 3237/6, 20.01.2015) – and two subsequent newspaper interviews promoting the concerns of the said resolution. The two interviews were given on the same day by two prominent politicians of the centre-left SPÖ, Franz Voves and Hans Niessl, then Governors of the Austria Federal Provinces of Styria and Burgenland respectively. Both were campaigning in regional elections and were faced with declining electoral support and increasing pressure from the right-wing populist Freedom Party (FPÖ) propagating a politics of fear and securitization (Wodak 2015a, b). The supposedly divergent behaviour they identified as indicative of ‘unwillingness’ comprised absences from class at school, wearing a ‘headscarf,’ speaking a

language other than German in school breaks and disrespecting female teachers.

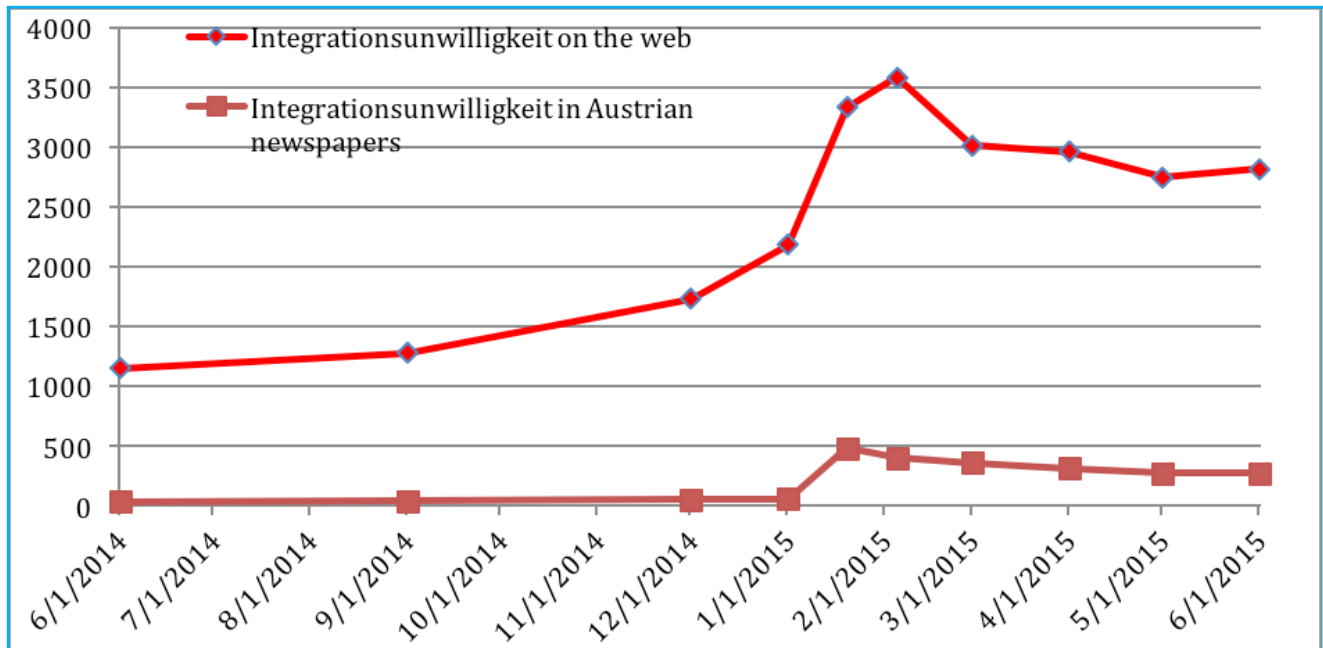
The measures suggested to counteract these undesirable behaviours can only be qualified as punishments, ranging from community service to severe fines of €1,000 to (on failure to pay) imprisonment, loss of welfare, loss of citizenship or even deportation. It is not surprising that the two interviews triggered a strong response, more so than the resolution itself, because the latter had not included any specific suggestions of punishable behaviours or punishments. To indicate the terminological effect that these interviews had on discourses on migration and integration in general, and in the Austrian media in particular, Figure 2 shows the average frequency/week of the term *Integrationsunwilligkeit* on the World Wide Web (Austrian domains only) and in Austrian newspapers for the past decade. Figure 3 focuses on the same data for a more narrowly-defined period centred on the discourse strand analysed here.

**Figure 2: Average use/week on the Web (Google Analytics for Austrian domains) and in national newspapers of the term *Integrationsunwilligkeit* (2005–2015)**





**Figure 3: Average use/week on the Web (Google Analytics for Austrian domains) and in national newspapers of the term Integrationsunwilligkeit (2014–2015)**



Both figures indicate that the gradually increasing use of the term on the Web was not matched by a corresponding use in the Austrian media. Indeed, the term and its derivatives remained a marginal phenomenon up until the interviews and subsequent reporting, when their use peaked. At least in the short run, the interviews established the term as a fixture in the Austrian media and, by implication, public discourse.

This discourse strand stands out from the overall discourse on integration by articulating the alleged lack of integration or unwillingness to integrate in terms of (a) schoolchildren, (b) Islamist terrorism and (c) punishments. Those suspected and accused of being ‘unwilling’ are mainly schoolchildren, also referred to as boys and sons more frequently than as girls and daughters. Indeed, familial relations play an important role as this group is also represented as families and parents, fathers more frequently than mothers. The third most common form of representation is linked to a *topos of difference*, emphasizing their alleged difference as migrants, immigrants, Turks, foreigners, Muslims or minorities. The fourth most common way of

representing this group is by reducing them to the quality of being the ‘unwilling’ in a nominalized form. Less frequent are neutral representations as (fellow) human beings, women and men.

This, then, marks a notable shift in the political discourse on integration, which is now informed by three main argumentative patterns:

- Integration through achievement: if Austrians are an industrious and diligent people and foreigners are not, then to be successful (by demonstrating such qualities) is to become (more) Austrian. Note that the seemingly liberal evocation of the ‘entrepreneurial migrant’ is embedded in a strictly paternalistic view of integration in which migrants must be pushed if not forced for their own good (de Cillia & Preisinger 2012).
- Integration through language competence: if the national language of Austria is German, then to acquire language competence in German is to become (more) Austrian.
- Integration through punishment: if noncompliance with desirable behaviours





is indicative of (cultural) otherness, any means of enforcing compliance will help the offenders become (more) Austrian and prevent radicalization.

