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**Immigration, Multi-Culturalism  
and the Nation State  
in Western Europe**

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United Nations  
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# Immigration, Multi-Culturalism and the Nation State in Western Europe

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## Introduction

With hindsight, it can be said that in the years following World War II, the whole of Western Europe gradually became a region of immigration. In the very first instance this concerned people displaced by the war and its aftermath (redrawn borders and policies of what later distastefully became known as 'ethnic cleansing'). Subsequently, politics induced people to leave what by then had become the Eastern Block; most notably this led to migration from the German Democratic Republic to the German Federal Republic, and emigration from Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). The arrival of such newcomers was never seen as immigration as such but rather as an anomaly, a one off phenomenon, and caused little discomfort in the countries where these people sought refuge. Moreover, these immigrants were easily absorbed in expanding labour markets. In fact, rebuilding destroyed economies induced an even larger need for labour. In the 1960s and 1970s this led to the arrival of what euphemistically were called guest workers from the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. As the word guest worker implies, this immigration was conceived to be of a temporary nature – which it turned out not to be.

After the oil-crises of the mid-1970s many guest workers lost their employment due to economic restructuring. As these were guest workers, it was generally assumed that they would subsequently return to their countries of origin. Though some did, many others stayed and were followed by their spouses and children. Marriage partners again later on followed them from the countries of origin.

After the War, colonialising states like Great Britain, France and The Netherlands were also faced with the arrival of many immigrants as a result of the process of decolonisation. Their arrival too was seen as a temporary anomaly, to be accommodated but then forgotten. However, like the settled former guest workers, family reunification and formation followed in their wake. These migration flows have meanwhile largely dried up but have been replaced by asylum seekers and refugees who, on the waves of economic globalisation, have found their way to Europe from many parts of the globe. Even a country that seemed immune to immigration - the Irish Republic - in the last couple of years witnesses the influx of many newcomers and the return of migrants who earlier left for the new world.

In short: even though de facto immigration has taken place in most Western European countries for the past four to five decades, and in considerable numbers, governments for a long time, and some until today, failed to define in proper terms what actually was happening. To be fair, the same should be said about researchers, journalists and others.

This impaired perspective in most instances has led to short term government responses, both when issues surrounding immigration and integration are concerned, to processes that by their very nature are very long term in character. Migration pressure is not easily alleviated as its causes, though manifold, often are first and foremost of a demographic nature (Van Amersfoort & Doomernik 1998).

The integration of immigrants, especially of those from less developed parts of the world, too should be thought about in terms of generations rather than legislative periods.

Of course, and especially to the welfare states of Western Europe, immigration other than in order to satisfy labour market needs by definition poses a challenge. In most instances, all legal residents of a country are granted certain basic rights - a minimum of economic security, a roof over the head, access to the educational system for minors and such. Much like an insurance system, it is no great problem if a few individuals claim for compensation without having contributed their premiums over a long period of time. If, however, their numbers are large at some point the system may not be able to shoulder the burden. Now this principle in itself would validate a policy of rejecting every form of non-economically induced immigration. However, and this explains why post-guest worker immigration did take place, economic arguments are not the only ones a liberal democratic state needs in order to maintain its legitimacy. Human rights concerns are just as important, and not without reason enshrined in international treaties like the Geneva Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. Those treaties prevent governments from closing the doors on unsolicited immigration, even though at times attempts are made to keep the chink as small as possible. In effect, immigration has become part and parcel of the modern world and will not cease until global economic integration and equality have been reached - and even then.

The dominant discourse within some states - like Germany or Austria - has nevertheless been one of denial: "*Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland*" is a phrase until very recently frequently used in a country that at one stage in the 1990s even had about as many immigrants as the United States. In other countries - for instance Sweden, Britain or The Netherlands - in contrast policy makers faced the facts, albeit perhaps grudgingly. In these countries thoughts have been developed on what the presence of newcomers with markedly different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds from the native population might entail, and whether it calls for particular types of policies. Yet another type of response can be found in France. This is, or perhaps better was, a country that for more than a century considered itself to be a country of immigrants. Or perhaps better put: a nation in which it did not matter where your parents came from for all citizens were nonetheless French to the bone.

On the basis of this very broad and simplified overview, a typology of three types of immigration countries can be construed:

- immigration countries with ostrich habits;
- immigration countries who'd prefer not be so, but willing to come to grips with reality;
- immigration countries who believe in the integrating power of their culture and nation.

Others have chosen to classify these differences more elegantly. Following the example of Castles and Miller (1993:39) we can distinguish four ideal types of nationhood - a concept closely related to a State's self-perception - and thus with direct consequences for the notion of who belongs to the nation and under what conditions newcomers can become full members.

