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# Migration and Integration in Europe: The State of Research

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## **I. Introduction**

The NORFACE partnership (New Opportunities for Research Funding Cooperation in Europe) comprises twelve national research councils in Europe, including the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). As part of a NORFACE initiative to develop a transnational research programme on migration, the ESRC commissioned COMPAS to prepare a state of the art paper outlining current research on migration and integration in Europe<sup>1</sup>. This paper sets out some of the key themes of research in these areas<sup>2</sup>.

The next section outlines recent migration and integration patterns, together with changing attitudes and policies towards them. Section Three outlines the current state of research on migration and integration, drawing on the overviews and state of the art reviews that have proliferated in recent years, particularly those commissioned by international organizations, at the national level, and those undertaken on a thematic basis. The paper then turns to challenges in migration and integration research that these overviews suggest before concluding with pointers to new research directions.

## **2. Features of recent migration and integration in Europe**

### **2.1 Changing patterns of mobility**

International migration now features strongly on the public and policy agenda worldwide. The number of persons living outside their country of birth nearly doubled to approximately 200 million between 1985 and 2005 (GCIM 2005). Figures for Europe show an even steeper increase of resident immigrants: in a period of 15 years their number grew from an estimated 23 million in 1985 (United Nations, 1998: 1) to more than 56 million, or 7.7 per cent of the total European population in 2000 (IOM 2003: 29).

On one hand, these figures demonstrate that Europe has clearly become an immigration continent. On the other hand, on their own, these figures cannot reveal the complex and differential impacts of immigration<sup>3</sup>. Migration and settlement patterns of immigrants in Europe have been diverse and have evolved unevenly across time and space, with some West European countries having longer immigration histories than others. A number of European countries, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, Norway and Finland, were emigration countries until the 1980s, but since have experienced strong immigration. Still other countries, predominantly among the new member states, have begun to experience simultaneously emigration, transit migration and immigration. These historical and geographic differences are reflected in the size and composition of immigrant populations.

The unevenness of the immigration experience is equally noticeable *within* the countries. New immigrants have tended to cluster predominantly in urban areas. Thus, large cities have become the visible faces of globalisation with their composition changing rapidly in recent decades. Within these metropolises, distribution of migrants is almost always skewed across districts and sub-districts.

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<sup>1</sup> The support of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged.

<sup>2</sup> A full and downloadable version of this report is available at - <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/publications/Reports.shtml>

<sup>3</sup> For a recent state of the art of research on migration and integration in Europe, based on work of the IMISCOE Network of Excellence, see. R. Penninx, M. Berger & K. Kraal (eds) (2006), *The dynamics of International Migration and Settlement in Europe. A State of the Art*. Amsterdam: AUP (IMISCOE Joint Studies series).

What is referred to as a 'new geography of migration' has developed. The pattern of origin of migrants in Europe up to the 1980s could be grouped in three main categories: a) migration with a colonial background connecting certain European countries to their former colonies; b) labour migration that connected a number of 'recruiting countries' to a limited number of 'sending countries', and c) refugee migration that was strongly dominated by refugee migration from Eastern to Western Europe. Geographical patterns of migration embraced Europe and the Mediterranean countries, and a limited number of (former) colonies.

Today, the categories and channels of immigration are extremely diverse. Immigrants in significant numbers come to Europe from all over the world: expatriates working for multinational companies and international organisations, skilled workers from all over the world, nurses and doctors from the Philippines, refugees and asylum seekers from African, Near Eastern and Asian countries, from the Balkan and former Soviet Union countries, students from China, and undocumented workers from African countries among many. In certain cases, heterogeneity has increased to such an extent that the term 'super-diversity' has recently been coined to describe this new phenomenon in the case of the London (Vertovec 2006).

The changing size, origin, destination and composition of international migration correspond to a broader context of change: that of increasing globalisation in all domains. The financial world has been one of the first doing away with national barriers; agricultural and industrial production has increasingly developed new divisions of labour across borders; trade across borders has been eased and has increased; culture and knowledge have developed new and rapid ways of dissemination that are not hindered by national borders. These changes have had far reaching consequences for the mobility of people across borders.

One of the consequences is that in such a globalising world the patterns of mobility have changed: there has been an increase in short term stays like those for business travel, study and tourism, as well as in longer stays of employees of international organisations, multinational enterprises and highly skilled people in general. Their mobility is facilitated, if not promoted. At the same time, other migrants have remained less 'wanted' even though they form part of the same processes of globalisation while searching for economically better and/or politically safer destinations. In their case, national boundaries and borders and the sovereign rights of states on admission of non-nationals have gained importance and have led to increasing barriers. The notion of 'supply versus demand' has translated in policy terms into 'wanted versus unsolicited' mobility and migration.

