

FREE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS IN EU. SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Abstract

Free movement of persons represents one of the four pillars of the EU's Single Market and the concept has changed in meaning since its inception (from the focus on workers' rights to the European citizenship). Thus, the mobility of EU's citizens is highly supported (free movement within Schengen area, but free establishment outside of Schengen), while the migration of the third-country nationals has become more and more strictly monitored. The labour migration phenomenon is not at all a recent one, but the controversies related to the immigration policy have become part at the top of the EU agenda (see the relevance of the immigration theme on the latest BREXIT debates).

The aging labour force, the accelerated increase of the dependency ratios, the crisis of the pensions' systems, the young labour force manifesting a lack of interest for low skilled jobs and the restructuring reforms in EU economies ask for inflows of labour force originating outside Europe.

The present paper aims to investigate the concept of integration as a multi-form and multi-layered one, and to tackle the limits of the socio-economic integration of the newcomers, without supporting the populist discourse demonizing "the others."

We share the belief that EU needs both a new balanced common immigration strategy and well sounded socio-economic integration programs.

Keywords: free movement of persons, socio-economic integration, labour migration, migration of third country nationals

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Preliminary

The process of migration is not something entirely new for our societies. The need to escape conflict and persecution or the desire to find a new and maybe a better life somewhere else has always determined people to migrate, leaving behind family, jobs, and communities. However, after the Second World War, migration has become increasingly global in character, involving all regions of the world, influencing demographics, regional development, cultural practices, etc. The present inflows of refugees led to alarming approaches adopted by receiving countries, from negative media coverage to denied access to EU borders. Still, we face an unprecedented number of newcomers, with different levels of education and skills, and a more balanced perspective on their integration is highly needed, taking into consideration both costs (access to accommodation, jobs, education, culture, etc.) and opportunities (like addressing the demographic disequilibrium, labour and skill shortages in fast-growing and declining sectors, contributing to labour-market flexibility). Therefore, we can refer to the concept of integration as the merger of two or more individual units to form a new greater unit or the inclusion of independent units into one greater entity. In social sciences, integration has the connotation of harmonization processes within a society between several roles, groups, organizations, or of inclusion of individuals or groups into the society. Immigrant integration can be described as the inclusion of individual newcomers (*whose roots do not reach deeper than two or three generations*) or groups into an existing receiving society. It is about the insertion of individuals bringing new cultures, habits, religious manifestations into the receiving society, meaning a two-way process.

Nowadays, in a general sense, the concept of integration implies a mutual adjustment of the components of a system, allowing it to form a new equilibrium. The system could take elements or features and could formulate its own characteristics, completely autonomous. The newly created structure can be considered as fully integrated, only when the relationships established between the elements that compose it are stable over a long period of time and could generate tangible spill over effects at the level of each component.¹ The interest for conceptualizing *integration* is not a new

¹ Anca Otilia Dodescu, Conceptul de integrare – O abordare economică exhaustivă, 2004, [<http://steconomiceuradea.ro/anale/volume/2004/30.pdf>], 28 November 2015.

one, as Karl Deutsch defined international integration as the attainment, within a territory, of a "sense of community" and of institutions and practices strong enough to assure dependable expectations of "peaceful change" among its population.² Ernest B. Haas described integration as "the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new and larger centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states"³.

On the same line of thought, Leon N. Lindberg saw the integration rather as a political process in which the political actors from various national structures persuade to change their allegiance, hopes and activities towards a new political centre, whose institutions possess or claim jurisdiction over existing national states and the nations, who were willing and capable to conduct their internal and external politics independently, are now trying to take certain decisions together or delegate the decision making process to the central institutions that belong to the European Community⁴. Herman W. Hoen also brought an exhaustive definition which encapsulates the actual economic situation and describes the phenomenon as a fusion of economic units in larger groups and units. Integration is not an objective *per se*, but rather a way to accomplish this goal. In this sense, it is easy to determine the level, the shape and/or the magnitude of the Union. Moreover, "integration is a term whose conceptualization is unclear"⁵, according to S. Carrera, the vague characteristics of the term could lead to misinterpretation or narrow its significance. This could lead to a situation in which migrants have a vulnerable position in their relation with the receiving state and the EU, concerning their rights and obligations. He believed that the concept of integration is not defined as a process of social inclusion of immigrants, but

² Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968, p.53.

³ Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces 1950-1957*, Second Edition, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968, p. 42.

⁴ Leon Lindberg, *The Political Dynamics of European Economic Integration*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964, pp. 451-453.