The *imperial* model views belonging to a nation "in terms of being a subject of the same power or ruler" (Ibid.). No modern liberal State fits this model but the European past has seen very clear examples in the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman empires. Until the Nationality Act of 1981 also in Britain this type remained formally in operation (Ibid.).

The *ethnic* model, which defines membership of a nation as based upon common roots and destiny, reflected in speaking the same language, having the same culture and hence belonging to the same ethnic community. This then almost by definition excludes newcomers with other cultural traits and different roots from becoming full members. Among the main immigration countries, Germany comes closest to this type, at least until very recently. This became in clear evidence by a reluctance to grant citizenship to all those who are not born out of at least one German parent (the prevalence of the so called *jus sanguinis*, literally 'law of the blood' but perhaps better translated as 'law of descent'). If citizenship is granted through naturalisation this is preferred to be seen as the crown upon a process of (near) assimilation. At the same time, however, large numbers of immigrants arrive who are granted German citizenship the moment they cross the German border. These are the so-called *Aussiedler*, descendants of German colonists who moved to settle in the Eastern parts of Europe in earlier centuries. This illustrates the importance of the country's 'law of descent'. The current government, which entered office late 1998, while maintaining the principle of *jus sanguinis* has developed policies that are more in line with reality. Naturalisation laws have been relaxed, especially for the children of immigrants (grown up in Germany they can opt for German citizenship), and Germany is being quite revolutionary redefined as an immigration country. Even the opposition parties in parliament have embraced this principle.<sup>1</sup> This is not to mean Germany will receive many more immigrants than it does today but the new policies should better accommodate labour market needs, especially for the highly skilled. Nevertheless, the rhetorical change is remarkable.

In the *republican* model belonging to society is predominantly defined as belonging to a political community. Newcomers may then become full members provided they accept to live according to its political rules. Citizenship then is seen as a logical prerequisite towards integration rather than, as is the case in the ethnic model, the final result of that process. In spite of some fluctuations in its policies, France can be considered to be a good example of a State functioning according to this model. This is reflected in its *jus soli*, the 'law of the soil' which grants citizenship not only to children of French descent but also to anyone born on French territory, and by the relative ease with which foreign born immigrants can become citizens. It is further reflected in a strong belief in the assimilating capacities of the French nation and the ensuing lack of any kind of minority based rights or minority targeted policies.

The *multi-cultural* model finally, is based upon the idea that cultural differences within a society are normal. These are not by necessity problematic provided they do not hinder full participation in society's core fields, i.e. in the educational system, on the labour and housing markets, and in democratic decision making processes. To this end, equality before the law needs to be achieved as best and quickly as possible. Uncomplicated citizenship rules are one instrument to achieve this but States functioning according to this model may additionally grant many civil and political rights to foreign nationals making them in those respects almost equal to nationals. The Netherlands, for example, grants local suffrage to non-EU nationals who legally reside in the country for five years.<sup>2</sup> It furthermore has policies explicitly aiming to integrate immigrants and their descendants, whereby being integrated is defined as having equal access to society's resources and institutions. Assimilation is no policy goal, instead provisions are present to facilitate the institutionalisation of the immigrants' culture and religion.

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<sup>1</sup> The present opposition consists, among others, of the Christian Democrats and the Liberals who, between 1982 and 1998, constituted the German government. It was this government that maintained that Germany is not a country of immigration – making this sudden change in stance rather remarkable.

<sup>2</sup> The right to vote and stand as candidate for provincial and national elections is still seen as the privilege of nationals.

One might expect each of these types of countries to have different policies when it comes to issues pertaining to the integration of newcomers, or even no policies in case a nation simply fails to perceive newcomers in need of integration. This also implies that the objective position of immigrants compared to the native population might be different as a result of those different policies. Why not put this simple hypothesis to the test? To this end we shall look at integration policies in France, Germany and The Netherlands and briefly discuss the position of immigrants in those countries. While not excluding other ethnic groups, doing so we concentrate our attention on Turkish immigrants and their descendants.<sup>3</sup> This choice is inspired by the fact that they arrived at around the same time and for the same original reason, i.e. as industrial workers. Moreover, immigrants from Turkey are present in considerable numbers in all three countries; whereby it should be noted that the numbers are by far the largest in Germany. In the latter country, with just over two million persons, they account for about 2.5% of the country's population. France and The Netherlands are home to slightly under and above 200.000 Turkish immigrants respectively. These figures, it should be noted, are distorted by the fact that in France they pertain to non-nationals (many immigrants will have become French nationals) whereas Dutch statistics include every person born in Turkey, regardless of nationality.

