

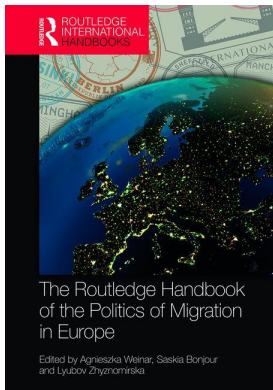
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Publisher: *Routledge*

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The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of Migration in Europe

Agnieszka Weinar, Saskia Bonjour, Lyubov Zhyznomirska

Family migration and membership

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315512853-18>

Anne-Marie D'Aoust

Published online on: 09 Jul 2018

How to cite :- Anne-Marie D'Aoust. 09 Jul 2018, *Family migration and membership from: The Routledge Handbook of the Politics of Migration in Europe* Routledge

Accessed on: 27 Sep 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315512853-18>

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FAMILY MIGRATION AND
MEMBERSHIP*Anne-Marie D'Aoust***Introduction**

Asylum-seeking families leaving war-torn Syria risking their lives on precarious rafts to reach the shores of Europe, skilled migrants sponsoring their spouses after a few months of work in a high-tech company, first generation migrants sponsoring grandparents left abroad to ensure daycare to their children, and European citizens applying for a fiancé visa to sponsor a man or a woman they fell in love with while away on vacation: family migration to Europe has many faces, and encompasses different stories of love, care, hope and resilience.

The very notion of 'family migration' is not a neutral category: it first and foremost points to a bureaucratic categorization implicitly opposed to 'labor migration'. Naturally, this division does violence to the complexity of migrants' lived experiences: why could you not be a wife, a parent and a worker (Piper and Roces 2003)? The category of family migration becomes even more politically charged when one is confronted with the question of who counts as family, and who can be recognized as such for immigration purposes. Can unofficially adopted children of a Muslim couple or a same-sex partner of three years count as family member? How about grandparents, or even aunts and uncles? These questions highlight that who becomes part of a family unit, and which network of people can be considered as such, is closely tied to state power.

For immigration purposes, who you are according to a state's definition of a family member matters more than blood relations, official marriage ceremonies, registered civil unions or caregiving relations. People are granted or denied entry based on a complex web of state recognitions. Grandparents can be considered eligible (e.g. Spain) or non-eligible (e.g. Italy, Austria) for family reunification in Europe, depending on the country of application. In Canada, failure to declare the existence a biological child living abroad (whether the child accompanies the applicant or not) when first applying for a visa means that the child will not be considered as a family member. He or she will thus be non-eligible for family reunification later, independently of proven biological relationships.

Variations about who should be included in the category of family migration also represent a challenge for researchers who aim to study family migration in Europe in a comparative fashion, as each country accounts for family migrants differently (Chaloff 2013). The Netherlands, for instance, distinguishes between family formation and family reunification when

processing visa applications, whereas other European countries like France or Germany do not. Similarly, the accompanying family members of a successful refugee applicant or the accompanying spouses of workers can either be counted as part of family migration, humanitarian migration or labour migration statistics, depending on the countries surveyed, and the categories used.

Given such fluctuation from one country to another, this contribution does not and cannot do justice to the complexity of all instances of family migration policy in Europe. Such a colossal task would require familiarity with the legal intricacies of each receiving country, and the legal framework of the European Union (EU) affecting them (for an overview, see Kraler 2010 and De Bruycker 2013; Groenendijk 2006). Instead, I propose to undertake an assessment of key issues and approaches used in interdisciplinary studies of family migration policy.

To do so, I first discuss the recent literature surge on family reunification policy in Europe, before addressing how the nuclear family constitutes the implicit norm regulating family migration. I then move on to address the tension between the normative principle of a human right to family life, and the concrete applications of this principle, which lead to a stratification of family migration rights. From there, the third section explores how the politics of belonging pertaining to family migration in Europe hinge on formal legal status as much as on socio-economic status and on racialized conceptions of (national) identity. Finally, I conclude by examining more specifically how, of all possible forms of family migrations, marriage migration (especially forced marriages and marriages of convenience) has been singled out as a 'problem' that needs to be addressed in several European countries.