The former two arguments have been employed to legitimize hegemonic politics implemented in policies for a considerable time. The third argument, however, is a recent innovation tied to the discursive construction of religious and cultural tensions between a homogenous Self (white, Christian, German-speaking) and the Other (coloured, Muslim, non-German-speaking) living within the Austrian borders, and thus an internal threat to national integrity. Where previously policies had referred to both the need to integrate and to criteria with which to measure the success or failure of integration, the terminology has now obviously shifted to accommodate a vague blaming strategy (scapegoating). Moreover, the focus of media and political attention seems to have shifted from 'integration' to an 'unwillingness to integrate,' providing an example of the culturalisation of discourse on integration.

#### *2.4. The salience of social (in) equality in (second) language acquisition*

In contrast to many expert opinions and much migration research, socio- and psycholinguistic research confirms that the socio-economic status of small children has more impact on the acquisition of language (L1 and L2) than ethnic origin. Indeed, this is not surprising as these results confirm some sociolinguistic theories that have been foundational since the 1970s, e.g. by Basil Bernstein and his collaborators (Bernstein 1971a, 1971b). When Bernstein wrote about language he was not referring to systems of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, the structures of language systems, but to the social relationships that make up institutions, such as families. He was interested in the way social relationships align

and order ideas, characterized as the grammar of the social in contradistinction to the grammar of linguistics. He argued that working-class children participate in different kinds of social interaction with parents than middle-class children do and, even more importantly, that fractions within the middle classes are oriented to meaning in different ways.

In the INPUT project, the researchers study 24 parent-child dyads living in Vienna, Austria, i.e. in a predominantly German-speaking environment (see Korecky-Kröll et al. 2015 for details). Half of the children are bilingual and mainly speak Turkish at home and mainly German in kindergarten, and the other half are monolingual German-speaking. Their ages range from 3 to 4 years. The groups are balanced in terms of socio-economic status (SES) and almost balanced in terms of gender: Austro-Turkish HSES vs LSES, monolingual HSES vs LSES (Korecky et al., in press).<sup>7</sup> The main caretaker was identified as the person that spent the most time with the target child or the person whom the child was most closely attached to (in all cases but one, this was the mother). Whereas HSES parents are known to use more conversation-eliciting speech acts, LSES parents often show a behaviour-directing conversation style. The most salient interim results, among many, are that the cleavage between HSES and LSES input and output is stronger among Austrian monolingual speakers than among Austro-Turkish children, and that a surprisingly large proportion of HSES Austro-Turkish children develop some of their German language skills earlier and faster than typical LSES native speakers of Austrian German.

In the following, I focus only on pragmatic variables such as the acquisition of speech acts, although the project has been investigating a wide range of linguistic indicators (the data were collected via interviews, participant observation,

<sup>7</sup> The data in this study are part of Project SSH11-027 "Investigating Parental and Other Caretakers' Utterances to Kindergarten Children (INPUT)," which is supported by the Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF).



story-telling, picture descriptions and competence tests). Directive speech acts in particular provide an interesting testing ground for exploring different conversation styles (e.g. Hoff et al. 2002). Parental conversation style is closely related to the socio-economic status of families. Parents from HSES backgrounds,<sup>8</sup> who mostly have a broader knowledge of child development and child care issues (Rowe 2008), are more responsive to their children's verbalizations, initiate and sustain conversation with their children more frequently and encourage them more often to talk by asking them questions (Hoff 2003). HSES parents also tend to formulate requests in an indirect way, e.g. in the form of questions, such as "Why don't you pick up the toys for me?" On the other hand, parents from LSES backgrounds, who often experience greater social stress and are thus more focused on goal-directed caretaking settings than on play situations, reportedly use more behaviour-directing speech acts (Hoff-Ginsberg 1991) such as direct commands and prohibitions (e.g. "Put it here!"; "Don't touch it!"). Speech acts are, of course, important characteristics of parenting styles (Searle and Vanderveken 1985). Speech acts occurring in child speech and child-directed speech are assertives (e.g. assertions and statements), expressives (e.g. complaints, praise and greetings), commissives (e.g. promises, offers and threats) and directives (e.g. requests and questions).

Suffice it to state here that all groups of children prefer assertive speech acts, whereas all groups of parents use directive speech acts most frequently. Expressive speech acts are more frequent in child speech than in child-directed speech, but commissive speech acts are rare among

8 SES was assessed via the highest level of education of the main parental caretaker (cf. Czinglar et al. 2015). Children of parents that had obtained at least a high-school diploma according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97, cf. OECD 1999) were classified as high SES, whereas children of parents that had lower levels of education (e.g. compulsory school or an apprenticeship) were classified as low SES.

both children and parents from both language backgrounds. In monolingual and bilingual children, we find similar SES differences: HSES children use more requests, whereas LSES children use more real questions. This SES difference is greater in bilingual than monolingual children. Regarding requests, both monolingual and bilingual HSES children use more indirect requests, whereas both groups of LSES children clearly prefer direct requests, but here the SES difference is greater in the monolingual than the bilingual group. Hence, language acquisition (both L1 and L2) is highly dependent on the parents' SES and their linguistic input (i.e. the family language environment). LSES children (both Austro-Turkish and monolingual children) use similar conversational styles and their progress is slower. In sum, HSES monolingual children do better than HSES Austro-Turkish children; all HSES children do better than all LSES children. Austro-Turkish LSES children perform better than monolingual LSES children (e.g. Korecky-Kröll et al. 2015).

The following two explanations might play a role. On the one hand, families that have taken the initiative to migrate from one country to another in order to improve their living situations tend to show greater mobility (including social mobility) and higher educational aspirations than families that have always stayed in the same place, regardless of SES (Block 2016). On the other hand, HSES families in the majority population have well-established networks that help them to acquire good jobs and high-quality education for their children. HSES migrant families do not have these relations, they have to focus on building them up successively, which may put them under greater social distress than autochthonous HSES families. These results confirm new theoretical sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic approaches which elaborate both Bernstein's class-centred sociolinguistic theory, such as Block's (2016) studies on 'declassing' and 'reclassing' resulting from migration and transnationalism, and



Pennycook's insights into new urban developments in a globalised world, condensed in the concept of 'metrolinguistics' (2015). As migrants frequently lose their former class position in the host country and have to resituate themselves in a new social environment, they preserve "their multi-stranded relations that link together their societies and communities of origin and settlement" (Block 2016). Social divisions thus seem to be smaller in migrant communities than in the host country, i.e. in Austria. This fact together with the greater pressure for assimilation that is experienced by all families with migration backgrounds may be reflected in the linguistic input that they give to their children. It is obvious that these results should be considered when devising new language policies, both for children and adults. Indeed, we could assume that SES differences are likely to be even stronger among large groups of refugees escaping from war zones, as families are usually able to escape if they have savings and can pay people to smuggle them abroad. Moreover, we might ask how the results of the INPUT project can be applied when dealing with severely traumatised children, regardless of their SES. Finally, what happens if parents do not choose to leave but are forced to do so without much previous planning? Does this situation have any specific impact on bilingualism among their children?