### **Integration**

Before we go on, we need to establish what we mean when we use the term integration. As Böhning (1995) noted, it can both refer to a state of being and to the process towards it. The state of being integrated we may define as a situation in which immigrants and their descendants hold a position, which is similar to natives with comparable and relevant characteristics; notably in terms of age, education, and gender. Such a definition is not necessarily embraced by all observers, but would seem a sensible one for our present purpose. The term assimilation we then reserve for a situation wherein citizens of foreign descent are not in any way 'detectable' in society other than perhaps by their surname, nor view themselves in any way as members of a group originating abroad.<sup>4</sup>

The process of integration should not be seen as a one way street. Like we know from our chemistry lessons in school, elements can be combined into products but those can also, by means of a catalyst, again be separated. For the social sciences we might for such a process conveniently use the label "disintegration".

### **Integration policies**

Integration policies can be examined along two dimensions: the subjects and the fields aimed at. As to the subjects, a distinction can be made between general and targeted policies (or in Hammar's (1985) terms: direct and indirect immigrant policies). The first type of policy addresses all persons within the population with certain characteristics; e.g. being deprived or marginalised, or running the risk of becoming so. The second type of policy singles out specific categories of people; e.g. immigrants and their descendants in general or from certain countries of origin in particular.

When it comes to the fields policies may aim at the most commonly targeted field is the labour market. With the possible exception of people born rich or otherwise economically well off, being integrated in the labour market determines to a considerable extent a person's integration in most, if not all, other spheres of society. Besides the financial aspects of being economically active, work constitutes an important element in the individual's sense of purpose and structures day-to-day live. From any government's point of view, moreover, it is costly to support people who cannot take

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<sup>3</sup> Many of the data presented here are also found, and in much greater detail, in Doornik 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Good examples are found in Germany where a surname ending in -ski signifies Polish roots or in the Netherlands where French names are not uncommon and descending from Huguenots resettling during the 17th century.

care of themselves; under- or unemployment means a waste of human capital; and unemployment may destabilise society's social fabric.

In addition to integration policies aimed at the labour market, governments may also try to support and encourage the integration of immigrants (or other potentially or actually marginalised persons) in other fields. As pointed out, there are more or less direct links between housing, schooling and income, and governments may assume that once the latter is taken care of, integration in other fields should be an automatic consequence. In practice this link is not mono-dimensional and, moreover, is not instantaneous. Place of residence, for example, may determine a person's access to employment and/or upward mobility. One needs only imagine a situation where large numbers of disadvantaged people are housed together in sub-urban areas with no or few industries, with no or few direct transportation links to the city centre or other parts of town where employment could be found, and, as a consequence of the general low income situation, little retail or other economic activities within the area itself. This example is not as hypothetical as it may sound<sup>5</sup> but more common are situations where some kind of geographical clustering of disadvantaged persons - among whom immigrants are often disproportionately found - occurs, especially in the larger cities. This then may cause governments, be it local, provincial or national, to devise measures by which to increase the chances for proper education for second generation immigrants<sup>6</sup> that might as a result of the low income, poor education and lack of language abilities of their parents otherwise remain beyond their reach. Another type of policy may be aimed at providing good quality housing as such or at trying to move poor housed people into other neighbourhoods; perhaps dispersing them, in the hope of increasing their integration.

In addition to policies that address the integration into the core fields of society, governments may also seek to intervene in the realm of religion and culture. In some States (notably those based upon the republican ideal) these aspects are left completely to the private sphere, whereas in others (those embracing the multicultural ideal) governments may perceive the need for an active (or at least facilitating) role. Examples from the Netherlands are numerous, for instance state subsidies for Islamic and Hindu public broadcasting companies and state funded Islamic and Hindu public schools. Furthermore, local and national government see religious immigrant organisations as discussion partners on an equal footing with other types of organisations.<sup>7</sup>

The above makes clear that integration can be measured in a whole range of areas, including those often associated with questions pertaining to mono- or multi-cultural society. Interesting as those might be it would seem doubtful if, for instance, it is always relevant whether immigrants have adopted the food preferences of their host society, its liking for particular types of music and literature or of the nationally preferred soap opera. Neither is crucial whether they support Arsenal, Ajax, FC Bayern, Olympic Marseille or Galatasaray for the UEFA-cup. Even though anthropologists may not fully agree when we discount those types of adaptation, one will agree that the well being of immigrants *and* that of the receiving society first of all depends on such key issues like employment

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<sup>5</sup> The suburbs around many of the main French cities, and the housing estates around the larger Scottish cities are some European examples that spring to mind.

