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Immigrant Integration meets European Integration

Le silence des sourds[1]

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Contents

Abstract

Two core questions of immigrant integration policy — namely the issues of the kind of society to be fostered, and the relationship between integration and immigration policies — remain undefined in the EU-level discussion. This has not precluded EU-level activity. Some far-reaching legislative measures defining immigrants' social and economic rights have been adopted and tools for the exchange of national integration policy practice set up. Yet, EU policy makers' disinclination to broach a highly sensitive debate has helped create a political vacuum in which the Commission and national immigration policy-makers are free to subvert integration policy cooperation to broader goals of European integration or border control. Having examined these trends, possible parameters for the necessary debate are set out here.

Debating immigrant integration[2]

In the EU, national-level debates about integrating immigrants have often been structured by reference to the pros and cons of the three most pronounced models of immigrant integration policy in place in Europe, namely: the French assimilationist model; the multicultural model, associated with the UK; and the German model of differential exclusion.[3] Each of these models[4] arguably boasts two key features[5]:

1) a vision of the society to be fostered, and

2) an idea of integration policy's relationship to immigration policy.

Clarity about these two issues may be considered a precondition for a coherent integration policy: The first issue sets out integration policy's guiding aims; the second, the compatibility of these aims with those of its closest „policy neighbour". If the measures adopted are to function properly - let alone democratic standards be met - this clarity cannot be confined to the policy's authors alone. Broad public debate is needed in integration policy.[6]

Today, though, there appears to be much public confusion about these two issues. Given the perceived failure of their domestic integration policies from the mid/late 1990s, policy-makers in some EU member states began to question the utility of their particular national model. They looked for inspiration to other models and probed new visions of society for their own policy.[7] Yet, since some national models, particularly those of the UK and France, had developed in express contradistinction to one another, national policy-makers were

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[2] The term „integration" is by no means a neutral one, nor is it employed by all the member states with the same degree of enthusiasm. For some policy-makers, it smacks of „assimilationist" immigrant policies which they do not condone. The use of the term „immigrant" in "immigrant integration" may equally be resisted by some member states. This is because not all states classify naturalised immigrants, or individuals whose parents or grandparents immigrated, as immigrants. These individuals are nevertheless subject to integration policy.

[3] For example: S. Castles, "How Nation-States Respond to Immigration and Ethnic Diversity", (1995) 3 New Community 23. For a recent critique see: C. Joppke, "Beyond National Models: Civic Integration Policies for Immigrants in Western Europe", (2007) 1 Western European Politics 30.

[4] The term „model" refers here to the collection of ideas and principles underpinning policy, rather than the complex reality of the measures actually adopted. Even before the mid-1990s when many of their proponent-states began to turn their backs on their national models, the central tenets of the various models did not fully tally with the measures in place on the ground.

[5] For example: A. Favell, "Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain, London", Macmillan, 1998; see also P. Jackson, R. Parkes and P. Zervakis, "A Contextual Analysis of the Integration of Muslims in Four Western Societies", (2005) 7 Discourse of Sociological Practice 1.

[6] EPC/KBF, "Beyond the Common Basic Principles on Integration: The Next Steps", (2005) Issue Paper 27.

[7] It is important to note that not all member states have a model in place. S. Carrera, "A Typology of Different Integration Programmes in the EU", (2006) CEPS Briefing Paper.

often reluctant to openly pilfer policy ideas from their neighbours – especially as these too were associated with high-profile policy failures.

Some effort has subsequently been made to shift the debate outside the parameters formed by the established models. Yet, policy-makers have just as often retreated within these parameters: The problematic of immigrant integration is being „depoliticised" and broken down into various functional questions concerned with improving integration practice and above all immigrants' access to social and economic structures.[8] These moves are not to be unconditionally welcomed. If the two questions of the kind of society to be promoted by integration policy and the relationship between integration and immigration policies are shied away from at a political level, the danger arises that integration practices will be „improved" without a proper normative standard by which to judge them.