### 3. Conclusion

The Council of Europe (2016) emphasizes that linguistic integration depends on the higher or lower value accorded to the languages present in their repertoire before migrants arrive in the host society. The degree of success in integrating languages into the repertoire is obviously not quantifiable. Frequently, linguistic experts are not involved in designing the various test items, which are also not standardized across languages and countries. It should be emphasized that the success of linguistic integration strongly depends on the motivation and attitudes of adult migrants,

their SES, the time spent in the host country, their level of education, their religious routines, their gender identities and their access to work and housing. Accordingly, migrants may

- decide to not change their repertoire, i.e. to not learn the main language of the host society systematically;
- wish to change their repertoire, but be unable to do so due to lack of time or self-confidence;
- aim to functionally rearrange their repertoire without attempting normative adaptation as part of a single-identity language strategy marked by the migrant's language of origin;
- aim to rearrange their linguistic repertoire in order to achieve 'linguistic naturalisation,' involving a gradual dropping of the language of origin;
- aim to rearrange their functional repertoire but with two joint languages of identity.

It is up to migrants to decide for themselves which of these language strategies is best suited to their goals in life and the management of their identity. In any case, the fact that migrants may wish to choose among these various types of adaptation implies that arrangements need to be made for listening to migrants' views and for designing and managing tailor-made courses.

To acquire plural competence, both migrants and the host country have to invest much energy, work and money. This competence does not only consist – although it is certainly important – of acquisition of the majority language. Successful integration implies knowledge of relevant *language games* in all domains of life, indeed for many people (both migrants and the host population) a *Gestalt-switch*. Motivation, learning, curiosity, patience and respect are necessary prerequisites for being able to understand each other's way of life, always



on the foundations of human rights and the respective societies' constitutions. As mentioned above, the situation for refugees has to be analysed separately: some conclusions certainly refer to all newcomers in a new society but some factors – such as trauma – usually only refer to refugees.

With respect to the culturalisation of political debates, i.e. the emphasis on cultural differences between the host society and newcomers, specifically regarding religion and gender, results imply that much work will have to be invested in order to convince both sides that living with plurality and difference should be encouraged. Of course, plurality should always remain within the boundaries of the respective constitution and human rights norms. Integration and competence in plurality obviously imply a long and difficult process over many years, challenging old belief systems and traditional ways of life. As Miller (2016) suggests, newcomers will have to shed 'some cultural baggage' and the host society will have to offer support in this endeavour.



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# FROM EASTERN ENLARGEMENT TO JIHAD: THE DOUBLE CHALLENGE FOR MIGRANT INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

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While the 1980s and 1990s were characterised by tensions and even terrorist violence or war along ethnic/national lines in Europe, during the last 15 years religion has emerged as the main fault line along which people are divided. After decades of Basque or Northern Irish terrorism, the war in Yugoslavia and the partition of the country, and related concerns that the situation of ethnic minorities in Central Eastern Europe could become an unmanageable challenge, today we are witnessing a weakening of ethnic tensions. Ethnic and national minority claims for more political space and independence are channelled through national institutions, e.g. the process of devolution in Britain and the Scottish referendum, or through international mediation and arbitration (see, e.g., the EU Roma Strategy, or the OSCE Ljubljana principles). It is the religious claims of minorities that are now seen to represent the most difficult challenges because, it is argued, they go against the very nature of secular liberal European democracies.

This is paradoxical, since religious minority claims do not challenge national sovereignty or territorial integration and could actually be accommodated in line with the path followed in each country in earlier times to make space for native religious minorities. Indeed, European societies are much

less secular than they often portray themselves to be (several countries have recognised official religions; most countries have religious education integrated in their national education systems; many allow or support religious schools; and many offer support to religious organisations). How are we then to explain this paradox that ethnic and national minority challenges are seen as less problematic than those of religious minorities?

Fear and suspicion towards religious minority claims are coupled with a renewed emphasis on the nation-state as the most important geopolitical and socioeconomic unit. As the intensification of globalisation and the erosion of national sovereignty (particularly in Europe through the European integration process), along with the recent global financial crisis and that of the Eurozone, send alarm signals to citizens, the nation-state re-emerges as a safe haven in an uncertain, even if closely integrated, international environment. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the nation-state becomes a last refuge from the storms of European and global crises. Citizens become increasingly diffident of global governance processes like the G8 and G20 and of EU policies generally – whether those on public finance or migration management – and they turn to their national institutions for socioeconomic security.

We are thus witnessing a contradictory process where on the one hand religion is perceived as a main dimension that organises social and political life at the global level, and on the other hand national identity and the nation-state are re-emerging as the main community of allegiance and belonging in a post-industrial society. Both processes find their roots in the political and symbolic reorganisation of the world order that emerged in 1989 after the collapse of communism. They are, of course, supported and fuelled by the recent socioeconomic crisis in Europe, which has intensified inequalities within and across countries, making citizens increasingly worried about their future.



The societal transformation that Bauman (1998, 2000) and Sennett (1998) already described and analysed in the late 1990s has acquired a particular configuration and intensity in Europe in the post-1989 period. The defeat of communism as a political and economic system has brought with it the reconnection of Europe (Spohn and Triandafyllidou 2003) but has also led to a dominance (if not outright hegemony) of consumer culture and of the free market economy that Bauman and Sennett, among others, critically analysed (Baumann 2000). Differences between left-wing and right-wing ideologies have thus become somewhat vague, and citizens have been left to wonder what the alternative is. In this context, the European Union offered an institutional framework to reconnect Europe and overcome the legacies of World War II and the divisions of the Cold War. The notion of European identity and European culture brought together the different nations of Europe and their minorities, even though this did not happen on a level playing field since cultural hierarchies and closures towards specific minority identities persisted (Triandafyllidou and Gropas 2015).