<sup>6</sup> At times a confusing and inaccurate term. The second generation may be considered to consist of people born in the country where their parents resettled and therefore are strictly speaking not immigrants. Furthermore, in many instances these children are citizens of the receiving State and not foreigners. Depending on the definition, second-generation immigrants may also be the children born abroad of the original immigrants but immigrating as minors and not on their own initiative.

<sup>7</sup> Each nationality has its own advisory council to the government, in which various types of organisations (labour, religion, sports etc.) work together.

and education (see also Böhning 1996). To expand on our earlier example: Being in employment hands an individual the means by which to acquire decent housing in a desirable neighbourhood, which again determines where his or her children go to school. Whether this is a school populated with disadvantaged children, perhaps with the same ethnic background, or one with children from a diversity of backgrounds can be, though should not by definition be, crucial in determining whether a child can develop its full intellectual potential. In other words: in this field it is determined whether immigrant communities will turn into long lasting ethnic minorities who can not escape their poverty trap. For the same reason, one may want to be cautious when it comes to discussions on multiculturalism when they fail to address the core issue. Once integration into society's core fields has been completed one may doubt whether the question as to whether our societies have become multicultural holds still much interest. We may have gained a couple of new religions and a host of new tastes in food but that would be about it. This does not mean, however, that a nation's commitment to accepting diversity is not crucial. It definitely is, but not, as shall be demonstrated, in the way often thought. Catering for cultural and social diversity will more quickly and easily result in a society with a high level of social cohesion than policies explicitly aiming for cultural uniformity and assimilation.

### France

Policies towards legal immigrants basically are inclusive and based upon the republican ideal of *liberté, égalité et fraternité*. For the century or so preceding the 1970s this stance was complemented with a liberal immigration regime. As to integrating newcomers, two mean strategies have until this day been employed: easy access to all political rights by an active naturalisation policy towards legally residing foreigners, and a firm believe in the assimilationist capacities of the French nation. This believe remained unchallenged until about the 1970s when the immigrant population began to change in character. Previously, immigrants had predominantly come from surrounding countries like Italy, Spain and Portugal and their integration into the labour market had posed few problems. This was different with subsequent immigration from Northern Africa, and also, though the numbers were smaller, from Turkey. The oil crises had substantially limited the need for un- and semiskilled workers, making the economic integration of those newcomers problematic. An additional 'problem' was that their religion (Islam) and other cultural properties set them aside from mainstream society more than had been the case with the Southern European immigrants, who predominantly had been Roman Catholics, like the native French population. The republican model under those circumstances was not as able to assimilate these newcomers as it had been in earlier eras.

From the viewpoint of the immigrants, the assimilationist tradition collided with their desire to retain and build upon their religion, a desire doubtlessly reinforced by their lagging economic integration. This mismatch between the expectations of the French State towards those immigrants and their own ambitions and needs, has for the past decades remained a large source of contention. Especially among young people, usually born and bred in France, dissatisfaction has become in evidence. The fact that French urban areas know a high level of geographical segregation (Thave 1999) whereby immigrants and their descendants are often found in high rise suburbs – the *banlieux* – exacerbates dissatisfaction. Spells of unrest and clashes with the police (sometimes culminating in fatal casualties) are not unknown. But also the wearing of a headscarf by schoolgirls meets with strong reactions from the side of the French authorities. The Front National's electoral appeal also seems by and large to lie in its anti-Islamic and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

The policy response has been to improve living conditions in the *banlieux*, invest in schools in deprived areas and youth schemes. Those policies, though as a result of ethnic segregation factually benefiting immigrants and their descendants to a much larger extend than native French people, are of a general nature.

In addition to cultural 'distance' between the French native population and Muslim newcomers the labour market position of many immigrants, not just of the Turks,<sup>8</sup> has remained precarious until this day. Unemployment among Turkish immigrants currently (i.e. according to the 1995 figures) stands at close to 30% for men and 45% for females. Among natives the employment rate lies at 12% (INSEE 1997). Figures for 1999 do not differentiate sufficiently between countries of origin to follow up on the unemployment rate for Turkish immigrants but do show a wide discrepancy between immigrants (i.e. foreign born persons) and French native born workers. Just over 20% of all immigrants were unemployed, among those Moroccans stand out with around a 32% unemployment rate for males and approximately 44% for females.<sup>9</sup>

The fact that French statistics only provide for a crude indicator of the position of members of ethnic communities in economic or other terms, forms an excellent illustration of French traditions. The term immigrant is, both in those statistics and policy making, and etymologically correct, reserved for those persons who are born abroad. As far as this principle stresses equality before the law, few will argue against that. However, it also ignores cultural differences between individuals and communities and the objective fact that some or even many persons, even though equal before the law, do not enjoy the same opportunities to fully participate in society. In other words, by emphasising the presumed assimilationist qualities of French society, the interests of immigrants and especially their descendants and others who do either not want to assimilate into mainstream French society or, perhaps more seriously, are not equipped to do so, remain out of reach of official policies.