It is at just such a practical level that the EU has entered the debate. EU Institutions have, for example, proposed that the Union play a role in information exchange and supporting selected national integration practices. The apparent neutrality of this handmaiden role is illusory. Yet, the Institutions continue to duck debate on the core issues at hand. In the second edition of the *Handbook on Integration*, published by the European Commission in 2007, the issue is avoided:

> What does integration mean? The question might be expected to trigger familiar debates about assimilation or multiculturalism, but participants at the technical seminars preparing the handbook hardly used these terms. As policy-makers and practitioners working with immigrant integration on a day-to-day basis they took a rather more practical approach, focusing on outcomes in terms of social and economic mobility, education, health, housing [...][9]

In the run-up to the 2007 *Potsdam Ministerial* on integration policy cooperation, meanwhile, the presiding German government dismissed arguments about multiculturalism and assimilation as „ideological". Instead, it sought to break down debate about the policy area into a series of smaller, functional questions, the answers to which were together hardly conducive to lending a coherent direction to policy.[10] Yet this conflation of *all* fundamental discussion on policy-makers' guiding vision of society with the „ideological" debates of the past is misleading. It is possible to leave behind the debate „multiculturalism vs. assimilation" without abandoning discussion of the desired social endpoint. This is, moreover, a debate that can only occur in dialogue with immigration policy.

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[8] The German „Integration Summit", for example, has six working groups: „integration courses"; „German language"; „education and training"; „gender issues"; „civil society"; „integration activities on the ground".

[9] European Commission, *Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners*, Second Edition, May 2007, p.10. It must, of course, be acknowledged that this *Handbook* was merely commission by the European Commission, and is the work of independent researchers.

[10] German Federal Interior Ministry, Informal Meeting of EU Integration Ministers, Potsdam 10th/11th of May 2007. Information from Presidency.

The rationale behind EU intervention in immigrant integration

One longstanding pressure for EU intervention in the area of immigrant integration policy comes from its existing engagement in the socioeconomic sphere. The interweaving of the EU-27's economies leaves all member states open to the negative externalities of just one state's failure to take full advantage of its immigrant labour force. There has also been tension concerning some member states' propensity to „regularise" illegal immigrants for integration purposes without consulting their neighbours: Once regularised, immigrants may be at greater liberty to take advantage of social and economic conditions in another member state. In the view of some member states, this undermines their own efforts at immigration control, and individual regularisation measures should thus be subject to a degree of common control. Finally, in this context of relative freedom of movement between the member states, one may even talk of a security risk arising to the EU as a whole thanks to one state's integration failures. Immigrants who turn to criminality thanks to the absence of successful integration policies will enjoy considerable scope to pursue their criminal ends across national borders in the EU.[11]

A second pressure for the EU to develop its immigrant integration profile derives from the growing appreciation amongst policy-makers that the EU's fast developing asylum and immigration policy is having an effect upon the integration of immigrants. In their Conclusions of the Tampere European Council (1999), the EU's heads of state and government called for a „more vigorous integration policy" which „should aim at granting [third country nationals] rights and obligations comparable to those of EU citizens".[12] At the Hague European Council (2004), they called for a „comprehensive approach [to the phenomenon of migration], involving all stages of migration, with respect to the root causes of migration, entry and admission policies and integration and return policies".[13]

Today, then, the EU has competencies over a wide range of policies and policy tools of significance to immigrant integration; yet, its formal competency to act in integration policy *per se* is limited. Article 63(3) of the *Treaty of Amsterdam* merely mandated the Council to adopt measures setting „conditions of entry and residence, and standards on procedures for the issue by Member States of long term visas and residence permits, including those for the purpose of family reunion". The Thessaloniki European Council clarified the EU's role in realising the ambitious prescriptions of the Tampere European Council as follows:

> While primary responsibility for [the elaboration and implementation of integration policies] remains with the Member States, such policies should be developed within a coherent European Union framework, taking into account the legal, political, economic, social and cultural diversity of Member States. In order to intensify the development of such a framework, the definition of common basic principles should be envisaged.[14]

In a 2007 Communication, the European Commission gives an overview of the EU's current immigrant integration activities.[15] It describes how the EU has built upon the Common Basic Principles of integration set out by the Justice and Home Affairs Council at the end of 2004[16]. These non-binding principles elaborate general guidelines for the EU's integration practices. They are supposed to help member states governments judge their own national policies, as well as to fathom the possible role for the EU in this area. Some 3½ years after their adoption, the Principles now underpin the EU's efforts to facilitate the exchange of experience and practice between the member states, as well as the funding offered to

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[11] For an analysis see: S. Bertozzi, "Integration: An Ever-Closer Challenge", (2007) CEPS Working Document.