Despite the important economic and political challenges posed by the reconnection of Europe, the 1990s were characterised by a certain ideological enthusiasm that the reconnection of the continent ended a past of wars and division, and that the European Union would offer a platform for both economic and geopolitical integration, while European identity would become intertwined with national identities, enriching and not replacing them. Not only were the 1990s a decade of European enthusiasm and a drive for unification, they were also characterised by increased attention to cultural and religious diversity in Europe. Multiculturalism was celebrated in many countries (e.g. the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden) as the most appropriate way to accommodate cultural and religious diversity and build an inclusive citizenship. This

pro-diversity policy also extended to the then newly independent states in Central and Eastern Europe, which were strongly encouraged to recognise their national minorities and provide appropriate guarantees of their rights, as provided for in relevant European and international legal instruments (Triandafyllidou and Ulasiuk 2014). Indeed, the end of the Cold War and the implosion of the communist Other were celebrated in the 1990s, both as a liberation from Europe's past tragedies and as the start of a new global era without deep ideological antagonisms – the “end of history” as Francis Fukuyama called it in his well-known book (Fukuyama 1992).

The new millennium started, however, with a profound geopolitical, cultural and existential shock for Europe and the West. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 signalled the end of the post-1989 euphoria. While the US government proclaimed the War on Terror, intervened in Afghanistan and again attacked Iraq, Europe was facing important internal and external challenges. Urban violence erupted in northern English cities in the summer of 2001, and French suburbs followed suit in 2005. National grievances of second-generation children who were failing both in school and the labour market were then coupled with global cultural crises like that over the Danish cartoons of Prophet Mohammad in 2006. While extremist and jihadist forms of Islam were emerging as a global terrorist threat, more moderate versions of Islam and European Muslims started being portrayed as unfit to live in European liberal and secular societies. The Madrid (2004) and London (2005) bombs did nothing but reinforce this view: that certainly not all Muslims are terrorists, but there is something fundamentally wrong with Islam as a religion that makes it inappropriate for European democratic societies and impossible to accommodate in a secular state.

Islam emerged forcefully as an important ‘civilizational’ dividing line within Europe during the same period in which the post-1989 European





re-unification enthusiasm started to fade away. Indeed, the magnitude of the economic and political challenges of the transition of Central Eastern European countries from communism to free market capitalism and liberal democracy became increasingly felt in Europe in the late 1990s, when several of the former communist countries experienced a second round of economic and political decline. Discussions about their integration into the European Union seemed to reach their objectives when the Helsinki summit of 1999 reaffirmed the political will of the EU15 to integrate the new countries, possibly in one big enlargement wave by 2004. Thus, economic objectives were subsumed to the overarching political goal of re-uniting Europe, provided the new member states became fully fledged democracies and subscribed to European values, which included the accommodation of national minorities and the abandonment of irredentist claims or border disputes.

In a way, it was the very success of Eastern Enlargement, along with the emergence of international jihadist terrorism and urban tensions among post-migration minorities and native majorities, that paved the way for Islam to become the necessary European Other. Not only had communism collapsed and with it the overall Cold War geopolitical and symbolic framework, but the Central Eastern European countries were fully subscribing to the by-then hegemonic western European model. The communists had been successfully 'reformed' – there was a need for a new Other at the European and global levels against whom a united Europe and Western/European values could be reaffirmed.

Muslims emerged as a convenient Other, both internally and externally – they were accused of creating 'parallel societies' within European countries and they also posed a threat to European security through terrorism. Indeed, a number of thinkers and politicians advanced the claim that it was impossible to accommodate Muslims

in European societies because their cultural traditions and religious faith were incompatible with secular democratic governance.

While for a good part of the 2000s this debate gained momentum and actually led to a public repudiation of multiculturalism by a number of European leaders (Angela Merkel in October 2010, David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy both in February 2011), there were other important developments in Europe which changed the course of things and shifted the focus from religion and Muslims to other 'Others.' Indeed, the debate on migration and diversity was further complicated by the intensification of intra-EU mobility after the 2004 enlargement and the 2007 accession of Bulgaria and Romania in the context of a progressive lifting of restrictions on access by the new member states' citizens to the labour markets of the old member states. There had been rising concern that intra-EU migration included welfare tourism. While the expulsion of (Romanian) Roma from France by Nicolas Sarkozy's government in 2009 caused widespread condemnation, a much broader rejection of Central Eastern European immigrants gained high currency in Britain in the 2010s. Such discourses were initially only promoted by extremist and populist parties, such as UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party), the Front National (in France) and the party of Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, but they gradually expanded into the mainstream political discourse. What was initially seen as mainly an issue involving second-generation migrant youths and Muslim communities had become a wider anxiety that national governments and national majority groups were losing control over their territories, labour markets and national identities. The European integration process thus shifted from being the epitome of Western cultural, economic and political dominance over communism – the victory of democracy over authoritarian rule – to posing a threat of national control over important social and economic issues being lost. The result of



the Brexit referendum in June 2016 can certainly be viewed through this lens too.

Today we are, therefore, faced with a complex socio-political reality where Muslims and Islam continue to be stigmatised as unfit for secular and liberal democracy, while at the same time fear is mounting among public opinion that the European integration process is stripping states of their power and leaving their national populations unprotected from a cultural and economic invasion by newcomers. If the newcomers are Muslims they are seen as culturally dangerous and eroding our way of life; if they are white, Christian and European, such as Poles or Romanians for instance, they are seen as welfare scroungers and as stealing our jobs. This leads to a divisive debate that cuts across religious and national lines. In a post-1989 and post-9/11 era, but also a post-enlargement era, religion and the nation compete with one another to provide ontological and socioeconomic security to European citizens, with both offering a Manichean view of a world divided between Us and Them as an anchor. Indeed, extreme events like the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris in January 2016, the shootings and explosions, again in Paris, in November 2015, and in Brussels in March 2016, do nothing but confirm these discourses of fear, to use Ruth Wodak's expression (Wodak 2016).

## Concluding remarks

It was at the turn of the millennium that Zygmunt Bauman warned of the pitfalls of the increased freedom and intensified mobility of late modern and post-industrial societies. Bauman pointed out that enhanced freedom and mobility were eroding stable reference points for identity, such as class, kinship, ethnicity, religion and even locality. The emancipation of the individual from the forces of nature was reaching a new level where this very emancipation was again put in jeopardy as an economic logic was taking precedence over non-economic challenges (Bauman 2000). The new world order, according to Bauman,

was characterised by excessive de-regulation, liberalisation and flexibilisation, leading to estrangement and uprootedness (see also Sennett 1998).