⁵ Sergio Carrera, A Typology of Different Integration Programmes in the EU, 2006, [[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2006/378266/IPOL-LIBE_NT\(2006\)378266_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2006/378266/IPOL-LIBE_NT(2006)378266_EN.pdf)], 02 December 2015.

rather it has embedded both legal and political mechanism of control through which the member states decide who enters and who stays in their territories (a clear expression of the principle of subsidiarity). According to his point of view, integration actually expresses the transition from social inclusion measures to the legal and statutory regulation. The concept can hide assimilation approaches or theories of acculturation. Carrera concluded that when referring to the social process by which an immigrant is included in the various spheres of social, cultural, economic and political state, it is better to use the concept of social inclusion, instead of integration⁶.

Latest Policies and Actions of the European Union regarding migration

In December 2004, the Council of the European Union launched *The Hague Programme* which focuses on “strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union”⁷. The program aims at the creation of common principles for the immigrant integration that should include the following aspects:

“Integration:

- *is a continuous, two-way process involving both legally resident third-country nationals and the host society;*
- *includes, but goes beyond, anti-discrimination policy;*
- *implies respect for the basic values of the European Union and fundamental human rights;*
- *requires basic skills for participation in society;*
- *relies on frequent interaction and intercultural dialogue between all members of society within common forums and activities in order to improve mutual understanding;*
- *extends to a variety of policy areas, including employment and education”.*⁸

⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁷ Council of the European Union, *The Hague Programme*, 2004, [http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/docs/hague_programme_en.pdf], 30 January 2016.

⁸ *Ibidem.*

The Hague Programme contains a detailed and comprehensive definition for integration. It clarifies the need for anti-discrimination policies as a part of effective integration programs. Moreover, it is also stated that integration would imply respect of basic values, and would require basic skills for participation in the civil society. These elements have to be taken into consideration and applied by every Member State.

The Stockholm Programme sets out EU priorities freedom in the area of freedom, security, justice, asylum, immigration for the period of 2010-2014. Based on previous achievements of *The Tampere Programme* (1999) and *The Hague Programme* (2005), this programme aims to address future challenges and to strengthen furthermore the area of justice, freedom and security through actions that are focused on the interests and needs of the citizens. The Proactive policies for migrants aim to ensure that the rights and obligations of the third-country nationals legally residing in Member States are comparable to those of the Union's citizens.

The most recent immigration strategy launched by the European Union was presented in May 2015 by the European Commission - *The European Agenda on Migration*. In short, its main purpose is to identify and register the arriving immigrants and to help investigating/preventing the migrant smuggling networks. Regarding the long-term priorities, the Commission has established four pillars in which it wants to operate: reducing the incentives for illegal immigration by focusing on the root causes behind it, saving lives and securing the external borders, "strengthening the common asylum policy" and "developing a new policy on legal migration"⁹ – by combining moves to foster better integration, and a clearer matching of immigration to labour-market needs in host countries, with an increasing focus on development in countries of origin.¹⁰

Throughout 2016, several reports on *Managing the refugees' crisis* have been launched by the European Commission¹¹, in an attempt to address the most urgent matters of granting access to newcomers, securing borders,

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Russell King, Migration: Facing Realities and Maximising Opportunities, 2016, [https://ec.europa.eu/research/conferences/2016/migration-challenge/pdf/migration_conf-r_king.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none], 05 June 2016.

¹¹ See more here: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/index_en.htm]

preventing illegal migration, and only one proposal with specific reference to integration of migrants – a new Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council *on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly skilled employment*.¹²

International Migration - facts and challenges

Nowadays, international migration has reached the level of *high-politics* and “is a process whose economic, social and demographic consequences for receiving and sending countries are hotly debated by government officials, civic groups and others”¹³. Furthermore, international migration has never been as pervasive as it is today and never before has it been accorded such priority by statesmen concerned with issues of national security and identity. In a world where the significance of internationalization of basic social and economic institutions and processes is being increasingly acknowledged, a volume on this topic brings an important contribution to the debate- Mary Kritz, Lin Lean Lim and Hania Zlotnik - *International Migration Systems: A Global Approach* (1992) – due to the migration systems theory embedded in it: international migration is a process that takes its significance from, and finds its causes and consequences within a broader system.

According to Russell King, “migration is becoming increasingly diversified by new typologies and motivations. Thus, the classic binaries (forced vs voluntary, legal vs irregular, temporary vs permanent, high-skilled vs low-skilled, refugee vs economic migrant) are being blurred, so that we have hybrid and mixed forms of migration. A new important dichotomy has emerged: the distinction between the *aspiration* to migrate and the *ability* to do so. More and more would-be migrants aspire to move but are not allowed to, legally. Nevertheless many do find a means to migrate, as irregular migrants.”¹⁴

¹² Available here: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/directive_conditions_entry_residence_third-country_nationals_highly_skilled_employment_en.pdf]

¹³ Mary M. Kritz, “Improving International Migration Governance”, in *International Migration and the Global Community*, no. 1, vol. 22, 2009, pp. 56–67.

