

**“Challenges of migrants’ integration in the
European Union:
Between Multi-Level Governance and decoupled
integration policies?”**

**Contribution to the 3rd EUMIGRO Conference “Migration and
integration in the European Union – facts, figures, challenges and
policy responses.**

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1. Introduction and overview

- **EU's migration paradox: more mobility, less immigrants?
EU's integration paradox: Who is to be integrated?**
- **A typology of multi-level policies as an analytical instrument**
- **The development of immigration policies in Europe**
- **The development of integration policies in Europe**
- **Conclusions: the local perspective.**

Europe became a continent of immigration between 1950 – 2015...

...but states have reacted unwillingly towards immigration and immigrants..

... while an enlarging EU created free movement and promoted mobility within

Consequences for integration policies:

... Intra-EU mobile persons are integrated by definition...

~~... While immigrants from outside the EU need to be integrated.~~

3. Policy making: Ideal types of relations and power between levels

- a. A **centralist** type: top-down, hierarchical division of labour, control mechanisms, central policy frame and rules; leads to convergence of policies
- b. A **localist** type: bottom-up perspective, policy competencies following subsidiarity principles; formulation of local policies rules and horizontal exchange; leads to specific local frames and divergence
- c. **Multi-level governance** type: interaction and coordination between levels without dominance of one level; vertical and horizontal venues and networks; levelling of power between levels
- d. **Decoupled relations** type: absence of meaningful policy coordination; possibly contradictory and conflicting

4. Immigration policies in Europe 1945 – 2015

- **Up till early 1990s: a national state sovereign competency to admit non-citizens (but steps to prepare “free circulation of labour” ECSC 1951, EEC 1968, and “free movement of people” in EC/Single European Act 1985 and the 1985 Schengen agreement).**
- **Europeanisation: Increasing transfer of competency to ‘Europe’ since**
 - **implementation of Schengen (FRG/FR/Benelux) in 1990**
 - **Maastricht Treaty 1993: intergovernmental cooperation on M.&A.**
 - **Amsterdam Treaty 1997: (first pillar) law based, binding cooperation and harmonisation of policies before 2004**

More interpretations on type of governance, but it has become more top-down (EU-national states); cities do not play a role in policy formation and implementation; conflicts around irregular/illegal migrants suggest decoupling of policies.

5. Integration policies in Europe 1945 – 2015 (a)

- **Until 1990s, integration policies on the national level non-existent: efforts to integrate guest workers f.e. were left to local government and societal partners: employers, trade unions, churches, etc.**
- **Exceptions were Sweden (since 1975) and The Netherlands (since 1980): here national policies stimulated and supported cities in integrating newcomers.**
- **Since late 1990s new forms of (neoliberal) integration policies developed in North-west Europe (DK, NL..):**
 - **mandatory self-financed integration courses, as condition for prolonged stay and naturalisation,**
 - **focusing on socio-cultural adaptation (assimilation);**
 - **cities were not seen as policy partners (NL) or just as implementers of state policies.**

5. Integration policies in Europe 1945 – 2015 (b)

- **In new Southern European countries, cities and regions have taken initiatives for integration policies in 1990s and 2000s and have pressured national governments to come with (support for) integration policies.**
- **EU started integration policies in 2003 only and as 3rd pillar with no real competences:**
 - **EC started supporting regions and cities as partners in integration policies**
 - **financing their projects and their horizontal cooperation (Integrating Cities, CLIP, Intercultural Cities, etc.)**

So, cities have always been involved in integration policies, sometimes in absence of national policies, sometimes in cooperation, but more often in a subordinated position. The EC, in the absence of strong competences, developed strong relations with local governments to support integration (circumventing national influences)

6. Conclusions: chances for Multi-level Governance?

- **In immigration policies, competences have been national level; these have (to a significant extent) shifted in the Europeanisation to the EU-level. The local level was out of sight and influence in both situations. Chances for Multi-Level Governance in the future are slim. In the politicized climate on migration (and its clamp-down on “illegals”) an increasing number of situations of “decoupling” is to be expected.**
- **In integration policies field, the prospects for Multi-Level Governance in the future are probably better. There is a much less clear division of competencies of partners/ levels, and in combination with the absence of a clear definition of what integration policies should do for whom, this could easily be an advantage (as it is nowadays). But it does not guarantee that we will see a real MLG-policy on integration emerge.**