While Bauman's analysis certainly holds true in that it presents the most important challenges that late modernity and globalisation set to citizens, what he did not foresee is that old solidities had not gone away but instead remained under the surface and could be activated, despite today's changing circumstances of production, life, mobility and communication (Atkinson 2008, Lee 2011, Levitt 2007). Indeed, as Castells (2010a; 2010b) has foreseen, very few people in the world can afford to be, or feel they are, cosmopolitans. Most identify with their urban milieux, while others rediscover their anchoring in religion. Collective identifications do not disappear but are instead transformed and re-invented in this fragmented yet networked society.

At this very moment in Europe, the old solidities of nationalism and religion are re-emerging with unexpected strength. This process has to do with the ways in which European integration has moved from being a political and ideological project to one that is dictated by economic logic and felt to be detached from local and national realities. This process is, however, also related to the overall challenges that globalisation raises for citizens, not only socioeconomic ones but also existential ones. Thus, while national identity and the nation-state are seen to better respond to the socio-economic vulnerability of the European citizen today, animosity towards Europe's largest minority religion responds to a necessity for a higher level of community that affirms European values and superiority in the world.

This analysis of the re-emergence of nationalism and religion is, of course, neither deterministic nor teleological. Even if people are in search of solidity in a liquid world, such solidity is not necessarily to be found in closure, discrimination and prejudice.



Indeed, we should not lose sight of the largely successful integration of Muslims in different European countries today, and nor of new forms of transnational solidarity. Through the power of information and communication technology we now feel much more related to (and are actually more informed about) what is happening in other regions of the world (e.g. the Middle East, but not only there) and how this affects our own lives – whether through a surge of incoming refugees or through a decrease in oil prices. International terrorism and foreign fighters from European countries joining ‘Islamic State’ in the last two years are one side of this coin, showing how cultural and political globalisation can transform local integration problems and grievances by linking them with geopolitics breeding transnational extremism. At the same time, the various Indignados and Occupy movements across Europe, youth mobilisation in support of the Arab spring and Ghezi Park movements, and transnational commemorations of the victims of international terrorism in Paris testify that globalisation can also reinforce solidarity and mobilisation for common transnational causes, such as peace, equality or democracy, across national boundaries.



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# THE CULTURAL INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES: SHIFTING NARRATIVES AND POLICIES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION<sup>1</sup>

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The unprecedented flow of immigrants and refugees since summer 2015 together with its only loosely controlled nature pose major dilemmas to the potential host societies and to the new arrivals themselves, as well as to policy makers and to academic research. An abundance of conceptual frameworks, integration models and interdisciplinary considerations have already been developed to meet this challenge “on a continuum from total rejection of the ‘other’ to total acceptance of the ‘other,’”<sup>2</sup> while sustainable long term solutions are most likely to be found in the large space between these two poles. Their position within this spectrum and ability to be implemented depend both on the specific histories, traditions and socio-economic circumstances of the host nations and the various ethnic and religious compositions of the newcomer communities.

The role of culture in tackling the recent migratory and refugee crisis, and indeed the necessity of cultural integration, has been moving to centre stage even beyond the academic discourse, both in terms of public debate and policymaking.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter reflects the personal views of the author. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use of the information contained herein.

<sup>2</sup> See Ruth Wodak’s contribution in this volume.

For a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon it is worth first putting these discussions in a broader perspective by reviewing the recent EU approach to managing migration in general. Second, the latest concrete initiatives to integrate and promote diversity should also be examined closely in this light to see what can actually be realistically expected from the various cultural integration projects in the current circumstances and the extent to which they fit into any theoretical approach.

The present contribution will first outline the shift in public attitudes to migration and their impact on the stances taken by EU and Member State authorities. It will then show that there has been important continuity in the EU’s principles and policies regarding the management of legal migration since the adoption by the Council in 2004 of the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy. The chapter concludes with some reflections on normative political theories on immigrant integration that could provide both critical and constructive perspectives from which to assess the EU’s efforts in this area and facilitate a more balanced political and public discourse.

## Shifting narratives and declining public support for integration

Since late last year, there has been a gradual but clear shift in public and political discourse towards considering immigrants as a security threat rather than focusing on facilitating their integration. This can be observed by looking at the various formal and informal European Council conclusions and discussions and the media across Europe. Most recently at the European Council in October,<sup>3</sup> leaders focused almost exclusively on reinforcing the protection of external borders, tightening controls on all routes and preventing illegal migration. The informal summit of 27

<sup>3</sup> European Council conclusions on migration, 20 October 2016





Member States (the first without the UK) in Bratislava in September<sup>4</sup> was dominated by a similar discourse and ended with the adoption of a ‘roadmap’<sup>5</sup> for the future. Equally significant are the changes in the positions of the traditionally most open host countries. After Bratislava, Chancellor Merkel stated clearly that “illegal immigration must be stopped” (although she still promised that Germany would take “hundreds of legal refugees every month” from Greece and Italy). Soon afterwards, on a visit to Africa (Niger, Ethiopia and Mali) to explore whether the Turkish model could be used there, she promised an aid package worth up to €77 million to fight against terrorism and human trafficking, and she warned young Africans not to undertake the dangerous journey to Europe without clear plans. A number of restrictive measures have also been introduced during this year by Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark and others. At a ‘special summit’ for 13 EU and Balkan leaders in Vienna,<sup>6</sup> some Central and Eastern European leaders proposed that new migrant hotspots and refugee camps for asylum seekers should be built in Turkey, Libya or Egypt. The Visegrad 4 countries also coined a new phrase, “flexible solidarity,” with which they are trying to block the adoption of a new permanent crisis relocation mechanism under the Dublin system<sup>7</sup> (with tacit support during Council discussions from Austria, France, Spain and others).