Another important feature of international mobility has specifically developed within the European Union. On one hand, the EU has granted its citizens and residents of member states fundamental rights to move and settle within the EU area. On the other hand, EU member states have developed restrictive and defensive immigration policies to keep out 'undesirable' migrants. This amounts to the paradoxical trend of 'free mobility' for those within, and increasing closure for those outside the EU.

The relationship between migration and the forms of settlement has also shifted. While in the past, migration tended to be viewed predominantly as a 'one-off' movement leading to permanent resettlement (a concept prevailing in classical immigration countries), recent migration, supported by strongly increased transport and communication facilities, has shifted to more fluid practices of international mobility in which more migrants have

consecutive stays in different countries, and alternate their residence between countries. This has led to some new practices of residence, integration and community formation. Researchers have explored these new phenomena under the notions of transnationalism and diaspora while policy makers have increasingly asked what such practices mean for integration.

## **2.2 Changing attitudes and policies towards migration and integration**

Strongly increased and diversified migration has evoked a multitude of reactions in the societies of settlement (as well as in those of origin). At one end of the spectrum of these reactions lie government and civil society initiatives responding positively and openly to the new developments in migration. These include different forms of inviting, encouraging and celebrating as well as effectively managing and legislating on mobility and diversity. On the other hand, there have been significant changes in public or political attitudes toward limiting and controlling or even altogether preventing migration and excluding migrants from both the nation-state and the welfare state. This has led to mobilisation of anti-immigration sentiments, to destructive politicization of migration debates and criminalisation of migration, to moral panic, social polarisation and even open conflict.

These developments need to be placed in the context of how European countries have historically defined and positioned themselves in relation to migration. European states have consistently seen themselves as non-immigration countries, in contrast to countries such as Canada, Australia and the United States. While the rhetoric about being 'nations of immigrants' is strong in the latter countries, it has been absent in Europe despite the fact that some countries have had higher immigration rates than classical immigration countries.

Such self-understanding has been deeply entrenched in the European life and recent challenges to it have brought lasting consequences. When the temporary labour schemes and policies developed since the mid-1950s were abandoned after the first oil crisis of 1973, lenient migration policies were replaced by highly restrictive policies. These were justified by a simultaneous decrease or absence of demand, particularly for lower skilled migrants, and by an increase of supply-driven migration presenting under family reunion and formation, and refuge and asylum. These new measures of restriction and control of destination countries were followed by 'innovative' new forms of entrance, introducing new actors and new dynamics. In the process, immigration was increasingly criminalised: the tougher the regulations, the more it led by definition to more illegality and irregularity, creating opportunities for new actors like smugglers and traffickers. International political terrorism has furthermore put migrants into focus from a security perspective. Migration has thus become associated with various problems and threats and as such it has risen to the top of political agendas in many countries.

Problems and threats perceived or presented as a consequence of integration problems reinforce this tendency. Thus, settlement and policies of integration have been influenced significantly by the European countries' self-definition as non-immigration countries. The North-West European countries hoped to 'solve' the contradiction of not being an immigration country and yet importing significant labour in the 1950 and 1960 by defining these migrants as 'temporary guests'. Such definition was linked to limited facilities for accommodation in anticipation of their eventual return while a significant proportion stayed for good and formed communities that gradually grew. Some national governments identified these tensions relatively early and initiated some policy of inclusion or integration,

like Sweden in the mid-1970s and the Netherlands in the early 1980s. Most countries acknowledged the need to formulate 'integration policies' much later in the 1990s, often hesitantly or partially (Penninx 2005).

Whatever the intensity and content of integration policies, and irrespective of the question whether such policies have been primarily initiated by national or local authorities, integration has become a central theme in politics in Europe since the 1990s. This has demonstrated that integration policies inevitably reach beyond the simple idea of providing facilities for newcomers to adapt and function in the new society. The premise of any integration policy ultimately has led to questions of how the society in which newcomers 'integrate' essentially defines itself and whether it is able and willing to change.

This has made integration policies as politically sensitive as immigration. North-West European countries seem to have moved in recent years from earlier conceptions of integration policies that focussed on the position of newcomers in society to one that is primarily focussing on the cohesion of societies as a whole and on commonalities that are supposed to be crucial for such social cohesion. This has led, using the newcomers as a trigger or a threat, to much more fundamental questions and discussions on the identity of our societies: who are we? The outcomes of such discussions have consequences for newcomers and for what their integration should mean. Some observers have called the recent policies in countries like Denmark and the Netherlands 'neo-assimilationist'.