¹⁴ Russell King, *op.cit.*

Many countries have witnessed an increase in the percentage of their foreign-born population. Among OECD countries, at the top of the list stands Luxembourg, with 42 % foreign-born population, followed by Switzerland and New Zealand¹⁵. In 2014, “the number of people living in the EU-28 who were citizens of non-member countries was 19.6 million while the number of people living in the EU-28 who had been born outside of the EU was 33.5 million”¹⁶. If we compare these numbers with the population of the European Union, which at the moment is estimated around 508 million people¹⁷, we find that migrants constituted more than 10% of the total population. Furthermore, as it is estimated by the statistical office of the European Union, in the following years, this number will increase by 5%.

In December 2015, the *International Organisation for Migration* announced that around one million refugees fleeing persecution, conflict and poverty in the Middle East and Africa crossed into Europe, in 2015. According to OECD, 1.65 million persons applied for asylum in 2015¹⁸. Since 1960, Germany registered a total stock of more than 12 million migrants¹⁹, becoming the largest host country in Europe. Meanwhile, more than 3,600 people lost their lives in their attempt to search for a better life.²⁰ Indeed,

¹⁵ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Foreign-Born Population (Indicator), 2016, [<https://data.oecd.org/migration/foreign-born-population.htm>], 29 January 2016.

¹⁶ Eurostat, Migration and Migrant Population Statistics, 2015, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics#Migrant_population], 29 January 2016.

¹⁷ Eurostat, Population on the 1st of January 2015, 2015, [<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001>], 29 January 2016.

¹⁸ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Migration Outlook 2016, [http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2016_migr_outlook-2016-en#page1], 05 June 2016.

¹⁹ Migration Policy Institute, Migration Statistics, [<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/top-25-destination-countries-global-migrants-over-time?width=1000&height=850&iframe=true>], 02 August 2016.

²⁰ UNHCR, A Million Refugees and Migrants Flee to Europe in 2015, 2015, [<http://www.unhcr.org/567918556.html>], 02 February 2016.

Europe is facing the highest number of refugees since the Second World War.²¹

The main issues on migration that EU faces nowadays refer to dismantling smuggling networks, reducing illegal migration, secure EU borders, reform the Dublin Mechanism, increase solidarity shared by EU member States for receiving the newcomers (the controversial quota system), sustainable integration programs.

Models of socio-economic integration of migrants

Europe is a “*continent of integration* (Scholten *et al.* 2015) with increasing ethnic, cultural and religious diversity matched with pressures to accommodate to the ‘European fold’. Three histories of integration: well-established (France, UK, Germany etc.); recent (Italy, Spain, Ireland etc.); hardly begun (Poland, Hungary, Romania etc.)”²²

When referring to integration, it is useful to distinguish between three major dimensions of integration: socio-economic dimension, legal and political dimension and the cultural dimension. Thus, any policy that seeks to promote the integration of immigrants must take into account all these three dimensions. According to Stephen Castles²³, there are three different models of integration: *the model of differential exclusion* (Germany, Southern Europe), *the assimilationist model* (UK, France, the Netherlands) and *the pluralist model* (outside Europe, in USA, Canada, Australia). The main criticism to this classification is attributed to the fact that “it jumps together the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands in one model, whereas most authors precisely point at significant differences in the approaches of these countries”.²⁴

²¹ Agence France Presse, EU Says World Facing Worst Refugee Crisis since WWII, 2015, [<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refdaily?pass=52fc6fbd5&id=55d17e7b5>], 03 February 2016.

²² Russell King, *op.cit.*

²³ Stephen Castles, "How Nation-States Respond to Immigration and Ethnic Diversity", in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, no. 3, vol. 21, 1995, pp. 293-308.

²⁴ Han Entzinger and Renske Biezeveld, *Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration*, 2003, [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/pdf/general/benchmarking_final_en.pdf], 12 December 2015.

James Hollifield²⁵ identified other three categories, such as: *the guest worker model* (Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Austria, with temporary immigrants and their stay is characterized in economic terms), *the assimilation model* (France, immigration is seen as a permanent phenomenon in which immigrants are welcome and given a legal status. Accordingly, migrants are expected to be fully incorporated in the country of settlement as individuals) and *the ethnic minorities model* (United Kingdom, Sweden and The Netherlands - migration is perceived as permanent, but the main difference from the assimilation model is that the migrants' origins and culture are granted, preserved and embraced "as positive marks of a diverse heritage."²⁶).