In short: economic integration in France remains as yet a problem and social cohesion is at risk due to the State's inability (or perhaps unwillingness) to accommodate cultural difference.

## Germany

We already saw that German political discourse has for a very long time been based on a strict denial of the facts, i.e. when it comes to immigration. The effect of a policy myth is not likely to disappear as quickly as the current government's (and opposition's) 180 degree turn in rhetoric. It would be too simple, however, to conclude that the German government in the past did not intervene when it comes to the integration of immigrants.

National policies<sup>10</sup> on integration have always been strictly related to economic participation – the new proposed immigration legislation being no different.

After the ban on recruitment following the economic downturn of the early 1970s, many Turkish immigrants returned home, either because they lost their jobs and residence permit, or on their own initiative, or because they were included in a remigration scheme (with financial incentives). Even today, being unemployed for a prolonged period of time puts the residence status at risk of most non-EU immigrants (this does not pertain to foreigners who have been admitted under international obligations; e.g. as refugees) who have not yet attained an establishment permit - which applies to a mere 26% of the Turks (Groenendijk et. al 1998). Naturalisation has for a long time been very difficult to achieve for the German government was of the opinion that it should be the crown upon a completed integration, or in effect even assimilation, process and not, like in France, the beginning of a more complete integration. At least partly due to this prolonged exclusion in legal terms, the unemployment rate among Turks in Germany is comparatively low, though very clearly on the increase (from 14.5% in 1986 to 22.5% in 1996 while for the entire labour force this level lies at 11.2%). Simply put, an immigrant either accepts any employment, however dirty, dangerous and

<sup>8</sup> Many North Africans are, of always have been, French nationals and therefore not statistically traceable.

<sup>9</sup> Deducted from a graph 3 in Thave 2000.

<sup>10</sup> The individual States that together constitute the Federal Republic have a considerable amount of autonomy when it comes to policies regarding cultural issues. This is something left out in this overview.

poorly paid, or returns home. German policies have thus succeeded in 'exporting' potential unemployment to Turkey.

Policies in the field of integration are, not surprisingly, aimed at the labour market. Unemployed immigrants are included on a non-discriminatory basis in schemes to reintegrate them into the labour market. Yet, they are also time and again reminded of the possibility to return to their country of origin.

Even among young people this principle seems to create unrest. Or as the German Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs puts it:

*Whereas the numbers of young people who want to return decreased between 1979 and 1989 from 29.6% to 5.6%, the numbers of youngsters who are not yet sure increased: without plans or with the intention to stay on for a couple of years are **more than 60% of the respondents. This is extraordinary because many of those are born and bred here** (my emphasis) (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung 1995, 74).*

In the field of cultural diversity the German government prefers to keep itself aloof for the country is fundamentally German and should in no way become multi-cultural. Islam is not generally recognised on the same basis as 'native' religions like Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Institutions representing those latter two religions are granted – by the country's constitution – substantial influence in many spheres of society: the State collects their taxes, they have a voice in the boards of the public broadcasting services, can organise their own schools, etc. Similar claims from Islamic organisations have always been rejected with the argument that they only qualify for similar recognition once they have formed a church-like institution (Doomernik 1995). For a religion that stands out by its lack of hierarchy, this is a demand nearly impossible to fulfil, which is a cause of serious frustration among German Muslims – predominantly of Turkish origin.

During the early 1990s the annual number of immigrants (non-nationals) lay at about one million. Including the ethnic Germans - *Aussiedler* – that number increases with another two hundred thousand. And today still the numbers of immigrants are considerable (2000: about seven hundred thousand).<sup>11</sup> In effect: Germany is one of the most significant immigration countries in today's world. The official denial of this fact has, at least in my view, done much to incite the unrest and race centred violence among – small – parts of the native population, the pictures of which went around the globe. If governments proclaim a "truth" that every man can easily falsify, its legitimacy as the representative of public interest is seriously undermined. In this particular instance, Neo-Nazis and other racists are given the opportunity to claim their violent actions to be merely putting the action to the words spoken by main stream politicians.

In short: German migration policies have long been able to keep the unemployment levels among Turkish immigrants low but disintegration on the labour market has become in evidence. Perhaps even much clearer, and more relevant in this context, is that a permanent denial of the facts has put a serious burden on social cohesion.