It is at this point that the nexus between the two policy fields of migration and integration becomes clear. Previous assumptions about restrictive immigration being a necessary precondition for success of integration policies have been joined by new ways of thinking: integration policy measures are used to select those immigrants that are able and willing to integrate and deter those who are not. Making first admission dependent on tests in the country of origin, extension of residence permits on success in integration courses, and naturalisation on ever more elaborate requirements of integration are examples of measures that fit this inversion.

The picture outlined here is strongly based on the Northwest-European experience. South-European countries have a much more recent experience in immigration and integration, but at the same time a stronger growth of immigration than Northwest-Europe presently has. Spain has become the leading immigration country. The Southern European countries' institutional framework for migration regulation is new and their practices are much less burdened by historical experience and the path-dependency that it may entail. This has led to different measures for migration regulation, such as frequent regularisations. For most of the twelve new members of the EU the experience of migration and integration is relatively new and has taken multiple forms: emigration, immigration and transit migration co-exists in most of these countries. At the same time, the European Union has become an important forum for policy development through its initiatives to create a framework for common migration policies (since 1997) and integration policies (since 2003).

### **3. Research on migration, integration and social cohesion**

Following broadly the unfolding of the developments outlined above, research on migration and integration in Europe has expanded greatly in recent years. The following section outlines very briefly the nature of this expansion.

Initially in the 1960s and 1970s, individual researchers engaged in such research, often focusing on one particular flow of migrants or immigrant group or on the specific nature of the immigration, such as the 'guestworker' type of temporary migration. The first research institutes in Europe were established in the 1980s. This migration and integration research has been strongly embedded within national contexts, both in terms of its framing of the questions and the selection of what questions should be researched, and its funding<sup>4</sup>. As a consequence it reflected predominantly national concerns and perspectives. Topics and priorities related primarily to destination countries and their policy preoccupations.

Since the late 1990s – mainly as a consequence of expanding EU-policy action in these fields – a rapidly growing number of international research and data collecting organisations have been established, some of them financially depending strongly on EC-funding, others from international organisations.<sup>5</sup>

The general picture of the development of research is one that is characterised by:

- a strong growth of numbers of researchers and research institutes involved<sup>6</sup>;
- a strong increase of output (books, articles, papers, data collecting systems, e-libraries);
- a growth that is predominantly policy driven and funded; independent funding by universities and organisations for fundamental research has lagged behind, although it is increasing in recent years;<sup>7</sup>
- new facilities for data collection and dissemination, coordination<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Penninx (1988) made an early analysis of all major research projects in The Netherlands between 1945 and 1988 and found that the overwhelming majority of these projects were commissioned and funded by Dutch governmental agencies. Basic research questions were thus policy driven and not formulated from a broader scientific framework. He indicates that only from the mid-1980s universities and national funders of scientific research (NWO) started to be involved as funders of research programmes and infrastructure. Admittedly, this situation could be more pronounced in countries like The Netherlands and Sweden that combined a strong tradition of applied research in general with an early explicit involvement in integration policies. There are indications, however, that a similar process has taken place later – from the 1990s on- in other Northwest European countries. At the moment the IMISCOE-Network of Excellence was recruiting – in 2003 – the major research institutes in this field, the great majority of these institutes turned out to be research institutes with a minor structural funding from universities and scientific funding institutions and a strong dependency on commissions and funding from policy-driven institutions (varying from local to EU- and international level).

<sup>5</sup> A major initiative to overcome the isolated and provincial character of research was taken in 2004: the establishment of IMISCOE, a Network of Excellence on International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion in Europe. Nineteen research institutes from 10 European countries joined to build an infrastructure for research in the domain of international migration, integration and social cohesion by developing a coherent, multi-disciplinary, cross-national comparative research programme, by developing a structure for training of future researchers and a system of dissemination of results of research to a wide audience. IMISCOE develops plans and facilities for research, training and dissemination, but it does not finance research itself. By 2007 IMISCOE had 23 institutional members and more than 450 researchers: see [www.imiscoe.org](http://www.imiscoe.org).

<sup>6</sup> This growth is reflected the establishment of new migration studies centres around Europe such as the ESRC funded Transnational Communities Program, Oxford University, UK, and later the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS). It is also reflected in the growing number of (specialist) journals in the field: while in the 1970s there existed the International Migration Review, Studi Emigrazione and International Migration as outlets for migration studies, and Ethnic and Racial Studies for integration studies, the 1980s saw a first boost of new journals, often specific in language and delimited to countries: REMI and Hommes et Migrations in France, Migantenstudies in The Netherlands, Migraciones (Latin America), Migration (Germany) etc. A third wave of new journals has come up since the mid-1990s, many of them focussing on international topics: Identities, New Identities, Migracije (Zagreb); and Migration and Identity (Glasgow, UK).