[12] European Council, "Tampere European Council: Presidency Conclusions", 15-16 October 1999.

[13] European Council, "The Hague Programme: Strengthening Freedom, Security and Justice in the European Union", 16054/04, 5 November 2004.

[14] European Council, "Thessaloniki European Council: Conclusions of the Presidency", 19 – 20 June 2003.

[15] European Commission, "Third Annual Report on Migration and Integration", COM (2007) 512 final.

[16] Council Document 14615/04 of 19 November 2004.

national integration activities and the Commission's efforts to „mainstream" immigrant integration concerns throughout all those other EU policy areas that have a bearing on immigrants' treatment. The Commission also recognises that the legislative decisions called for in article 63 of the *Amsterdam Treaty* concerning the rights of long-term residents and family reunification will have a real impact on integration. According to the Communication, the Commission is consequently seeking to ensure that these are properly implemented.

The necessity of public debate on immigrant integration policy

The scope of recent discussion on immigrant integration policy in many EU member states has been misleadingly limited. Integration policy must increasingly come to terms with immigrants who are but a *temporary* presence in the EU and will shortly exit the country. Indeed, integration policies may even involve conditions for *prospective* immigrants' to fulfil before they gain access to the territory. Its broad ambit indicates that integration policy can scarcely be decoupled from policies regulating entry to and exit from the territory, and thus from immigration policy.[17] Yet, public debate has often focussed upon those immigrants who settle *permanently* in host states.

It is perhaps unsurprising that policy-makers avoid elaborating in public upon the relationship between these two policy areas. The linkage is highly complex and difficult to communicate. The goals of immigrant integration policy often diverge from those of immigration policy, with a different weighting given to the various social, economic, foreign and security policy priorities that they each encapsulate.

However, if the links between the two policy areas are not clarified in public debate, the functionality of the policies adopted is likely to suffer. Integration policy implementation is, after all, typically dominated not by central government but by local actors, NGOs and private individuals. The case for thorough public debate on immigrant integration policy thus appears clear-cut.

Some policy-makers would, however, argue that thorough, open debate is scarcely conducive to the good functioning of integration policy. Indeed, historical deficits in the functionality of immigrant integration policy may actually be traced in no small measure to the effect of public debate itself and, specifically, the disparity between political discourse and practical realities.

In order to shore up their legitimacy, policy-makers may namely find themselves publicly propounding principles and ideas that bear little relation to their real capacity for action.[18] Needless to say, subsequent efforts to match reality with this discourse can be detrimental to the quality of policy.

One particular distortion of reality is well-documented. It concerns the extent of the state's capacity for control: The liberal democratic states of the EU are in practice constrained in their ability to control access to their social, economic and political structures through border control or otherwise. Yet, policy-makers are often loath to admit this to national publics since the control of such structures is linked to core functions of government.[19]

In order to live up to public boasts concerning their capacity for border control, policy-makers may subordinate the tools of immigrant integration policy to the aims of immigration policy: Regardless of the negative effect on immigrant integration, policy-makers would further restrict immigrants' access to national economies and welfare systems in order to reduce the „pull factors" of uncontrolled immigration. By the same token though, one can easily imagine a situation where policy-makers would exploit immigration policy tools in order to meet otherwise unrealistic integration policy aspirations: Immigration control may be used to increase policy-makers' control over access to national social and economic structures, and thus increase their capacity to effect social change.

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[17] See for example K. Groenendijk, "Legal Concepts of Integration in EU Migration Law", (2004) 6 European Journal of Migration and Law.

[18] The very term „integration" has been the subject of academic criticism in this light. It apparently conjures up a false image of a society that was integrated prior to the immigrant's arrival. For analysis see: C. Joppke and E. Morawska, "Integrating Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States: Policies and Practices", in: C. Joppke and E. Morawska, *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 at 1

[19] For analysis of this idea: D. Bigo, "Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease", (2002) 27 Alternatives 1; J. Torpey, "Coming and Going: On the State Monopolization of the Legitimate Means of Movement", (1998) 16 Sociological Theory 3.

Such observations apparently offer a good argument in favour of Executive-dominated policy-making, in which decision-takers are spared the need for public debate. But the notion that European publics should be excluded from policy-making because they encourage policy-makers to speak political untruths is normatively abhorrent. This is particularly so, since policy-makers left to their own devices appear likely to pursue interests which have little to do with improving the functionality of policy.[20]

Instead, the onus must be clearly placed on policy-makers to communicate with, and consult national publics in better ways. The requirement for public clarity over key questions - the relationship between immigrant integration and immigration policy, and the vision of society pursued – is not to be shirked.