Another important contribution to the classification of the main models of integration belongs to Anja Rudinger and Sarah Spencer²⁷, who distinguish between *assimilation* (assimilation to a pre-existing, unified social order, with a homogeneous culture and set of values), *inclusion and participation* (granting access to and participation in a given society), *cohesion* (can be achieved in a pluralist society through the interaction of different communities that build a bond through the recognition of both difference and interdependence), *equality* (migrants and ethnic minorities obtain equal rights so that they become full partners and participants in the development of a cohesive society) and *multi-culturalism* (is guided by the principles of reciprocity, equality, diversity and cohesion).

Of course, all these models and patterns tend to simplify reality. They are constructed more from ideologies adopted by various states, than by the situation. For example, despite the ideological differences between France and Germany, the current progress of the integration process of immigrants in these two Member States is quite similar. Both states are applying, in most cases, the same measures and strategies to facilitate the integration process.

²⁵ James Hollifield, "The Emerging Migration State", in *International Migration Review*, no. 3, vol. 38, 2004, pp. 191-211.

²⁶ Patrick Simon, *French National Identity And Integration: Who Belongs to the National Community?*, Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012, p.7.

²⁷ Anja Rudinger and Sarah Spencer, *Social Economic Integration of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities. Policies to Combat Discrimination*, 2003, [<http://www.oecd.org/els/mig/15516956.pdf>], 02 August 2016.

It is therefore very important to look closely at the very content of these social policies aimed at integrating immigrants.

Despite the considerable political and ideological differences among states, in all countries, social policies that aim at integrating immigrants, try (after granting legal residence) to facilitate the access in the labour market under equal conditions. There is also a degree of similarity in the policies of granting citizenship, but also in efforts to combat discrimination, racism and xenophobia. Granting access to the migrant population on equal terms with other citizens in the institutions of the welfare state is considered the primary condition to facilitate their integration by most European countries.²⁸ On the other hand, in certain aspects, such as the one concerning the granting of citizenship as a central element of these policies, there are still significant differences, not only in ideological terms but also in practical terms. For instance, while the Southern European states tend to consider granting citizenship as a major condition for integration, the Nordic countries are focused on other issues, such as participation in political life and in the civil society. This is also the case for The Netherlands that has been offering mandatory Dutch course for non-EU immigrants by introducing the '*Newcomer Integration Law*' in 1998, which was revised in 2006. The main focus of these courses, besides obtaining a sufficient level in the Dutch language, is also to acquire some basic knowledge about the Dutch society. Furthermore, the Dutch example has been followed by other countries, such as Denmark, which in 1999 introduced the '*Danish Integration Act*', having as a purpose "to contribute to the newly arrived migrant's possibility for participation on an equal footing with other citizens in the political, economic, work-related, social, religious and cultural life of society; and to induce economic self-reliance"²⁹. The same path has been followed by Finland, Germany, Austria and Belgium. Moreover, in 2003, France introduced the '*Contrat d'accueil et de l'integration*' which can be translated as the '*Integration contract*', aimed at teaching immigrants the core values and

²⁸ Han Entzinger and Renske Biezeveld, *op.cit.* p. 16.

²⁹ Per Mouritsen and Christine Hovmark Jensen, *Integration Policies in Denmark*, 2014, [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/32020/INTERACT-RR-2014_06.pdf?sequence=1], 18 March 2016.

norms of the French society and encouraged them to learn the local language.³⁰

Hence, we can conclude that the national programs aimed at integrating immigrants generally consist of three main components: language training, orientation sessions and introduction to the culture of the host society and professional training and reorientation, closely linked to labour market. These programs, which are compulsory to a certain extent, are, in most cases, individualized to the needs of immigrants.

Integration of newcomers in the Netherlands

Over the past few years, migration in the Netherlands has experienced sustained growth “due to its favourable position within Europe and its flexible labour force”³¹. Hence, it “remains an attractive country for investment and for foreign nationals to work”.³² According to the Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, CBS), for the last thirty years, the Dutch population has increased by 2.4 million inhabitants. Three-quarters of this increase is attributed to people having at least one parent born outside the Netherlands. In the upcoming decades, international migration is expected to contribute significantly to the population growth. By 2060, the Netherlands is expected to have 0.9 million more first-generation immigrants, and 1.2 million more second-generation immigrants. On the other hand, the number of inhabitants of whom both parents were born in the Netherlands will decrease by almost 1 million. Moreover, the future population of the Netherlands will be comprised of mostly old people.³³

Integration policies in the Netherlands mainly focus on the immigrant population of non-EU origin. Starting with the end of 1990’s, many new immigration and integration laws have been introduced. New

³⁰ Han Entzinger and Renske Biezeveld, *op.cit.* p. 17.