<sup>7</sup> Significantly, the European Science Foundation (ESF), an association of European National Research Funders, introduced the topic of International Migration and Integration for the first time in its programme in 2002 when a first session of the Forward Looking Conference (in Como, Italy) was dedicated to this topic. A clear follow up in terms of a special funding programme in this area, however, did not follow.

<sup>8</sup> Some of the more important are:

- International Metropolis: a worldwide forum for exchange between researchers, policy makers and stakeholders in the field of migration and integration (see: <http://www.international.metropolis.net>)
- Migration Policy Institute (Washington) and its Migration Information Source ([www.migrationinformation.org](http://www.migrationinformation.org))
- European Migration Network (EMN): [www.european-migration-network.org](http://www.european-migration-network.org)
- European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN): [www.eukn.org](http://www.eukn.org)
- IMISCOE: <http://www.imiscoe.org>
- Migration Policy Group (Brussels), produced among others two versions of the Handbook for Integration for the EC: 2002 and 2007. The Second edition is on: [www.migpolgroup.com/documents/3695.html](http://www.migpolgroup.com/documents/3695.html)

Research related to international migration, integration and social cohesion has grown to such an extent that it is impossible to review the literature according to conventional approaches of a State of the Art Study. The field of migration has grown itself as the diversity of migration, its forms, mechanisms and motivations have changed, as indicated above. The field of integration has likewise expanded, coming to include, along with the traditional domains of work, education, housing and health and political, social and cultural/religious dimensions, new topics such as language, policymaking in the field, interethnic relations, discrimination, age, gender and generation. Furthermore, with the inclusion of new analytical perspectives, such as the focus on transnational ties and connections of migrants and the perspective of sending countries, the domain of study has significantly enlarged.

Against the background of such strong growth, there have recently been a great number of overview studies, commissioned by different kind of institutions. They include the following.

#### *Overview studies commissioned by international organisations*

The Council of Europe was one of the earliest organisations that included migration and integration on its agenda, and the OECD SOPEMI-system<sup>9</sup> of annual reports likewise dates from the late 1970s. Various United Nations organisations and the ILO also reported on migration from an early stage. The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has entered the field since 1990s. The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) was the latest and the most comprehensive initiative. The IOM has become an active semi-political organisation in the field of migration research. The EU, and specifically the European Commission, has commissioned a significant amount of research and overview studies since international migration was declared a topic of communitarian policymaking (Amsterdam Treaty 1997). The field of integration followed in 2003 after the Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment (2003) was politically accepted. EU-policies in the latter field, however, were not communitarian, but to be based on consensus of sovereign partners.

#### *National studies*

With the rising importance of migration and integration on the political agenda in the 1990s, a great number of national overviews have been published. Most have been commissioned by the government and are policy oriented. They are usually prepared annually. These national reports demonstrate the ways in which European countries deal with their transformation into immigration countries. A common trait is the focus on policy content rather than policy process or governance. Analysis of the mismatch between policy evaluation and advice and actual political processes is lacking and it is not clear how political processes originate and develop in the field of immigration and integration as well as what is the role of different actors (governments - central, regional, local, trade unions, NGOs, individuals, etc). Most country reports lack the regional and local perspective although recently, there has been some increase in research focus on a wider European context or on links with sending countries.

#### *Thematic overviews*

The most recent and most comprehensive thematic overviews have recently<sup>10</sup> been produced by IMISCOE as state of the art reviews on nine themes:

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<sup>9</sup> Continuous Reporting System on Migration, known under its French acronym SOPEMI.

<sup>10</sup> Abbreviated versions of these overviews are published as chapters in Penninx et al. (2006). The full versions can be downloaded from <http://www.imiscoe.org> (Working Papers).

- International migration flows and their regulation (by Maria Baganha et al.)
- Migration and development: causes and consequences (by Richard Black et al.);
- Migrants' citizenship: legal status, rights and political participation (by Rainer Bauböck et al.);
- Migrants' work, entrepreneurship and economic integration (by Michael Bommers and Holger Kolb)<sup>11</sup>
- The social integration of immigrants with special reference to the local and spatial dimension (Olivier Asselin et al.);
- Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in Europe: an overview of issues and trends (by Steven Vertovec and Suzanne Wessendorf)
- Identity, representation, interethnic relations and discrimination (by Jose Bastos et al.);
- Time, generations and gender in migration and settlement (by Russell King et al.);
- The multilevel governance of migration (by Giovanna Zincone and Tiziana Caponio).

We return to the suggestions of these nine thematic overviews for future research in the final section.