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[20] This, at least, is the expectation that arises from „principal-agent" theory.

The necessity of debate on the EU's role

Member state governments are often unwilling to publicly admit the extent to which EU integration has seen them cede sovereignty over national borders as well as over domestic socio-economic structures. The difficulty of engaging in honest debate on the subject of EU intervention can only reinforce policy-makers' disinclination for putting EU immigrant integration issues to the public. Nevertheless, the dangers of preventing national publics from giving input into European policy are vividly sketched out in two bodies of theory describing EU integration.

The first and most established theory - neofunctionalism - suggested that, once initiated, European integration would gain a momentum of its own.[21] Thanks to its origins in relatively uncontroversial issues of „low politics", EU integration was expected to proceed by progressively depoliticising sensitive domestic policy issues. Initial integration in areas of low salience would inevitably require cooperation in areas more central to national sovereignty. These would in turn be uploaded for treatment at the European level in a gradual, piecemeal fashion without causing the uproar that wholesale cooperation would excite.

The integration process described in neofunctionalism is an elite-driven one. It can function without public debate. Indeed, if its depoliticising dynamic is to be maintained, a lack of such debate is almost a pre-condition for success. It is, instead, supranational actors like the European Commission which actively drive this process, highlighting new areas for integration.

Whatever the merits of this theory for describing EU integration as a whole, it throws up useful lessons in the specific question of EU immigrant integration policy. In line with neofunctionalist expectations, the sensitive issue of immigrant integration has indeed been placed on the EU agenda thanks to previous integration in relatively uncontroversial areas like economic cooperation.

The spectre of European integration occurring „over the heads of national publics" in this important policy area is unappealing – even more so because integration may not improve the functionality of immigrant integration policy. The name „neofunctionalism" may well suggest a process whereby the best solutions are objectively matched to problems; however, the highly political role attributed to the European Commission in this theory suggests that that Institution may systematically reject suitable national and local policy tools in favour of European solutions. In order to prevent novel forms of social membership emerging „unexpected" at the EU-level, thorough debate about the vision of society underpinning EU activities is required.

The second body of theory is „venue-shopping". It describes how national policy-makers seek out the policy-making arena most amenable to the realisation of their priorities. It too argues that European integration does not proceed solely in response to functional pressures. National ministries may, for example, upload domestic issues for treatment at the European level merely to circumvent their opponents at the national level rather than because European solutions are best suited to problems. In the case of EU Justice and Home Affairs (JHA), it has been argued that national interior ministries uploaded policy issues to the European level in order to avoid the constant opposition to their domestic preferences from parliaments, as well as social, economic and foreign ministries.[22]

This theory too has implications for the EU's incursions into immigrant integration policy. Interior ministries continue to enjoy an amenable institutional position at the European level thanks to the predominance in decision-making on „legal migration" of the JHA Council in which they sit. It is principally under the heading „legal migration" that questions of immigrant integration are being dealt with. Interior ministries may thus be able to use this position to subordinate integration policy tools to immigration control

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[21] E. Haas, "The Uniting of Europe", Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1958.
[22] V. Guiraudon, "European Integration and Migration Policy: Vertical Policy-making as Venue Shopping", (2000) 38 Journal of Common Market Studies 2.

priorities in a manner that domestic ministries and parliaments would block if this were attempted at the national level.

The risk of precisely this kind of subordination was presented above as a grounds against public debate. In fact, open debate about the desired relationship between EU immigration and its immigrant integration efforts is required if the aim of the heads of state and government for a „comprehensive" approach to migration is to be realised.

