

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS, NATIONALISM AND FAILURE OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION POLICIES

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ABSTRACT

FACING NEW KINDS OF MIGRATION FLOWS, FROM MORE DISTANT REGIONS, THE DEBATE ABOUT MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION HAS BEEN GROWING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION. NOWADAYS, PERCEPTION IS ESSENTIAL AND EACH ANALYST EXPRESSES HIS OPINION, THERE IS A TENDENCY TO EXPLAIN INTEGRATION ISSUES IN ETHNO-CULTURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC TERMS. MIGRANTS' ECONOMIC INTEGRATION ENVELOPES THEIR MOVEMENT IN THE SOCIETY CLASSES, ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION IS A BARRIER TO THIS MOVEMENT AND THUS IMPEDES THEIR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION. A SOCIALLY COHESIVE EUROPEAN SOCIETY IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER IS TO ASSESS THE RELATION BETWEEN SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS AND NATIONALISM AND HOW THEY CAN LEAD TO THE FAILURE OF INTEGRATION POLICIES IN EUROPEAN UNION. IN THE FIRST PART OF THIS PAPER WE WILL DISCUSS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATION, MAKING AN OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES. IN THE SECOND PART WE WILL IDENTIFY THE POSSIBLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION AND WE WILL TRY TO SHOW HOW THE INSTALLATION OF THESE BARRIERS CAN LEAD TO THE INCREASE OF NATIONALISM AMONG MIGRANTS. DOES AN INTEGRATION DEFICIENCY CONSIST OF UNEQUAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND DISCRIMINATION? IS THE LABOR MARKET A BARRIER TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC MOBILITY? ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED IN THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN RECOGNIZED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION? IS NATIONALISM A HINDRANCE TO INTEGRATION POLICIES? THESE ARE SOME QUESTIONS THAT WILL GUIDE US IN OUR ANALYSIS. .

KEY WORDS: MIGRANTS, NATIONALISM, SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS, MAINSTREAMING INTEGRATION. .

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the number of migrants has increased in volume, migration flows have drawn the attention of security experts concerned with the effects of immense flows of migrants around the world. Not all EU Member States have the same way of seeing

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emigrants, and culture, religion, history, the economy and many other things affect how they are looked at. Also, a lot of immigrants come by sea and this is why states are unevenly affected by these flows.

In the contemporary political arena where perception is key, various discourses are competing to explain integration issues in ethno-cultural vs. socio-economic terms. In recent years the populist right wing narrative, which argues that “cultural distance” prevents the successful integration of migrants, has gained ground against the liberal narrative, which considers that the root of integration failures lies in unequal economic opportunities and discrimination.³

INTEGRATION

Migration flows and policies are reciprocally related: migration flows create the need for policies to manage them, and policies, in return, shape ongoing and future migration flows. A European Agenda on Migration is clear in its recognition of the need to strengthen and develop new policies to respond to what are seen as new migratory pressures and challenges.⁴

We normally talk about integration only in the case of migrants who intend to stay for a longer period of time, which is also the case with refugees who are prevented from returning to their country of origin.

The term integration has several definitions, one of which refers to the process of providing immigrants with equal chances to access opportunities available to native-born. As such, it reflects the extent to which receiving societies are willing to go towards immigrants, accept them, and provide them with equal rights to express their behaviors and preferences along with the native-born, while potentially preserving and fully expressing of their differences.⁵ Integration is therefore accompanied by measures and policies specific to each destination country that allows or excludes immigrants in different dimensions of social life, especially in the circumstances where a change in the social life of people, can cause a change in various other aspects of human life, such as economic, cultural and political.

The political dimension that is related to the legal part mainly concerns the ways and possibilities of obtaining the rights of residents, family reunification, political participation and the right to citizenship. Here, it must be borne in mind that the political representation of migrant communities⁶, at least in the first phase, will be lacking, eliminating the possibility of modifying possible unfavorable policies.

The cultural dimension is related to religious rights of immigrants, the perceptions and practices of ethnic and religious cultural differences in the host society. The host country may accept a greater or lesser degree of cultural and religious differences of immigrant groups and may create policies in this respect.

One of the key components of the economic dimension is the labor market where migrant workers and their family members should have equal rights and opportunities, as well as domestic workers. Moreover, this dimension should also include guaranteeing access to social rights and benefits, such as the right to work, health and education.

³ Pierre Kohler, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies Working Paper No: 07” Economic Discrimination and Cultural Differences as Barriers to Migrant Integration: Is Reverse Causality Symmetric?” 2012.