#### **4. Challenges for research on migration and integration**

The brief 'review of the reviews' outlined above suggests a number of challenges for research on migration and integration. One observation is that the development of research in Europe has not kept pace with developments in the field it studies. The most obvious weakness of European research on migration and integration issues is that it is fragmented. Three forms of fragmentation are regularly brought up: lack of comparative research, lack of cooperation between disciplines and lack of integration of the different levels at which phenomena are studied.<sup>12</sup>

##### **4.1 Lack of systematic comparison**

Throughout the literature that has taken stock of research there seems to be a consensus both on the lack of comparative research and on the expectation that systematic comparison will take knowledge forward. The challenges here lie on different levels that have relevance for the design of a comparative research framework. The first and most practical level is that of basic administrative data that are often used by researchers. Cross-national comparability of seemingly simple data such as those on migration turn out to be profoundly problematic. The problem is that administrative data are collected within a specified institutional context for specific purposes, using definitions that reflect their particular tasks, assumptions and preoccupations. Apart from the validity and reliability of the data within the system in which they are collected, the basic problem for scientists in using such data for comparative purposes are twofold: do they measure the same

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<sup>11</sup> A special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* has recently been prepared on this topic, edited by Christina Boswell and Peter Mueser (forthcoming in May 2008). An edited volume on "Migration Research in Economics and the other Social Sciences" is being prepared by Holger Kolb, Clemens Esser and Henrik Egbert.

<sup>12</sup> Another way of describing that fragmentation has been to point to relatively isolated national traditions of research. As indicated earlier, such traditions have often developed in a context in which the funding of research is significantly influenced by policy interests. It implies a strong focus on the national case that may lead not only to a lack of cross-national comparison, but also to specific foci of research. In general more attention is given to migrants as the object of study (the dependent variable of the design) than the receiving society (the independent one). The crucial questions to be researched also reflect perspectives of receiving countries rather than those of sending countries. Some observers have coined the term 'methodological nationalism' for this phenomenon (Ali-Ali and Koser 2002, Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2003). Recent publications such as Bommers (2006), Lavenex (2005) and Vasta and Vaddamalay (2006) substantiate (the limitations of) such national traditions in empirical comparison of countries.



phenomenon, and are they complete or representative? Critical assessment of comparability is a fundamental requirement, but too little of it is done.

The second level is the design of comparisons. The kind of comparison chosen directly relates to the specific questions that need to be answered. For example, a research design that compares different immigrant populations within one national or local context will draw attention, by the choice of the design, to factors *within these immigrant populations* that explain the differential outcomes; on the other hand, a design that compares the same ethnic group within different national or local contexts will focus on factors *within these contexts* that explain differences in outcomes. The same holds for comparisons in which time is additionally and explicitly brought into the design. In principle, comparison combining different forms of design in a complementary way would mean a significant step forward. In practice, however, the present organisation of research, its orientation and funding, does not stimulate this.

The third level is that of concepts and terminology. The fact that the same terms are used in different national or local contexts - say for example integration policy or multicultural policies - may create the illusion that the same phenomena are dealt with. Empirical research, however, has shown that not only the ideas and assumptions behind such policies are different, but that the practice and measures of such policies vary considerably in different places and situations.<sup>13</sup> Another complication is that scientific concepts may, in public and political discourse, acquire normative connotations that make it difficult for scientists to use such concepts particularly in communication with a broader audience. Often used key concepts like assimilation and integration, or the concept of multiculturalism for that matter, are basically contended. We therefore need to design analytical frameworks in which such abstract concepts and notions are operationalised in such a way that empirical data can be collected in the same way in different contexts.<sup>14</sup>

## 4. 2 Interdisciplinarity

Critiques on the involvement of various disciplines in the study of migration and settlement in the preceding sections essentially refer to two aspects. The first is the observation that in the past the research field has been dominated by a limited number of disciplines, often anthropology, sociology, social geography, economics and law, while other disciplines came in relatively late, such as political sciences and history.

The second is that disciplines often develop their research and perspectives in relative isolation – this point is made strongly for economics for example, but it also applies to other disciplines like history and law - and that comprehensive interdisciplinary research is rare, let alone interdisciplinary research projects.

Efforts to transcend the division of disciplines in research on international migration and settlement of migrants are relatively new and few. Such cooperation across disciplines can be done at two levels. The first is to create multi-disciplinary organisational structures,

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<sup>13</sup> See for examples Vermeulen (1977) and Vermeulen and Slijper (2003)

<sup>14</sup> Within IMISCOE various initiatives have been taken. On a still relatively abstract level the INTPOL-study by Heckmann and Bosswick (Forthcoming) has delivered an analytical framework for the comparative study of integration processes of immigrants. Within the TIES-project a systematic framework for the comparison of the position of the second generation of 4 immigrant groups in 8 countries and 15 cities has been developed during a 2-year period of preparation, including a standardized and piloted questionnaire (see:<http://www.tiesproject.eu>)

which bring disciplines together and stimulate exchange and cooperation.<sup>15</sup> The second, deeper level is to conceive and implement interdisciplinary projects and programmes in which such cooperation is built into the central questions and design, the collection of material and is integrated into the analysis and reporting (cf. Bommers and Morawska 2005).