## Netherlands

After the oil crises, the Dutch government held the view that further immigration should be as minimal as possible. At the same time it came to the conclusion that those migrants who would like to return home should be assisted whereas those who preferred to stay should be integrated as best as possible. There also were no serious attempts to curtail the immigration of family members of those

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<sup>11</sup> To be sure: the number of departing foreigners is considerable too, putting net-migration at a much lower level (see Walwei 2001).

who stayed and settled. In due course, the immigration policies came to resemble those of France: an establishment permit after five years of legal residence (regardless of whether a person is in employment or not) and relative easy access to citizenship (about half of all former Turkish nationals now holds a Dutch passport) in order to stimulate the migrants to participate in all spheres of society. In contrast to France, cultural diversity is explicitly applauded. The Dutch government nowadays officially considers the country to have become multicultural. This is less surprising as it may seem as The Netherlands has a tradition of managing cultural differences as a consociational democracy; a system akin to the parallel inclusion of minority groups but with a joint roof (parliament) where those decisions affecting all are made (Lijphart 1977).

Decision-making has always required compromise as no party (each representing one of the minorities: liberal and conservative protestants, Roman Catholics, liberals, and social democrats) is large enough to dominate all the others. This meant that if the State was required to fund a particular kind of institution for one minority, the others demanded parity. Especially during the first half of the 20th century this principle resulted for instance in large numbers of catholic and protestant hospitals, schools (even at the university level the consequences could be seen), and later on broadcasting time on state radio and television became equally divided. Even though cultural differences among the native population have lost most of their relevance, especially within politics, the legal framework intended to accommodate such differences is still in place. As a result The Netherlands today knows a large number of Islamic, and some Hindu, primary schools and an Islamic and a Hindu broadcasting corporation; all of which is paid for by the State. Neither the French nor the German government would contemplate the possibility of such institutionalisation.

Catering for cultural difference can even be considered to have been the spearhead of Dutch integration policies during the 1980s. However, during the past decade or so, policies have moved into the direction of general ones aimed to assist all members of society who are disadvantaged or are at risk of becoming so. Especially under the current government, these policies are matched with a strong advocacy for full participation for *all*, the right to be different and the value this adds to society. The term currently employed is 'citizenship', *burgerschap*, not in its legal meaning but to stress the rights and obligations all legally resident persons have towards each other and society at large.<sup>12</sup> In addition, anti-discrimination policies are well developed, not just in legal terms but also by stimulating local initiatives and public relations campaigns.

Whether this is an effect of those policies or a particular trait of Dutch society is difficult to establish, it is nevertheless important to note that ethnically motivated violence is very rare in The Netherlands, especially compared to France or Germany.

Looking at the labour market, however, disintegration has long been in clear evidence, probably even to a larger extent than in France and most certainly in Germany. In 1994 the unemployment rate among Turks<sup>13</sup> stood at 30% and their net participation rate was very low, whereas unemployment among natives was 7%. Due to high levels of economic growth, the past few years have seen a steady decline in unemployment rates (in 1999 it had dropped to 13% among Turks and 3% among natives) and a gradual increase in net participation rates among members of ethnic minority groups can be observed (figures from CBS 2000). Whether this represents a genuine reversal of the disintegration trend or is largely the result of near full employment can only be established with some certainty when the next economic downturn sets in.

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<sup>12</sup> Recent newcomers are, wherever relevant, under a legal obligation to follow integration courses (language training but also in order to learn the basic facts about Dutch society). These are called *inburgeringscursus*.

<sup>13</sup> Meaning persons either being born in Turkey or born in The Netherlands having at least one Turkish born parent.

In the field of labour market integration the policy reaction has not only been defined in general but also in specific terms. From the 1970s onwards national and other public authorities have pursued preferential hiring practices (including for women). In order to stimulate similar behaviour among other employers, during the 1990s two laws were passed (the second being a rejuvenation of the first law) basically requiring employers to monitor the ethnic composition of their labour force and make them sensitive to the need for it to be diverse.<sup>14</sup> Although evaluation of these policies is pending, it is safe to assume that their impact is relatively small.

In short: The Netherlands has developed a policy aimed at inclusion of those who have legally settled,<sup>15</sup> even at great economic cost, and of accommodating differences. Policy responses are of a general nature, yet based upon the multi-cultural ideal, unless these are seen to be insufficiently effective. Nevertheless, among Turks and most other immigrant groups unemployment is still rather high but so has remained social cohesion.