These developments prompted President Juncker to state that countries unable to participate in the redistribution of asylum seekers must participate more in the reinforcement of the EU’s external borders. Providing protection, preserving the European way of life, and defending Europe at home and abroad were also key elements in his

4 [Statement - informal meeting of the heads of state or government, 23 September 2015.](#)

5 [Bratislava Declaration and Roadmap.](#)

6 [Summit 24. September 2016: Press: Federal ... invitation and President Tusk's remarks : Remarks by President Donald Tusk before the summit on migration along the Balkan route.](#)

7 A permanent crisis relocation mechanism under the Dublin system: [Proposal for a Regulation.](#)

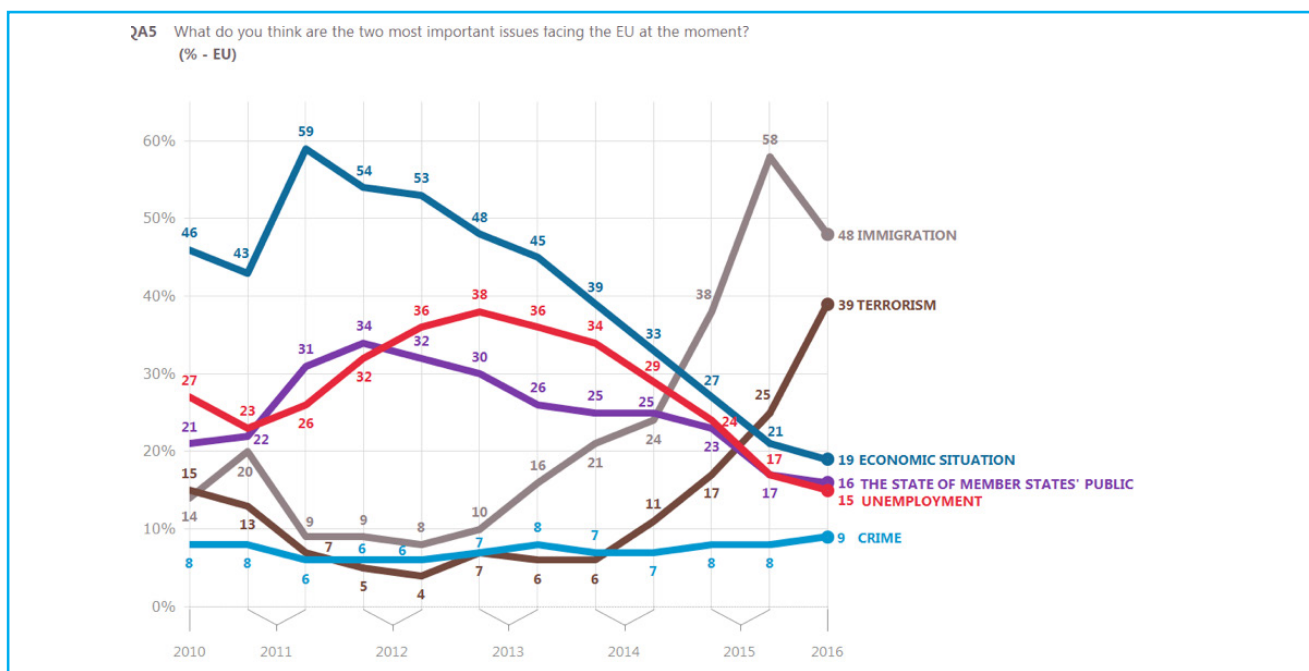
State of the Union speech delivered in the run-up to the Bratislava Summit, where the establishment of a European Border and Coast Guard was announced. This was followed by a concrete legislative proposal in October, in addition to further measures against terrorism and ones strengthening the EU’s external borders. At the same time, a new European Fund for Sustainable Development was also suggested for Africa and the Neighbourhood countries to address one of the root causes of migration. Its External Investment Plan may allow investments to increase by up to €88bn.

The shifting narratives also reflect the prevailing public mood, which has changed dramatically during the last few years. According to the latest Eurobarometer figures published in July 2016,<sup>8</sup> immigration (48%) and terrorism (39%) remain the top two concerns of European citizens, well ahead of the economic situation (19%) and unemployment (15%).

8 The Spring 2016 Standard Eurobarometer was conducted between 21 and 31 May 2016. A total of 31,946 people were interviewed in all EU Member States and in the candidate countries. The ‘First results report’ was published on 29 July and is available online [here](#).



**Table 1: Spring 2016 Standard Eurobarometer**



In 20 Member States immigration is the number one concern for the EU and it is among the top two concerns in all countries except Portugal. Terrorism is the number one concern in 8 Member States and among the top two concerns in all countries except Greece.

Partly reacting to these trends, a large majority of EU governments appear to be keen to proceed quickly with implementation of the first two pillars of the European Agenda on Migration, adopted in May 2015.<sup>9</sup> Since then, many Commission proposals have been adopted to reduce the incentives for irregular migration and to ensure better border management, and most of these have already made significant headway. In September and October 2016 three major progress reports<sup>10</sup> and six new or follow-up initiatives were sent to the EP and the Council. At the same time, despite

<sup>9</sup> A [European Agenda on Migration](#)

<sup>10</sup> [First progress report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration](#) on 18 October 2016, [Communication](#) on progress towards an effective and genuine Security Union on 12 October 2016, and a [Communication](#) on the Sixth Report on Relocation and Resettlement on 28 September 2016.

having a comprehensive legislative proposal<sup>11</sup> on the table, the Heads of States and Governments seem to be making somewhat slower progress on the third pillar – creation of a strong common asylum policy – mainly due to heated internal disputes. It is also noticeable that there is an increasing tendency to deal with migration and security together as well as to “mainstream counterterrorism” into education and cultural policies.

### Towards a new policy on legal migration

Against this ‘securitized’ background, perhaps it is not surprising that less attention is paid – especially by the media – to the fourth pillar, the development of a new EU policy on legal migration. In this domain, work had already started long before the

<sup>11</sup> The proposal to reform the Common European Asylum System (Dublin reform) was adopted in May 2016: [Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third country national or a stateless person \(Recast\)](#)

migratory and refugee crisis. For several years the focus had already been on maintaining a Europe in demographic decline as an attractive destination for immigrants by using targeted measures, many of which are discussed in other contributions to this e-book.

For this particular chapter, the most relevant recent measures to integrate diversity are in the European Commission's Action Plan<sup>12</sup> on the integration of third-country nationals of June 2016. This is actually one of the follow-up proposals to the JHA Council's mandate in 2014 which reaffirmed the [EU Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy](#), already adopted in 2004. These set out a common approach to immigrant integration across the EU and it is worth noting that the Council decided to reaffirm these principles 10 years later. They were basically unchanged, even though at the time of their adoption they were only intended to be an "indicative description which should be further developed." The Action Plan also builds on the EC's [European Agenda for the integration of third-country nationals set out in 2011](#), calling for a strengthened and coherent approach to integration across different policy areas and government levels.

The current proposal targets the more than 20 million third-country nationals legally residing in the EU, irrespectively of the reason why they migrated or for how long, but some actions specifically target newly-arrived refugees who face specific problems. It is based on the experience that integration policies work best when they are designed to ensure coherent systems to facilitate participation and empowerment for everyone in society: for both immigrant and native communities. This means that integration should go beyond participation in the labour market and mastering the language, and become a dynamic two-way process; not only should migrants be expected to embrace fundamental EU values and learn the host language, but they should also be

12 [Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals](#)

offered meaningful opportunities to participate in the host country's economy and society. The involvement of migrants themselves in the design and implementation of integration policies and projects is essential to improve their outcomes, but none of these actions should be at the expense of measures to benefit disadvantaged groups or minorities in the host countries.