### 4.3 Integrating levels of analysis

Another form of fragmentation relates to levels of units of analysis and the lack of integration of these levels. This may express itself in the form where (mostly qualitative) research on the micro-level of small groups does not seem to have any relation with (mostly quantitative) research on the aggregate level of groups or categories.<sup>16</sup> This is a classical kind of fragmentation that is not unique to the field of migration and integration, but this observation does not make the challenge to overcome it any easier.

The fragmentation may also take a more space-based form, particularly when the unit of analysis refers to the different levels at which societies are politically organised and policy efforts are involved: the borough, the city, the region, the national state and supra-national or international agents. While the national state has been an important level from the beginning and has dominated in research, there is a growing body of research on the local level on the one hand, and on the international and supra-national level on the other. The relations between these levels and the complex way in which they influence each other are yet to be explored.

This form of fragmentation has a special dimension in the European context. Since the early start of Europeanisation in the form of the European Economic Community up to the present European Union an ever more significant supra-national level has developed. In its early phase – starting back as far as the 1950s - mobility within the European Economic Community and later the European Union has been a topic of complicated interaction between national governments and the European Commission (Goedings 2005), while discussions focusing on immigration from outside the EU have grown in importance since the 1980s, and integration policies since 2003.<sup>17</sup> There is a growing awareness among researchers that there is a need to overcome this fragmentation, and at the same time an expectation that this will greatly enhance our understanding of policies and policy making in the field.

## 5. Conclusion: new research directions

Apart from improvements in the organisation of research by involving relevant disciplines, using comparison as a strategic tool and designing research that comprises more levels and the interaction between them, the state of the art reviews suggested time and again that there are also significant challenges in terms of the development of new theoretical and analytical perspectives. The term perspective here means looking at the field from a different angle and thus asking different questions, taking other units of analysis as a starting point and collecting new kinds of empirical material. These suggestions can be brought together under three headings.

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<sup>15</sup> The Network of Excellence IMISCOE is an example of such an organisational structure at the European level. The extent of multi-disciplinarity of its individual institutional members varies considerably.

<sup>16</sup> Admittedly in migration studies this cleavage has been discussed since the late 1980s and interesting new studies have introduced 'meso-level' mechanisms, particularly in the form of networks of different kinds, to bridge the gap. In integration studies, however, there is much less of an effort to bridge between the micro- and macro/aggregate level.

<sup>17</sup> For a concise overview see Van Selm and Tzolakis (2004)

## **5.1 Rethinking the relation between migration and settlement**

International migration and integration (or its alternative terms such as assimilation, incorporation or settlement) have established themselves as more or less independent fields of research and theory in the past. The first - international migration – is defined as the spatial movement, voluntary or forced, of persons across political borders as a process, together with its causes and consequences. The second pertains to the process of settlement and integration of immigrants and their descendants in the society of destination and the consequences this has for these societies. Most of the existing body of theories in these fields is being developed on the basis of experience in traditional immigration countries and by researchers from these countries.

Though it is useful to start from that knowledge and build on it, at the same time it transpires from the recent literature and overviews that there are at least two kinds of problems, stemming from such definitions and the implied division between migration and integration research. The first issues arise when migration and integration are seen as self contained and independent fields of research, thus decoupling migration from settlement. As noted in the introduction and sections, international migration in recent decades has changed in character: the migration process has become more complex, more fluid and less permanent. The implicitly assumed one-time movement and the time sequence of migration followed by a settlement process is increasingly blurred.

The second set of issues refers specifically to the European context: having defined itself as a set of non-immigration countries has had far reaching consequences both for international migration and integration separately, but also for the nexus between the two fields. There is a new tendency in policy thinking that sets integration requirements as criteria for the selection and admission of immigrants (See for example Carrera 2006).

There is thus a need to reformulate the research field as one complex field rather than two separate ones, and introduce new perspectives and questions that focus on this more complicated interconnectedness. Focusing on the migrants themselves, one of these new perspectives is that of transnationalism. This notion basically challenges the above mentioned assumptions of once-off movements, followed by gradual settlement, by asking pertinent questions about the nature and continuity of the ties of migrants with several places and communities and thus their simultaneous 'integration' in them. Focusing on both sending and receiving societies a number of new questions also arise (or are put in a different light) that interconnect migration and integration. For example: how are migration and development issues influenced by new migration patterns, by the formation of transnational communities and by integration policies in destination countries? How do arguments related to integration (and concrete policy measures in that field) influence admission and immigration policies and practices and the patterns of continued immigration and return?