### Synthesis and conclusions

One main difference between the three countries discussed used to lie in the realm of immigration policies, i.e. those by which a government defines who can find legal residence within its borders, for what duration and to what end. Yet convergence has become in clear evidence, especially by the German government's fundamental policy changes. This convergence is likely to develop further with the continued integration of the European Union, not in the least while the intention has been formulated to arrive at uniform immigration policies in the foreseeable future. However, what would seem at least as important is not what governments' policies in this field are but how they are discussed in public. It is, for instance, important to realise that Germany, now it has officially become an immigration country, is unlikely to have much more immigration than it previously did. Yet, if a country's elite time and again stresses the fact that immigrants are basically unwelcome this sets a fundamentally different tone compared to when a government gives off more moderate signals or goes as far as to applaud the arrival of newcomers and new cultures.

Contrary to our assumption, we found few differences in active integration policies: in all cases the labour market and - something we have not touched upon: the educational system - stands central. In those fields general policies are the rule in all three countries. But, we did see that there are major differences between States in the ways they take account of cultural diversity; i.e. France and Germany on the one hand and The Netherlands on the other. Those differences seem to be first and foremost the consequences of tradition and hardly of long term, pro-active, thinking. Maybe, they nevertheless show us the direction into which such thinking should go.

Still, for the time being in all three countries we witness trends of disintegration. For the first generation of Turkish immigrants labour market disintegration, though at varying rates, is in clear evidence. Yet, the labour market position of Turks in Germany is considerably better than that of their compatriots in France and, until very recently, in The Netherlands.

If we look for possible explanations for this disintegration trend, the most obvious one is a mismatch between labour market needs and labour supply. Many of the jobs the guest worker generation came to fulfil have disappeared. This is especially in evidence in The Netherlands where the economy has made a strong shift away from labour intensive production towards the service industries. Only few of the former guest workers were able to find a new job in these new types of

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<sup>14</sup> Establishing ethnicity is on the basis of the employee's self-definition.

<sup>15</sup> At the same time migrants who have not been granted the right to settle are vigorously excluded from all claims to public resources by means of the 1998 *Koppelingswet*, which requires all service providers to check upon every client's residence status. This law has sparked many discussions and some municipalities have refused to withdraw the social security benefits of illegal residents.

industry; due to lacking skills and language deficiencies. As a result many became long-term unemployed or left the labour market all together. Turkish immigrants of a later date did to some extent manage to find employment in the service sector but, again, did not have the skills that qualified them for management positions. For those who were educated in The Netherlands, the story is a different one. Provided, of course, their educational levels are at par with those of their native peer group.

Yet, this does not mean that we can reduce the trends we have observed to a mere sum of economic needs and labour supply. Time and again it has been empirically established, for instance through situation testing commissioned by the International Labour Office's migration branch in Germany (Goldberg et. al 1996), The Netherlands (Bovenkerk et. al 1995), Belgium (Arriijn Iisa et. al 1998), and Spain (Colectivo IOE 1996) that discrimination may seriously impede the labour market access of members of minority groups and immigrants. Analyses of secondary sources for the United States (Bendick, Jr 1996) and the United Kingdom (Wrench & Madood 2001), including the results from situation testing, lead to the same conclusion. The methodology used in this type of testing is basically very simple: have two candidates apply for a job (or for renting an apartment) whose objective properties differ in only one respect: their ethnic origin. If the candidate with the native background is significantly more often hired (or let the apartment) than the other candidate discrimination is in evidence. Of course, the hiring stage is usually left out of the testing and a first positive or negative reaction on the side of an employer (or landlord) is used as benchmark. What comes out of all these experiments unequivocally is that discrimination is a feature of our societies. It should be pointed out though that not in all cases the same extent of discrimination could be established: some ethnic groups are more likely to be viewed negatively than others. In The Netherlands, for instance, Moroccans appear to suffer more from discrimination than Turks or people from the former colonies do.

Another factor one should keep in mind when looking at unemployment statistics is continued immigration. It is not easy to establish who the unemployed are, recently arrived newcomers with few language skills or permanently marginalised long ago settled migrants. Put differently, a constant stream of newcomers who need to be integrated economically keeps unemployment by definition high if there is no immediate labour market need for their arrival.

On the one hand the impact of continuing immigration could be construed as an argument for restrictive policies. On the other hand we should not be so sure. If we compare German policies with the Dutch ones, we find a paradox. In Germany the government appears to have been able to keep unemployment among Turks low by tying residence permits to being in employment, forcing migrants to either go back to Turkey or accept any job offered to them, however unpleasant, unhealthy or poorly paid. In The Netherlands a secure residence status is fairly easy to attain, and as a rule not dependent on one's economic position. This is part of Dutch policies aimed at inclusion. The German policy has always been aimed at long-term exclusion except of those who are considered to be German (like the so called *Aussiedler*) or, under certain conditions, those who aspire to assimilate. It doesn't seem far-fetched to assume a direct link here between those policies and the extent to which ethnic violence occurs: in Germany this is a common feature of everyday life, in The Netherlands such violence is extremely rare. In other words: exclusionary policies may well be beneficial in short term economic terms but undermine social cohesion in the longer run whereas inclusionary policies are beneficial for society's cohesion but economically expensive in the short and medium run.