The Action Plan itself actually provides a common policy framework to help Member States to develop their national integration policies and it describes the potential support from the EC. Among its five main areas, in this chapter we shall only focus on that of active participation and social inclusion, which includes actions to support exchanges with the receiving society, immigrant participation in cultural life and fighting discrimination. In general terms, this means that the Commission will (co-) finance projects to promote intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and common European values through culture, films and the arts (Creative Europe) and also projects to promote social inclusion involving youth and sport (Erasmus+). A number of other funds/programmes will also be mobilised to promote participation in political, social and cultural life and to foster better understanding between various communities. An innovative element, also featured in President Juncker's 2016 State of the Union speech, is that it gives greater priority to activities dedicated to the integration of refugees within the European Voluntary Service.

By working together with the EP and the Council, Member States will be encouraged to strengthen their integration policies to increase migrant participation in local democratic structures, to invest in projects to fight prejudice and stereotypes and to implement legislation to combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Civic orientation programmes are also encouraged to foster integration and respect for EU values. Of course, the success of integration policies also depends on adequate funding. The EU has already supported



integration actions in all Member States through dedicated funding and the Structural and Cohesion Funds for a long time. In the previous cycle (2007-2013), €825 million were spent from the dedicated European Integration Fund, and its mid-term evaluation demonstrated that the projects involved would not have been carried out otherwise and that they contributed to the reinforcement of NGO and local activities. In addition, the European Social Fund (ESF) co-funded actions that reached more than 5 million people.<sup>13</sup> This funding, however, represented just part of the overall investment carried out within Member States. Under the current Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, € 765 million has already been earmarked for the dedicated fund, but as this would mean a slight decrease, the EC suggested strategically using the various shared management funds to support integration. Especially in the European Social Fund (ESF – €21 bn) and in the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF – €21.4 bn), large amounts are available to potentially promote – among other goals – cultural integration.

### Innovative paths in the latest concrete projects

The capacity to implement the Action Plan in general and the speed with which it happens is in the hands of EU leaders, whose visions show a fair degree of variation. This is likely to have an impact on whether and how the available funds will be used as, of course, it depends primarily on the Member States themselves. The Commission on its part decided to launch an innovative call for applications in the framework of the cross-sectoral strand of the Creative Europe programme in April 2016 as a follow up to the Culture Council conclusions from November 2015 to support cultural, audio-visual and cross-sectoral projects facilitating the integration of refugees and

<sup>13</sup> In 2014-15, other funds, such as Erasmus+, funded more than 200 projects dealing with refugees or addressing challenges related to the inclusion of refugees.

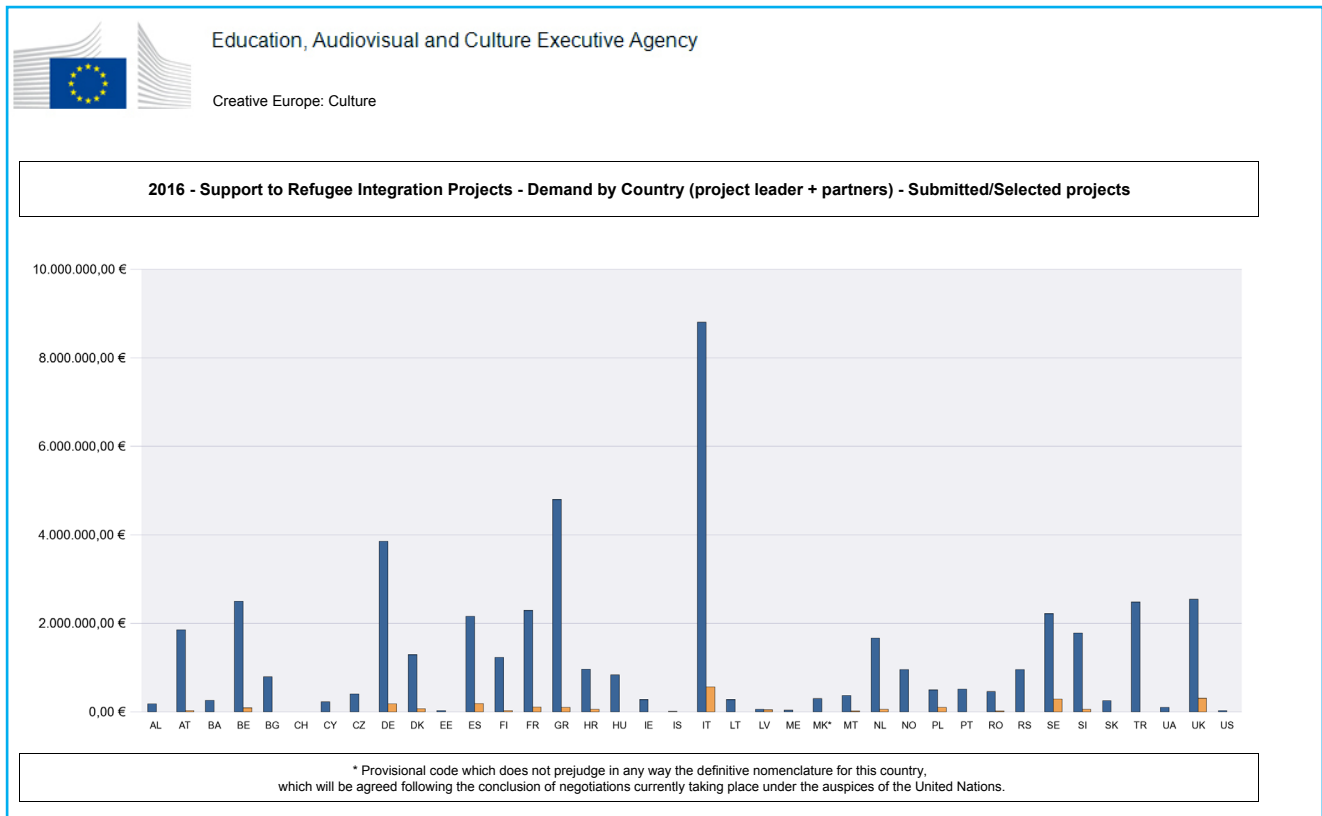
enhancing mutual cultural understanding. The expectation was that a limited number (10 -12) of high quality consortia from the cultural sectors would be established to create and test initiatives – “creative partnerships.” These transnational projects were designed to help refugees to socialize and express themselves even without them immediately being able to speak the host country language, to become learning platforms, to foster respect for diversity, intercultural and civic competencies, and to help host country citizens understand the values and cultures of refugees.