## **5.2 Shifting the focus from migrants to society**

State of the art reviews of migration and integration research also hint at the need to introduce new perspectives: the fact that nearly all research focuses primarily on migration, immigrants and their integration, while the societal systems into which the phenomenon of

migration and the immigrants themselves are to be integrated is taken for granted.<sup>18</sup> It is interesting to observe that when the effects of migration on societal structures are studied, it is mainly from a sending-country perspective. Migration and development is apparently a topic that is relevant and applicable for countries that send migrants rather than for countries that receive them. The effects of migration on social structures in sending countries have been studied under headings such as brain drain, effects on families and households, on peasant economies, local markets, etc. More recently the developmental potential of migration and migrant communities for the regions of origin have attracted much attention. Broadly speaking, migration research has looked more at the societal effects of the 'absence of migrants' in sending countries than at the societal effects of the 'presence of migrants' in receiving ones (Black et al. 2006).

There is thus a clear lack of studies that ask questions as to what extent migration has affected the core structures of European immigrant receiving societies themselves. How has international migration become part of the development of these societies beyond political or other kinds of intentions? From such a perspective the social dynamics of integration and social cohesion are both necessarily embedded in the structural changes that are an outcome also of the unintended and differentiated effects of international migration itself on the various realms of society, such as politics, the economy, law, science, education, health, religion, mass media, arts, sports and the family.

### **5.3 Perspectives 'from outside'**

The foregoing observations on new perspectives refer to imbalances within the thematic fields of international migration, integration and social cohesion and suggest ways to address them. New issues and questions arise when particular fields are seen in a broader perspective.

One such broader perspective involves looking at international migration as just one of the forms that (spatial) mobility may take. Systematic comparison with other forms of mobility that do not imply crossing national borders, such as internal migration, or that have a shorter time horizon, such as cross-border commuting, tourism and business travel, may bring the special characteristics and underlying mechanisms of international migration to the fore.

The mobility perspective can also be applied to the social mobility of individuals and groups within a given societal system asking for the empirical study of how international migrants fit in and compare to other groups and categories.

Another broader perspective is the one that nowadays goes under the term of globalisation. From such a perspective, important questions arise as to how physical migration of people across borders relates to the movement of money, of goods, of ideas and cultural and religious meanings and practices across these same borders, some of which are physical but other much less so, or not at all. And what do such relations mean for how we should look at the process of settlement.

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<sup>18</sup> Although in the new rhetoric of integration policy the normative statement that integration is a two-sided process of change of migrants and the receiving society is accepted nowadays (see for example the Communication of the European Commission on Integration (European Commission 2003) and the Common Basic Principles for integration policies approved by the Conference of Integration ministers in Groningen (European Commission 2004)), we see the same strong focus on immigrants in practice.

Other analysts have pleaded for general analytical frameworks or perspectives in which migration and its causes and consequences are located: for example, Stephen Castles (2007) has proposed a framework of studying migration and its consequences as part of societal transformations and Penninx has called for studying migration in the context of the sociology of societal change (Penninx et al 2007; Bommès and Morawska 2005).

#### **5.4 Specific thematic directions for future research**

Having indicated some ways in which research on migration and integration might usefully re-orientate itself, we conclude by returning to thematic directions suggested by the IMISCOE state of the art reviews. For the sake of brevity we have presented these in bullet point form.

- International migration flows and their regulation
  - collect further empirical data on illegal/irregular migration;
  - produce typologies of illegal/irregular migration;
  - produce typologies of migration regulations at local, national and supranational level;
  - map out the patterns and logics of interrelations between different categories of migrants and the dynamics of migration flows;
  - collect empirical data on and analysis of entry regulations with significant impact on migration and integration.
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- Migration and development: causes and consequences
  - examine further the role of networks;
  - amass research on the links between internal and international migration;
  - operationalise better the concept of 'culture of migration';
  - study in-depth the migration influences on integration;
  - provide better understanding of the sending countries context;
  - study transnational links and processes;
  - develop comprehensive methodologies such as stage-wise sampling designs and multi-sited ethnographic research;
  - compile a substantial longitudinal database that combines breadth and depth of information on migrants and their sending communities.
- Migrants' citizenship: legal status, rights and political participation
  - compare institutions and policies of citizenship within and across countries;
  - assess the consistency of these policies with legal and political norms, and their consequences for effective achievement of policy goals;
  - study the impact of migration on changes in institutional arrangements and policies;
  - analyse migrant attitudes, ties and practices with regard to citizenship (including sense of belonging to political communities, involvement in different polities through social, economic, cultural and political ties, choices with regard to alternative statuses of citizenship, use of rights, and political activities).