The state of play
The „immigration-integration nexus"

There have been at best limited efforts to excite public debate on the relationship between immigrant integration efforts and EU immigration policy. The Commission has, for example, responded to the European Council's calls for a „comprehensive" approach to migration by recognising that a „nexus" between integration and immigration exists. What this means remains unclear.[23]

For their part, interior ministries have rather avoided debate, despite their predominance in EU immigration policy. Special meetings of all those national ministers centrally involved in immigrant integration policy were supposed to be held at regular intervals in order to thrash out the integration agenda. Yet, it is only under the German EU-Presidency (first semester of 2007) that any moves in this direction were undertaken, with an informal meeting dedicated to the question of immigrant integration being held in Potsdam on 10-11 May 2007. The results of this and the subsequent JHA Council meeting were not earth-shattering: It was principally decided that the member states should build on the Common Basic Principles for integrating immigrants elaborated by the November 2004 JHA Council,[24] as well as on the „National Contact Points" established in 2003 for the sharing of relevant policy information between the member states.[25]

In practice, and in the absence of real debate, policy tools of central relevance to immigrants' integration have been subordinated to purposes of immigration control. Non-nationals' access to welfare benefits and the labour market has been restricted as an undesirable „pull factor" attracting asylum-seekers, the families of immigrant workers or illegal immigrants – categories of migrant considered undesirable from an immigration policy perspective. By the same token, immigrants' social and economic integration was conceived of as a disruption to governments' eventual efforts to expel them from the territory. Such thinking left a clear mark on the legislative measures called for in the *Amsterdam Treaty* (e.g. the asylum reception directive[26], the directive laying down the rights of long-term-residents[27] and the directive on family reunification[28]).[29]

This apparent subordination of integration policy tools to immigration control is in line with the expectations set out above in the description of the policy outcomes associated with „venue-shopping".

The vision of society underpinning EU policy

Debate about the vision of society underpinning the EU's activities in immigrant integration was equally limited. As noted above, attention focussed instead upon the apparently neutral issues of practice and process. Did, then, the Commission also pursue its own interests by stealth, as the neofunctionalist reading might suggest?

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[23] See for example: European Commission, "Communication on immigration, integration and employment", COM (2003) 336 final; "The Global Approach to Migration one year on", COM (2006) 735 final.

[24] That said, the Common Basic Principles did at least recognise that different kinds of immigrant are usually included in integration efforts, including temporary migrants.

[25] Council of the European Union, "Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the Strengthening of Integration Policies in the European Union by Promoting Unity in Diversity", 12-13 June 2007.

[26] Council Directive laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers (2003/ 9/ EC).

[27] Council Directive concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents (2003/109/EC).

[28] Council Directive on the right to family reunification (2003/ 86/ EC).

[29] For an analysis of these measures see: S. Babrou and H. Oger, "Making the European Migration Regime: Decoding Member States' Legal Strategies", (2005) 6 European Journal of Migration and Law 4; S. Carrera, "Integration as a Process of Inclusion for Migrants? The Case of Long-Term Residents in the EU", (2005) CEPS Working Document; A. Maurer and R. Parkes, "The Prospects for Policy Change in EU Asylum Policy", (2007) 9 European Journal of Migration and Law 2.

One Commission proposal for immigrant integration certainly caused a degree of public concern that that Institution was pursuing an insidious pro-integrationist agenda. This was its idea that the EU's *Charter of Fundamental Rights* might establish a framework for immigrants' rights.[30] However, the Commission's pro-integrationist agenda appeared confined to its aspirations for the *Charter* than for the EU's prospective role in immigrant integration policy.[31]

In practice, the Commission did indeed make moves towards the constitution of a novel form of social membership in the EU. The directive on the position of long-term residents in the EU was one of those measures that the Commission had recognised in its 2007 Communication as having a strong bearing on immigrant integration. The Commission's proposal afforded „transferable" rights to legally resident immigrants who fulfilled certain criteria. These rights could then be exercised in member states other than those that originally granted long-term-residence status. These moves were, however, fully in line with the Conclusions of the Tampere European Council and the desire expressed there of equating the rights of third-country-nationals with those of European citizens.

In EU immigrant integration policy proper, meanwhile, the Commission has very much restricted its role to that of handmaiden to the member states, helping exchange and promote integration processes and practices. It has frequently acknowledged the member states' predominance in this area and appears genuinely reluctant to push the EU's role in immigrant integration. However, even if the Commission is at pains to restrict the EU's role in mainstream immigrant integration policy to that of handmaiden, the substantive practices and processes that it is promoting may actually be paving the way for a pro-integrationist agenda.

Central to many member states' immigrant integration policies is a vision of a culturally cohesive national society. This vision chimes with conceptual understandings of the nation-state as an organisation protecting the territory of a group drawn together by their ethno-cultural commonalities. It has, though, been increasingly acknowledged that these aspirations are out of step with modern societies, and that cultural factors may be blocking newcomers' access to social and economic structures. Efforts to achieve a degree of cultural cohesion can thus come at the expense of socioeconomic cohesion. The cultural bent of established models is one reason why they have been marginalised.