This call eventually attracted 274 applications – more than three times the original expectation. Therefore, the initial budget (€1.6 million) was increased to € 2.35 million, with which 12 projects will be (co-)financed involving 60 organizations from 20 countries.<sup>14</sup> As can be seen from Table 2, Italy and Sweden are the best-represented countries with 17 and 9 organizations respectively. The table also gives a certain indication of the degrees of interest of various actors across Europe. Common threads in the winning projects were related to storytelling, the digital arts and training and workshops for participants. Each of the projects will receive an average of just under €200,000 and will run until 2018.

<sup>14</sup> [Selection results: Creative Europe/Support for Refugee Integration, Call EACEA 12/2016](#)



**Table 2**



In September 2016 a regular call for European cooperation projects was also launched in line with the EU Common Basic Principles referred to above<sup>15</sup> (with a total budget of €35 million for 2017) and one of its priorities is specifically to help the integration of refugees in the EU through showcasing and co-creating activities of a cultural and audio-visual nature across Europe. The focus of successful projects should be on fostering intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and respect for other cultures.

### Political theory and the real world

One may legitimately ask whether the principles underlying EU policies on the integration of refugees and other newcomers are defensible and to what extent they concur with the reality on the ground. These are questions to be addressed to

<sup>15</sup> [Call for proposal: Support to European Cooperation projects 2017 EACEA 45/2016.](#)

normative political theorists. While historically immigration has not been a major topic in political philosophy, it has recently become the subject of an increasingly contentious debate which so far seems to have been dominated by a human rights-based cosmopolitan approach embodied most eminently in the seminal work of Joseph Carens,<sup>16</sup> even though its underlying advocacy of open borders can be qualified as somewhat utopian in the current European and global political context. Especially at a time when traditional integration mechanisms are being seriously challenged and critical decisions are made by governments, it would be useful to thoroughly consider the ‘realist approach,’ primarily represented by David Miller,<sup>17</sup> which places immigration in a nation-state context. He argues that “it is implausible to regard

<sup>16</sup> J. Carens, *The Ethics of Immigration*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Most recently in his latest book: D. Miller, *Strangers in Our Midst*, Harvard University Press, 2016





global equality of opportunity, as opposed to global sufficiency, as setting limits to national self-determination.”<sup>18</sup> Of course, in such an immensely complex and politically highly sensitive matter a third claim that “a more desirable task for the political philosophy of immigration is to find ways in which the *joint* requirement of global equality of opportunity *and* collective self-determination can be coherently upheld”<sup>19</sup> deserves equally careful assessment.

Notwithstanding these theoretical debates, and presumably sometimes even without awareness of them, the daily management of mass migratory movements has clearly shifted towards a fairly restrictive approach, not just in Europe (as shown above) but also in Australia (which was already strict but is becoming even stricter) and the US as well. A clear distinction between refugees and economic migrants remains one of the cornerstones for each regime. At the same time, if we examine the calls for the above-mentioned latest integration projects promoted by the EU together with their designs and results, we find that they aim to facilitate the kind of ideal full cultural integration described by David Miller: “full cultural integration requires that members of the indigenous majority understand why the private cultures of immigrants need to be accommodated and offer ungrudging support for the measures needed, and that the immigrants themselves understand and embrace the public culture of the society they have joined.”<sup>20</sup> This approach sits easily also with the [EU Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy](#), which in practice have provided very useful

guidance<sup>21</sup> during the implementation of cultural integration policies, even though the efficiency of these policies varies substantially across Member States, reflecting their specificities and dispositions towards migration in general.

One of the areas where Member States differ most concerns the limits of humanitarian obligations and the reciprocal relationship between values and fundamental rights in terms of the migration crisis. This also relates to broader academic debates on the culturalisation of civil and human rights agendas and the institutionalisation of culture.<sup>22</sup> One characteristic example where these differences emerged was provided during the latest Council discussion on the integration of third-country nationals in the context of its 2016 Annual Dialogue on the Rule of Law.<sup>23</sup> While some Member States argued that there can be no limits to the EU’s humanitarian obligations towards refugees, others claimed that while the right is not limited the capacity to offer protection is. All ministers agreed that European states and societies as a whole, including migrants, must adhere to fundamental EU values, but there was no consensus on whether or not reciprocity requires active tolerance and obliges Member States to accommodate cultural and religious diversity.

It remains to be seen whether, when and where on the ‘acceptance-rejection continuum’ a consensus can be formed on these (and a wide range of other) issues. The Common Basic Principles (since 2004) rest on the premise that “if the flow of legally residing immigrants is orderly and well managed, Member States may reap benefits.” Even though the premise does not hold in the current situation, the Principles have still proven relevant

18 In Miller, D, Migration and justice: a reply to my critics, [Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy](#), published online 09 September 2016.

19 In Kollár, E., [Global equality of opportunity and self-determination in the context of immigration](#), [Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy](#), published online 04 October 2016.

20 Miller, D., Strangers in Our Midst, Harvard University Press, 2016, p 149.

21 [Research on Migration: Facing Realities and Maximising Opportunities](#), a policy review prepared by Prof Russell King and Dr Aija Lulle for the EC, 2016, p 67.

22 Soysal, L., Introduction: Triumph of culture, troubles of anthropology, *Focaal* 55, 2009, p7.

23 For details and a short summary of the session, and especially the Presidency non-paper for the Council, see <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/gac/2016/05/24/>



in the handling of the mass movements of refugees and migrants during the last few years. Equally useful has been the invaluable contribution of academic research offering advice on devising and implementing concrete integration projects.<sup>24</sup> The political and public discourse would also benefit if political theory could help to develop a coherent and principled response to cases of unregulated flows of refugees and migrants – a response which takes into account the possibilities and constraints of the ‘real world,’ which could give guidance to policymakers, and which could facilitate the achievement of public consent for a legitimate politically feasible and morally defensible cause.

<sup>24</sup> Ample proof can be found in the 160-page comprehensive summary of EU-funded research projects [Research on Migration: Facing Realities and Maximising Opportunities](#), A Policy Review, prepared by Prof Russell King and Dr Aija Lulle for the European Commission in 2016.