- Migrants' work, entrepreneurship and economic integration
  - compile data on and analysis of migration and work;
  - study the dynamic interrelations between labour markets and migration and integration;
  - examine migrant entrepreneurship as a form of economic integration;
  - analyse the interrelations between organisational rationality, labour market outcomes and migration and integration;
  - include the study of organisations/employers as employment sites/actors in relation to migration and integration;
  - examine the network approaches through interdisciplinary interactions between economics and other social sciences;
  - make systematic use of the available theoretical and methodological knowledge within economics to the specific interests of migration research in the field of migrant entrepreneurship.
  
- The social integration of immigrants with special reference to local and spatial dimensions
  - study the relations of interdependence between individuals and groups and their development over time, within the spatial framework of particular places;
  - provide an insight into the relevance and links between different socio-economic and political as well as cultural contexts at different levels – local, national, supranational (e.g. in the degree of xenophobia/xenophilia, the existing regulatory mechanisms allowing the participation of foreigners in the different fields of social life such as labour market, housing market, political sphere);
  - examine the spatial dimension in the concept of integration in terms of three aspects: access to urban resources; the role of immigrants in the process of production and transformation of urban spaces and the relationship between (spatial) segregation and (social) integration;
  - further focus on housing and segregation;
  - developing a neighbourhood-level approach identifying the perspective of both immigrants and non-immigrants;
  - study processes of social and spatial mobility of the second generation;
  - analyse spatial accessibility to education resources and health and health care systems.
  
- Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in Europe
  - develop cross-national comparisons of the debates on cultural difference and multiculturalism;
  - examine public religion and secular democracy in relation to migration and integration;
  - develop studies on legal practices and cultural diversity to include: how legal frames determine debates and practices and their (non-)acceptance and how practices of cultural diversity and difference may be endorsed and more widely accepted;
  - study language policies and practices to include literacy acquisition on the one hand, and managing diverse language situations in immigration contexts on the other;
  - study ethnic minority and immigrants cultural productions as forms of political expression: to what extent immigrant and ethnic popular cultural productions (music, literature, etc) could be analysed in terms of political expression and participation;

- research cities of diversity through contextualising the cultural dimension in space and in relation to other domains of daily life;
- research the interrelationship of manifestations of religious and cultural diversity in urban public spaces, and the production and reproduction of social, political and economic relations.
- Identity, representation, interethnic relations and discrimination
  - provide better empirical evidence and sound theoretical conceptualisation of these four concepts with emphasis on their mutual impacts, on their links, commonalities and mediations;
  - study further how representation cross cuts identity discourses in terms of social (or collective) representations, but also how discrimination can be combatted by empowerment through political representation;
  - conduct more comparative research on identities and on discrimination employing a multidisciplinary and multilevel combination of approaches.
- Time, generations and gender in migration and settlement
  - research on formative and decision-making processes, and on the outcomes and consequences of the migration in the short term and in the long term;
  - situate migrations in their household, family and temporal contexts, including a consideration of the migrants' prospects and opportunities
  - conduct more and deeper ethnographies of migration decision-making, including a focus on the influence and interest of the closest relatives of the migrants;
  - provide more nuanced analysis encompassing the intersections of gender with race/ethnicity, class, nation, family structures etc.;
  - understand better how the acts and circumstances of migration itself produce variants in the practice and meaning of family and household;
  - study how such practices may be 'forced' on migrants by immigration control policies and legal/citizenship regimes of the receiving countries;
  - study integration in a more holistic way to include, among others, questions of citizenship and identity.
- The multilevel governance of migration
  - take into account features and possible changes in the formal distribution of competencies among different institutions involved in the governance of migration (including institutional development and shifts in competencies and power between different institutions);
  - employ interdisciplinary approaches for deeper understanding of external constraints such as regulations, laws, market demands, international events, and security threats;
  - develop bottom-up perspectives especially in EU policy-making processes to provide an insight into the specific member states' governments and civil society actors in the EU decision-making process;
  - study the interplay between different levels of government in decision-making processes;
  - collect further empirical data and analyse migrant associations, and particularly social movements;
  - employ both diachronic and synchronic comparisons to reinforce the empirical dimensions of research, to enable better-grounded analyses and to generate a cross-

- national debate on the making of migration policy;
- produce policy evaluations to support policy learning and revision while resisting immediate political needs and demands.



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