⁴ Research on Migration: A Policy Review Prof Russell King and Dr. Aija Lulle

⁵ Algan, Y., Ch. Dustmann, A. Glitz, and A. Manning *The Economic Situation of First and Second-Generation Immigrants in France. Germany and the United Kingdom*” - Economic Journal. Royal Economic Society. 120 (542), (2010).“ F4-F30. 02

⁶ Political participation will be lacking and will not have electoral rights, so they will not be able to legally regulate their positions and desires.

The integration process of migrants cannot be seen only from an economic or labor perspective. Besides these two process components, there are at least two of which are of crucial importance in the success of the integration and these are social acceptance and education. All these components of the integration process are interconnected, if one of the components does not work, there is the risk that this process will eventually fail.

In the last two years, public attention and political discourse are focused on the irregular flows of immigrants entering the European Union through Italy and Greece via the Mediterranean.⁷ Most of the 1.5 million migrants are asking for asylum in various northern and western EU countries.

Europe is at the heart of two models of integration developed between Member States. The first is the assimilation model, traditionally found in France and inspired by the principle of equality. This model refers to a unilateral adaptation of the migrant to the culture of the host society, which ultimately leads to the abandonment of its origins.⁸

The second model refers to multiculturalism and is characteristic of countries such as the UK and the Netherlands. Unlike the first model, this is a twofold process in which the migrant adapts to the host society and the host society adapts to the migrant allowing them to preserve their cultural heritage.⁹

Recently another pattern on how to deal with migration has emerged, it is called mainstreaming integration policy. The concept of mainstreaming was developed in relation to gender studies where it became a powerful tool in the study of good governance. It gained a formal component in 1997, United Nations proposing it as a 4 steps program to reach gender equality (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies in all main fields).¹⁰

This model acts through a series of mainstream adapting services to address the needs of both the local communities, as well as of those of migrants. Mainstreaming acts through social programming and policies, targeting both the population with a migration background, as well as the general population.¹¹ Four states in Europe have already resorted to this model: the UK, France, Denmark and Germany; for some others, like: Spain and Poland, mainstreaming was an accident, but with some major achievements as well.

In the last decade the scientific literature on integrating migrants has advanced 2 new approaches. The first approach was formally drafted by Vertovec¹² and it is centered around superdiversity. The main challenge here consists of how to address very diverse cities or communities in terms of policy formation and sustainability, given the fact the major national recipes have proved inefficient. Such a rhetoric goes beyond the ethnic, religious or gender components of a nation, into a broader perspective built around multiculturalism.

The second approach is structured around the concept of interculturalism. As opposed to the assimilationist nature of multiculturalism, this second perspective encompasses both majority and minority cultures.¹³ This model is interested in creating new forms of public

⁷ <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> and <http://migration.iom.int/europe/> accessed on 15.07.2017

⁸ Bertossi, C. "National Models of Integration in Europe: A Comparative and Critical Analysis, Center for Migrations and Citizenship", French Institute for International Relations (Ifri), Paris (2011)

⁹ Regout, S. "The integration of immigrant communities in France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands: National models in a European context", LES Working Paper, London (2011),

¹⁰ P.W.A. Scholten, I. van Breugel, *Mainstreaming Integration Governance. New Trends in Migrant Integration Policies in Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 6, available at: DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-59277-0_1.

¹¹ Elizabeth Collett, Milica Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe. Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion*, Brussels, Migration Policy Institute, March 2014, 3.

¹² Steven Vertovec, "Super-diversity and its implications", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 30(6), 2007, 1024-1054, available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>

¹³ Gerard Bouchard, "What is Interculturalism", *McGill Law Journal*, Vol. 56(2), 2011, passim 437-442.

culture, that would be able to attract a full spectrum of populations and citizens, in the sense of forging a commitment. Interculturalism pleads for interaction, respect and some sort of collective responsibility and action.¹⁴

In addition to the integration models, several EU level instruments have been developed to provide support for the integration of migrants in the Member States. These include the European Integration Forum¹⁵, the Integration Manual¹⁶, the European Integration Web Site¹⁷ and the European Integration Fund.¹⁸ The Common Basic Principles for Integration Policies¹⁹, for which the Council reaffirmed its commitment in 2014, also have great potential in guiding national policies in this area, serving as a basis in shaping national integration strategies.