³¹ Joanna Apap, “Shaping Europe’s Migration Policy New Regimes for the Employment of Third Country Nationals: A Comparison of Strategies in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK”, in *European Journal of Migration and Law*, no.179, 2002, p. 321.

³² *Ibidem.*

³³ Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), Statistics Netherlands: 18.1 Million Inhabitants in 2060, 2014, [<https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2014/51/18-1-million-inhabitants-in-2060>], 26 April 2016.

immigrants who came in the country had to take mandatory integration courses which were financed by the Dutch government and organized by local municipalities. These courses comprised of implemented standards on a national level, specifically Dutch language courses and courses about features of the Dutch society.³⁴ However, there was no compulsory test to be taken after completing the courses. If immigrants did not take those courses without a valid reason, they were fined. The fine can be up to a maximum of 1,250 euro.³⁵ In 2006, the *Law on Integration (Wet inburgering)* was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and entered into effect starting with the 1st of January 2007. This law requires immigrants willing to integrate to learn Dutch and take an exam which is comprised of 5 parts: Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking, Knowledge of Dutch Society (*Kennis Nederlandse Maatschappij*). Starting with the 1st of January 2015, a sixth part was added which assesses their understanding of the Dutch labour market (Orientation on the Dutch Labor Market). The integration period in which immigrants must pass the exam is 3 years.³⁶ In addition to this, another law known as the *Overseas Integration Test (Wet inburgering in het buitenland)* was introduced that applies to a specific type of immigrants, more exactly to nationals of certain countries³⁷ wishing to join family members or spouses in the Netherlands. The main issue regarding this legislation was the fact that immigrants have to take the test before they even arrive in the Netherlands, in order to obtain a residence permit.

The Dutch integration budget is one of the highest among the EU Member States. However, recently it has undergone dramatic cuts, particularly for Civic Integration. As of 2013 all third-country nationals wishing to remain in the Netherlands will have to pay for their civic integration course themselves, meaning that courses will no longer be

³⁴ The Dutch Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, Integration – Research conducted by Radboud University, 2013, [<https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/dossier/32824/kst-32824-26?resultIndex=85&sorttype=1&sortorder=4>], 03 May 2016.

³⁵ Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, Integration in the Netherlands, [<http://en.inburgeren.nl/inburgeren-hoe-moet-dat.jsp>], 18 May 2016.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ Citizens of European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) states and Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the United States are not required to take the test.

offered by Municipalities.³⁸ Another important point that is worth mentioning is that, in the Netherlands, statistics on the immigrant population are based on ethnicity and not on nationality or country of birth. There are two categories of people: either *allochtonen* or *autochtonen*. Autochtonen are the native population and allochtonen are persons with at least one parent born outside the country. A further distinction is made between Western and non-Western allochtonen. Western allochtonen are the category of people who came from Europe (excluding Turkey), North America, Oceania, Indonesia and Japan, while non-Western allochtonen are the category of people coming from Africa, Latin American, Turkey and the rest of Asia³⁹.

The Netherlands is well-known as a country remarkably tolerant and multicultural. As previously stated, the Dutch society is very keen on having and respecting equal rights and opportunities for all ethnic groups. Since the 1990s, Dutch attitudes towards immigrants have been changing. This change is reflected in stricter immigration laws that have created a lot of debate and conflicts nationally and internationally. Recently, the multiculturalism of the country is put under question. Several empirical studies show that Dutch people consider immigrants as being insufficiently adapted to the Dutch society and multiculturalism is rather supported by immigrants than by native population. There are various problems that pose a threat to multiculturalism in the Dutch society, among which I mention the emphasis on the assimilation of immigrants, the failure to establish integration policies and also the permanent fear of terrorist attacks. The Dutch government is mainly accused of being “unable to achieve a state of integration and participation” and that the “multicultural experiment” has largely failed.⁴⁰

³⁸ Giuliana Urso and Anke Schuster, *Migration, Employment and Labour Market Integration Policies in the European Union*, Brussels: International Organization for Migration, 2013, pp. 221-222.

³⁹ Evelyn Ersanilli, Country profile No 11 – Netherlands, 2007, [http://focus-migration.hwwi.de/typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile/CP11_Netherlands.pdf] 25 March 2016.