A last important aspect we should consider is the effect of levels of learning, especially that of the first generation. One should bear in mind that many of the original immigrants enjoyed little education. In fact, especially among Moroccan immigrants who came to The Netherlands, a large number has not learned to read or write. Among Turkish immigrants illiteracy is less common yet

levels of education are generally low (primary education). It is then perhaps not surprising that their children do not equally participate in the system of higher education. Indeed, the emancipation of the native working classes did not come about in a single generation either. As mentioned in the introduction, cultural difference should not be discounted for, but the conclusion seems justified that class differences are by far the most important factor determining the present and future position of immigrants and their descendants.

Now if the above is true, what types of policies would be most likely to facilitate intergenerational mobility? Obviously, these are those policies that reduce or remove obstacles. And those are located not just in the realm of integration policies but also are found in the field of what we would call immigration policies: policies that are about access and settlement. And they are about the allocation of rights. In Scandinavia and The Netherlands we usually agree on the principle that a settled immigrant should basically have the same rights as citizens, with the exception of full suffrage. This is different in many other countries and for this reason we nevertheless will spell them out.

First: a secure residence status after a relative brief period of time (say 3 to 5 years) which means protection against the threat of expulsion, regardless of whether one is employed or not.

Second: the right to family reunification with no discriminatory provisions attached to it (i.e. provisions that are reserved for aliens) and no limits as to a minimum or maximum of duration of legal residence within which reunification should take place. This principle is cemented in the European Convention on Human Rights but governments in the past have sought to be as conservative as possible in their interpretation of this basic right;

Third: the right to vote in local elections for holders of a permanent establishment permit;

Fourth: the right to acquire citizenship once the immigrant is in the possession of a permanent establishment permit;

It typically are societies who label themselves as multicultural that have policies granting those rights mentioned above. Admittedly, France also comes near in its immigration practice but evidently not in the domain of integration or the discourse surrounding it. Germany very clearly until very recently did not.

And then there are some rights currently not endowed upon foreigners, neither in multicultural nor in assimilationist states, that one may also want to address:

- the extension of the rights of free movement within the EU currently reserved for citizens of member States to those immigrants who hold a permanent establishment permit. The European Union's Tampere summit of Autumn 1999 did address the topic but consensus on the matter seems to remain as far away as it has been for years.
- the right for those who want to migrate back to their country of origin or to a third country to retain an establishment permit (and hence the option to return) for a meaningful period of time.

Both these rights would greatly increase the mobility of migrants not just within Europe but also between Europe and the countries of origin. For the restrictions we have now in place first and foremost put a premium on staying, regardless of the question whether this is beneficial to either the migrant or the state where he or she has settled.

Furthermore, governments should in every way possible combat irrational discrimination in all fields of society. The necessary basis for this has to be provided for by means of a comprehensive

body of legal provisions, both in civil and in penal law.<sup>16</sup> This has to be backed with sufficient and suitable means by which to implement these provisions; e.g. low thresholds for complainants to claim their right to equal treatment, and effective law enforcement. This again is a stance not difficult to defend in multicultural societies, though it should be mentioned that a number of countries have not as yet implemented anti-discrimination legislation to the full. France and Germany have no specific legislation against racial discrimination.

Lastly, and we can be brief about this point as it was brought up earlier, it seems to pay for governments to be as open as possible when it comes to accommodating ethnic or cultural differences. Provided governments manage to unequivocally state this as a policy aim, for instance, by defining the country as multi-cultural, such a stance will greatly increase the well being of immigrant communities and, when managed carefully, not alienate the native population. The paradoxical outcome could well be that by such a policy chance, which would to a large extent, though definitely not just, be a rhetorical one, is near assimilation. Stressing the need for assimilation, in contrast, may well have the opposite effect.

The interesting thing about all the policy elements listed is that they incur virtually no costs and basically just require a change in attitude and legislation. In fact, perhaps one should be cautious to demand of States that they bring about the integration of newcomers by financial means. Obviously, making available language courses, professional training and the like is necessary but, at the end of the day, removing those obstacles that unduly hinder individuals in the development of their full potential needs to come first and foremost. And this, by the way, does not just pertain to immigrants.

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<sup>16</sup> The burden of proof in civil law lies considerably lower than in penal law and hence often is a more useful tool for combating everyday types of racial/ethnic discrimination.

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