However, despite the existence of these EU instruments, both their scope and their impact are limited. In addition, EU instruments in the field of integration policy come from, or are often, adapted from other policy areas, not being designed to address the specific issue. As a result, the issue of integration should be rethought in EU migration policy. Although the EU has adopted legal instruments to combat illegal migration, border control and asylum, its actions on migrant integration are very limited. Thus, responsibility for migrant integration lies with national and regional authorities, while the EU is slowly trying to "pursue active integration policies that promote social cohesion and economic dynamism".²⁰

SOCIO ECONOMIC BARRIERS AND NATIONALISM

The difficult and unpredictable economic environment, with its repercussions on people's everyday lives, affects how migrants are perceived by the rest of society. Usually, migrant workers have low social and legal status in host countries, they will be an ethnically identified group, mostly with a lower economic class.

Social inequalities are present in every society, which means that the freedom to lead flourishing lives and to enjoy good jobs and health is unevenly distributed among different population groups and migrants frequently find themselves among those most affected by these imbalances.

Nationalism is born as a result of the persistence of barriers to socio-economic mobility. In order for the integration project to become feasible, the masses of migrants must be convinced to want and accept the idea that the host state could meet their demands for socio-economic mobility. This case may correspond to the "Habsburg classical form of nationalism" in Gellner's typology, "An ethnic minority fails to share high-level culture because it possesses certain cultural features resistant to uncertainty such as language, physical traits, religion or customs". In this case, given the resistance to the state of uncertainty by preserving their own language (Arabic), habits and religion (Islam), assimilation cannot take place.

¹⁴ Phil Wood, *Intercultural Cities. Towards a Model for Intercultural Integration*, Council of Europe, Strassburg, 2009, 11-19, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/16802ff5ef>

¹⁵ <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/tags/european-integration-forum> accessed on 20.08.2017

¹⁶ http://www.olai.public.lu/en/publications/brochures-depliants/04-manuel3-fr/handbook_3_en.pdf accessed on 20.08.2017

¹⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/> accessed on 20.08.2017

¹⁸ <https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/EIF%20ERF%20manual%202015.pdf> accessed on 20.08.2017

¹⁹ http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/common-basic-principles_en.pdf accessed on 20.08.2017

²⁰ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/143478.pdf accessed on 25.08.2017

If the minority possesses and assumes a culture different from the dominant one, it ends in inferior socio-economic classes and individuals consider their ethnic status as a minority to adversely affect their life perspectives.

Because the resistance to uncertainty prevents assimilation, the desire for socio-economic progress in the host society determines the ethnic minority to seek “its own state”, especially since the minority cannot change the situation from within because it has no political power.

Moreover, economic integration entails turning migrants into a workforce for Europe's economy. Once created, the proletariat will face obstacles to socio-economic mobility that are resistant to entropy. They will constantly occupy the lowest degrees of occupational ladder. The result will be transposed into an inevitable sense of discrimination because they will have lower wages, will not be eligible to fill certain jobs, and will often be employed in lower jobs.

Access to labor markets is usually delayed due to the necessary procedures for obtaining asylum. Refugees need time to adapt, learn the language of the host country, and go through a process of assessing and recognizing the skills and homework's acquired in their country of origin.

According to studies published by the OECD, more than four out of ten refugees (43%) only have primary education compared to about 23% for EU citizens, refugees who have come in recent years have a lower education than those who came before, and the results of the PISA²¹ test clearly demonstrate that children with a migrant background have lower average scores than native children in all three areas analyzed in the OECD Global Study.²² The difference between the levels of education across generations indicates not only that migrants but also children of immigrants will face a certain disadvantage when they enter the labor market.

None, though, are mutually exclusive: disadvantage and the failure to integrate in one dimension are likely to have multiple repercussions. Concentrations of migrants in geographically disadvantaged areas, for example, may affect effective integration in the education system and, later, the labor market.²³

CONCLUSIONS

In order to find a job or start a new business, migrants and refugees have to cope with many barriers that at various levels affect the effectiveness of integration strategies. Given the current conditions, especially ease of communication, it is very easy to reach the spread of the nationalist idea as well as to politicizing the masses along ethnic lines. Existing mosques and professional organizations can play a role as incubators, while helping to promote nationalism among the masses. Also, due to the fact that, at least for a period of time, the political representation will be lacking, there will be a shortfall in the possibility of changing the situation from their perspective.

²¹Three areas were analyzed in the test: reading, mathematics and IT problem solving

²² OECD reports 2015 and 2017 available at <http://www.oecd.org/> accessed on 27.08.2017

²³ (OECD/European Union (2015), Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264234024-en>) accessed on 27.08.2017

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