⁴⁰ Fons J.R. Van De Vijver, Saskia R.G. Schalk-Soekar, Judit Arends-Tóth and Seger M. Breugelmans, “Cracks in the Wall of Multiculturalism? A Review of Attitudinal Studies in the Netherlands”, in *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 2006, no.1, vol.8, pp. 102-118.

A study conducted by the European Commission in 2011 shows that, in general, Dutch people show a positive attitude toward migration and its effects. The population is willing to accept and protect asylum seekers and agree that the rules for them should be the same across the EU. A high percentage (85%) of Dutch people considers that legal immigrants should have the same rights as nationals. Furthermore, the Netherlands is one of the few EU states which agree that immigration enriches their country.⁴¹ Another research regarding the public opinion on immigrants in the Netherlands identifies that “between 40 and 50 percent of the Dutch population is tolerant and their tolerance is remarkably consistent”⁴². Furthermore, “they are not prejudiced, do not distance themselves from immigrants, and grant them equal rights. They endorse individual freedom and resist attempts to close the national ranks against immigrants”⁴³.

In summer 2016, the authors⁴⁴ conducted a survey for a total number of 100 respondents, among which, 50 were males and 50 females. Furthermore, a selection was made based on the language proficiency in English - the selected participants are native Dutch and fluent in English. The questionnaire (9 close questions and 1 open question) made use of negative statements instead of the positive ones to test the respondent’s opinions and to verify if the participants are strongly influenced by the statements and if their responses may be distorted because of them. The choice of negative statements was also made in order to prevent acquiescence, also known as yes-set answers which describe the general tendency of a person to provide affirmative answers to items of a questionnaire, regardless of the content of the items.

⁴¹ European Commission, Directorate-General Home Affairs, *Awareness Of Home Affairs Report*, 2012, [http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_380_en.pdf], 02 May 2016.

⁴² Louk Hagendoorn and Edwin Poppe, “Consistency of Tolerance, Public Opinion on Immigrants in the Netherlands at the Turn of the Millennium”, in *Politics, Culture and Socialization*, no. 4, vol. 2, 2011, pp. 367-387.

⁴³ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴ The field work was carried out by Hana Safaya, during her stay as an Erasmus student at Saxon University of Applied Sciences, department of Marketing and International Management.

Dutch Public Opinion about Immigrants	Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1. In the future, the rising number of immigrants would be a threat for the Dutch society	38 %	35%	27%
2. Immigrants take the jobs of natives	20%	61%	19%
3. Immigrants increase the rate of criminality	33%	34%	33%
4. Immigrants represent a burden for the social protection system	20%	44%	36%
5. Immigrants decrease the cultural values of a country	37%	46%	17%
6. For the good of the society it is better if immigrants keep their own customs and values	16%	59%	25%

Table 1. Dutch Public Opinion about Immigrants

The data above reveal that a significant percentage of respondents had a neutral opinion, for each statement. The reason for this could be the difficulty in choosing either agree or disagree, because it may depend on the circumstances. As one of the respondents stated, "in the above survey a couple of times I chose to neither agree nor disagree, because it is not as black and white as a simple yes or no. There is so much more to the situation than that". Another possible explanation could be the lack of information regarding this subject. Furthermore, 61% do not think that immigrants may take the jobs of native workers, while 20% agree with this statement. This high percentage may be attributed to the fact that usually, Dutch people are quite confident in their own capabilities. Therefore, according to their viewpoint there is a small change that immigrants might take their potential jobs. In fact, there is no evidence-based research which indicates that immigrants substitute for native workers. Immigrants tend to select places where jobs are readily available. In fact, immigrants end to boost employment effects in the long term by increasing the demand in the economy. This way they stimulate new businesses to open, creating more jobs for both immigrant and

native populations.⁴⁵ A third of the respondents consider that immigrants are a threat to safety.

According to the annual report published by Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics, “immigrants are more often suspected of having committed a crime than native Dutch and western people”⁴⁶. However, for the last 10 years, the higher proportion of foreign suspects compared with native Dutch suspects has remained fairly stable. Concerning the immigrants who have arrived in the Netherlands since 2004, Poles, Bulgarians and Romanians are least often suspected of a crime, while Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans most often⁴⁷.

With regard to the fourth statement, 44% of the participants disagreed with the fact that immigrants represent burden on the welfare system, while a significant portion of 36% refrained from giving an answer. As a matter of fact, immigrants and their descendants pay more in taxes than they consume in government services in terms of net present value. According to an article written by D. Griswold, “low skilled immigrants do impose a net cost on government, in particular on the state and local level, but those costs are often exaggerated by critics of immigration and are offset by broader benefits to the overall economy”⁴⁸.