The Council's Common Basic Principles nevertheless conceive of immigrant integration as a two-way process in which immigrants will encounter obligations, one of these being respect for the values of the Union. This presumably leaves room for governments to set cultural integration conditions for immigrants to fulfil if they are to gain access to social, economic and political rights. By contrast, the Commission's previous experience in the socioeconomic sphere has been marked by its efforts to ease individuals' entry into the labour market. Immigrants' ethno-cultural traits should not be allowed to act as a block on their socioeconomic inclusion. Insofar as cultural cohesion is to be promoted then, this would be through inter-cultural dialogue and tolerance.

In the absence of proper debate about the vision of society underpinning the EU's interventions in immigrant integration policy, the Commission may promote as best practice processes which favour socio-economic cohesion at the possible expense of cultural cohesion. As the product of a culturally heterogeneous groups' efforts to realise socioeconomic goals, the EU may be better able to support forms of social membership based primarily upon socioeconomic cohesion than the member states.

Such considerations may be at once both highly abstract and overly simplistic. They should, however, illustrate, that the EU's handmaiden role is by no means a neutral one.

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[30] European Commission, "Communication on a Community immigration policy", COM (2000) 757 final; "Communication on immigration, integration and employment", COM (2003) 336 final.
[31] House of Commons, European Standing Committee B Debates, 25th April 2001. As it happens, in their subsequent Common Basic Principles, member state representatives acknowledged that the *Charter* could play a useful role in the area of immigrant integration.

Future perspectives: the changing immigration policy agenda

The utility of more wide-ranging debate appears clear. Indeed, the need for debate is compounded by the fact that the EU's immigration policy agenda is altering and maturing fast. If this agenda is to succeed, the „nexus" with immigrant integration as identified by the European Commission will have to be probed.

EU immigration policy has long been criticised as too „security-centric". By this, commentators mean that immigration policy has been highly restrictive, with policy-makers seeking to reduce migration because of the threat it poses to member states' internal security, labour markets and welfare systems.[32] As noted above, immigrant integration policy has suffered under these developments. In the asylum reception directive, for example, access to national economic and social structures is cut off in order to reduce the „pull factors" of uncontrolled migration.

Today though, increasing debate has seen the JHA Council revise its immigration policy agenda. Rather than treating immigration as a problem for national economies, societies and security, the opportunities associated with human movement are being promoted. This, and a review of the effect of migration policy upon the EU's external relations, throws up implications for immigrant integration policy.

The foreign and development policy agenda

In their efforts to control migration flows, the member states rely upon the cooperation of third countries. Until 2004, the foreign policy dimension of the EU's immigration policy was largely formulated by national interior ministry officials. It showed little concern for the interests of its international cooperation partners.[33] Recently, though, there has been recognition that this can damage not only the EU's good relations to third states, but also the very effectiveness of immigration policies. Some third states have, for example, been reluctant to comply with EU immigration priorities on the grounds that their nationals are badly treated in the EU. This reluctance was apparent last year when the EU struggled to enlist the co-operation of African states in its efforts to stem migration flows to the Canary Islands.[34]

The EU's treatment of foreign nationals can therefore be of relevance to the Union's attempts to mollify third countries in immigration cooperation. This has manifold implications for the EU's immigrant integration activities. For third states, gaining open access to the EU's social services and labour markets for their nationals has proved a particular priority, as have efforts to protect them from discrimination. However, third states may balk at integration obligations placed upon immigrants, preferring to see cultural links and allegiance to the country of origin maintained. It has been noted elsewhere that the EU's current integration policy principles are insensitive to the „transnational" dimension of integration.[35]

The notion of immigrants as a transient presence in the EU is however increasingly reflected in the Union's immigration policy agenda. This is because of the sporadic prevalence of the EU's development priorities in immigration policy-making. Although it was not clear what store they actually set by development priorities, the idea of „circular migration" as put forward by the French and Germans within the G6-framework stressed that immigrants should return home after a brief period in the EU.[36] If used for development purposes, circular migration would see foreign workers come to the EU for a limited time, before returning to their countries of origin with the material and informational resources necessary to aid the development of those countries. Although the exact modalities of the