Concerning the cultural aspect of the country, the majority of respondents did not consider that foreigners degrade the Dutch cultural norms and values. In spite of that, when it comes to the possibility to keep its customs and traditions, the opinion of 60 % of respondents indicated that Dutch people prefer immigrants to give away or abandon their own customs and values and adopt the Dutch features of culture.

However, if we make a detailed analysis by separating the answers according to the gender, the situation turns out to be slightly different. One can easily observe from the table below that percentage of females

⁴⁵ Amelie F. Constant, 5 Reasons Why Immigrants Do Not Take Natives' Jobs, 2015, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/amelie-constant/5-reasons-why-immigrants-_b_8036814.html], 01 April 2016.

⁴⁶ Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Annual report on integration 2012, 2012, [<https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/publication/2012/51/annual-report-on-integration-2012-summary>], 01 April 2016.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸ Daniel T. Griswold, “Immigration and the Welfare State”, in *Cato Journal*, no. 1, vol. 32, 2012, p. 159.

disagreeing with each statement is considerably higher than the male one, except the fifth statement in which the percentage is the same. Concerning the sixth statement, one can easily observe that men do not really agree with immigrants keeping their own customs and norms and they would rather prefer foreigner to acquire the national values. On the other hand, the research shows that the female population is more open and tolerant towards immigrants. Women would not necessarily imply or require immigrants to abandon their individual values, but rather to embrace and carry on their cultural background.

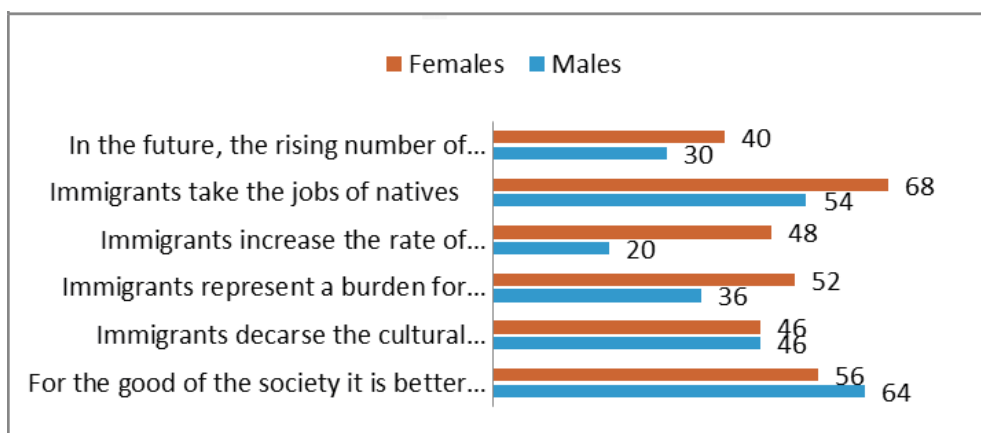


Figure 1. Dutch Public Opinion about immigrants according to the gender

Another important aspect in the data analysis was to identify what are the conditions that an immigrant must meet in order to be considered integrated by Dutch citizens. The table below indicates that the highest percentage of respondents (31.91 %) think that first of all, the immigrant must speak Dutch in order to be considered integrated. Secondly, immigrants need to know and respect the national legislation so as they can integrate properly. In the famous book of G. Hofstede, "Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind", the Netherlands is described as a country with a high score on *Uncertainty Avoidance*. What this implies is that Dutch people feel the need to have rules and respect them accordingly due to the fact that it makes them feel more secure. That is also the reason why Dutch people consider that immigrants have to know and respect the national legislation. Also, the foreigner must be adapted, meaning to know

the norms and values of the Dutch society and have an appropriate behaviour which is accepted by the others. 1 in 8 people consider that an immigrant is integrated when h/she has a good financial situation following a steady job or a business development. On the other hand, the acquisition of citizenship together with a definitive residence is not seen as important parts of integration.

When do you think a migrant has achieved full integration in the Dutch society?	
a) When he/she knows the language	32%
b) When he/she has a stable job, a good financial situation, their own business	12 %
c) When he/she knows and respects the national legislation	29 %
d) When he/she is adapted, has a good behaviour which is accepted by the others	22%
e) After a long period of time when he/she has a definitive residence	2%
f) When he/she acquire citizenship	4%

Table 2. When do you think a migrant has achieved full integration in the Dutch society?

One can easily observe that according to Dutch citizens' perspective, a foreigner integrates properly due to his/her personal efforts, meaning: knowing the language, compliance with laws, cultural adaptation, and employment. Migrants are primarily responsible to take charge of the integration and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to build a self-reliant life in the Netherlands. Learning the language is a prerequisite to participate in the Dutch society. Knowledge of language is common, connects people and creates opportunities. Integration also requires people to know the Dutch norms and values and live accordingly and treat each other respectfully. The analysis of the surveys as represented in the above table, leads to the following conclusion: integration is a personal matter that each must accomplish as much as possible.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked how the Dutch State should provide social support and assistance for immigrants.

Through what methods the Dutch government should offer support and social assistance for immigrants?	
a) Through special supporting programmes	36 %
b) Offering the same support as for the Dutch nationals through existent social programmes	42 %
c) Basic limited support	19 %
d) No support, of any kind they should make it on their own	3 %

Table 3. Through what methods the Dutch government should offer support and social assistance for immigrants?

Most of the participants consider that immigrants should receive the same social support as Dutch nationals, through existing social programmes. However, a significant percentage (36%) agreed that foreigners should receive special supporting programmes. It seems that, a reasonable segment of Dutch citizens realize it is important for foreigners to be supported, not only through social programs that already exist and accessible to every citizen, but also through targeted programs that meet the needs and specific problems immigrants might face during the process of integration into the Dutch society. What came as a surprise was that almost 20% of respondents believe that immigrants should be offered only basic limited support, while 3 % did not want to give support of any kind and considered that foreigners should handle the situation by themselves.

In order to have a better understanding of how the Dutch society perceives the process of integration, the respondents were asked to indicate the most appropriate method in offering supporting programmes for immigrants.

The most appropriate method in offering supporting programmes for immigrants	
a) Directly through public institutions that are specialized in this field	42 %
b) Through financing the NGOs	4 %
c) Through hiring specialized companies	8 %
d) A combination between the above mentioned options	48 %

Table 4. The most appropriate method in offering supporting programmes for immigrants

According to the analysed data of the surveys, Dutch citizens consider that the most appropriate method is a combination between hiring specialised companies, financing Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and through specialized public institutions. The main downside of this option is that it delegates responsibilities between different parties and it makes it hard to coordinate the actions of all the groups which are involved. On the other hand, a substantial percentage (42%) believes that best option is directly through public institutions that are specialized in this field. This way, the Dutch government could take care and support immigrants throughout their whole process of integration. Only 8% of the participants agreed that hiring a specialized independent company would be the best option, while 4% believed that financing the NGOs which advocate for immigrants would constitute a good option.

With regard to the open question concerning their opinion on the current refugee crisis, most respondents considered that the refugees have precarious and dangerous circumstances in their home country and should be our moral obligation to support them, if they cannot support themselves. However, the main issue is to be able to distinguish between those who really need help and those who take advantage of the situation and enter illegally in the country.

As stated by one of the participants, the topic of the refugee crisis “is a really tough issue. Of course, they are welcome, since the situation in their home country is unbearable. However, money and capacity is limited and we cannot accept ALL of them, just like any other country. This might sound hard but it is reality. Furthermore, they bring a different culture which will challenge the narrow/minded Dutch who might have problems understanding other cultures. This leads to difficult situations such as (violent) protests”.

Conclusions

In the nowadays migration turmoil, the integration of newcomers in Europe remains a project in the making, with opposite approaches, various needs to be met. Nevertheless, the recent refugee’s crisis brought into attention that newcomers’ “marginalization makes them easy targets for scape-goating by far right parties, which have gained increasing support

throughout Europe by exploiting fears and inciting resentment"⁴⁹. Still, the free movement of labour is one of the most tangible benefits of European integration. Therefore, Europe needs a genuine comprehensive new strategy for both granting access and integration of the migrants.

Various models of integration can be found in Europe, where the Netherlands represents a country remarkably tolerant and multicultural. Still, since the 1990s, Dutch attitudes towards immigrants have been changing, reflected in stricter immigration laws causing a lot of debate and conflicts nationally and internationally. The positive change is brought by the young generation, growing up in a different culturally heterogeneous society, manifesting more tolerance towards foreigners. Furthermore, women appear to be more in favor of immigrants than men, according to our study.

Our recommendations are for the Dutch government to take into consideration that the current integration policies can be improved and capitalized - the potential of the young highly skilled to address the skills shortages in certain sectors, a valuable source for development. By supporting access to education and the labour market, the above mentioned policies will gain efficiency.

Each country, and the Netherlands is no exception, has to find its own balance and specific response on the issue of immigration and integration of foreigners, security and human rights, and find a proper equilibrium between its economic and demographic interests and respect for human dignity.

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⁴⁹ Rudiger Anja and Sarah Spencer Social, *op. cit.*

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