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[32] J. Huysmans, "The European Union and the securitization of migration", (2000) 38 Journal of Common Market Studies 5.
[33] J. van Selm, "Immigration and Asylum or Foreign Policy: The EU's Approach to Migrants and their Countries of Origin", in: S. Lavenex and E. Ucarer, *Migration and the Externalities of European Integration*, Lanham, Lexington 2002, at 143.
[34] R. Parkes, "Joint Patrols at the EU's Southern Border", (2006) SWP Comment.
[35] EPC/KBF, supra 5.
[36] See for example: House of Lords European Union Committee, "Fifth Report", 2007.

proposal have not yet been worked out, there is clarity about the fact that they would require the member states to develop modes of immigrant integration which would not compromise immigrants' willingness to return to their countries of origin.

The socioeconomic agenda

Just as integration policies were previously deemed to create a „pull factor" for unwanted immigration, so too they can be viewed as a means to attract desirable forms of immigration. Against the background of international competition for highly qualified labour, there have thus been moves to offer the best-qualified immigrants fuller access to social and economic rights. This was a theme of the *Potsdam Ministerial*. It has also been mentioned by the European Commission in its Policy Plan on attracting legal immigration to the EU.[37]

The prime focus of the EU's activities in legal migration is thus highly-qualified workers. However, given the likely negative impact of the so-called demographic deficit on national welfare systems, there is an emerging social policy agenda to use young, often poorly-qualified immigrants to counter the implications of aging societies. The treatment that awaits low-qualified immigrants will, however, be very different to that to be afforded to highly qualified workers. If the EU is to exploit them for reasons of social welfare, low-qualified workers will be expected to contribute to social welfare systems but will be — for an initial period at least — restricted in their access to them.

This emerging socioeconomic agenda in immigration policy thus clashes with traditional integration policy priorities, potentially reinforcing the social exclusion of poor immigrants whilst tossing integration policy perks to those immigrants least in need of them.

The new security agenda

EU immigration policy-makers have frequently presented the extension of rights to immigrants as an irresponsible luxury given the security threat that can arise from uncontrolled immigration: rights, particularly those offering formal protection against expulsion, or disrupting exit controls by offering immigrants opportunities to integrate themselves into labour markets, present a further constraint on Executives' power to control human movement. Of late, though, there has been recognition of a „security-rights" nexus[38], and the idea that the extension of rights to immigrants can improve the security situation. It might counter the threat of „home-grown" terror arising from immigrant disgruntlement. These moves could involve affording them greater rights of movement in and out of the EU, thus allowing them to spend extended periods of time in their home countries or states with which they have cultural links. In a reversal of fate, then, immigration policy could be subordinated to integration policy in the broader pursuit of internal security aims.

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[37] European Commission, "Policy Plan on Legal Migration", SEC(2005) 1680.
[38] G. Sasse, "Securitization or Securing Rights? Exploring the Conceptual Foundations of Policies towards Minorities and Migrants in Europe", (2005) 43 Journal of Common Market Studies 4.

Conclusions

One of the reasons why policy-makers appear to avoid public debate on core issues of immigrant integration policy is because they fear being forced to uphold myths concerning the state's capacity for action. The propagation of such myths can in turn damage the functionality of subsequent policy outcomes. By this logic, though, one might expect the relative lack of public debate surrounding EU immigrant integration policy to allow policy-makers to overcome the strictures of such myths. This does not appear to be the case.

A core myth propagated by policy-makers in public discussion is that of their capacity for control over national borders and social and economic structures. Yet, the presence of undocumented immigrants in the EU refutes this exaggerated sense of the state's capacity for control. This is one reason why undocumented migrants have been neglected in states' immigrant integration policies: to deal with undocumented immigrants is to recognise the limits of state power.

This neglects appears to be replicated in the EU agenda. Although improving the position of undocumented migrants has been a feature of the Commission's broader social inclusion activities[39], undocumented migrants are something of a blindspot in the EU's current immigrant integration agenda.[40] The reasons for this may be numerous, but the functionality of integration policy is unlikely to count amongst them.

If the EU is to play a sensible role in this policy area, there are few reasons for it to avoid open debate on the subject.

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[39] For example the Commission-funded programme "Access to Healthcare for Undocumented Migrants".
[40] EPC/KBF, supra 5.