Family migration in Europe: a burgeoning field

The explosion of the literature on family migration in Europe in the past fifteen years is noteworthy. Eleonore Kofman's 2004 review of family migration and European studies offers no equivocation on the paucity of scholarly engagements at the time: 'Despite being the dominants mode of legal entry for the past two decades in European Union states, the study of family migration has been marginalized theoretically, methodologically and empirically' (Kofman 2004: 243). An intriguing aspect of this literature surge is its convergence around the geographical spaces of Scandinavia and Western Europe (see Ambrosini, Bonizzoni and Triandafylidou 2014 on Southern Europe). This focus can notably be explained by the fact that policies pertaining to marriage migration have been the harshest in some of these countries, such as Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, thus leading to increased critical academic scrutiny. In contrast to proactive political scrutiny of family migration in Western and Northern Europe, the authors note that migration controls in Southern Europe have been characterized by 'a reactive (rather than proactive) approach' and that 'family reunification and family formation migration stand out as the smooth, regulated, legal, and accepted immigration flow' (Ambrosini, Bonizzoni and Triandafylidou 2014: 368).

From an academic perspective, this increased attention on family migration in general can be explained by 'a heightened sensitivity towards gender and generational issues, or the progressive spread of a transnational approach in analysing migration dynamics' (ibid.). From a policy perspective, one can pinpoint Europeanization processes that created some harmonization between national policies and norms aimed at tackling family reunification (Wray, Agoston and Hutton 2014). This harmonization process has created various outcomes, such as more restrictive policies in some countries, and less restrictive ones in others. A key study by Block and Bonjour (2013) on the Europeanization of family reunification notably suggests that states instrumentalized Europeanization (state-led Europeanization) to align it with a more conservative agenda, hence indirectly contributing 'to a race to the bottom among Member States' (ibid.: 223). Still,

an increase in standardization practices or Europeanization processes should not hide important divergences in policies regulating partner and family migration between Eastern and Western Europe or Northern and Southern Europe (for more on this, see Kraler 2010).

The literature on family migration in Europe seems especially thriving from a North American perspective. Analysis explicitly focused on family migration policies in Canada and the United States is limited compared to labour migration (but see Liew, Balasundaram and Stone 2016; Neborak 2013; VanderPlaat 2006).

Family reunification and stratified regimes of rights

Family migration draws attention to the moral and political ordering of the state, but also to marriage and the family as no less political institutions than the state itself. According to Ralph Grillo, the hegemonic conception of what family consists of in a national community has two important consequences for migrants seeking family reunification. First, an ideal (deemed to be European) model of the nuclear family might be promoted by policymakers 'to judge qualification for entry ... even though such a model fails to acknowledge alternative constructions of family relations' (2008: 16). Second, using the nuclear family as the backbone of family migration policies sets a double standard: European family structures have become more complex and acknowledged in their diversity, whereas migrants are held to a constraining standard of what a 'real' marriage or a 'real family' should look like (*ibid.*: 17). As the nuclear family has become a marker of rights for family migrants in Europe (Mustasaari 2015), analyses have been attuned to implicit norms promoted through family reunification policies that partake in the politics of membership.

In a concise presentation of the various legal frameworks shaping family reunification in Europe, Schweitzer reminds us 'that no international agreement or court ruling establishes reunification as an absolute right [Lahav 1997], or specifically recognizes an automatic obligation for states to respect a migrant family's choice of country of residence under Art. 8 ECHR [European Court of Human Rights]' (2015: 2134). We must thus juggle with the ambiguity resulting from the discrepancy existing between the normative principle of a human right to family life, and the concrete applications of this principle in all their national variations. There is no right to family reunification: there is a right to family life, which must be balanced against the right of the state to regulate immigration. For instance, an application for family reunification in Great Britain between a British citizen and his or her Brazilian partner might be denied, with the claim that this denial of family reunification still does not prevent the couple from having a family life – albeit in Brazil.

Furthermore, in the European context, EU law entails that European Economic Area (EEA) citizens who have exercised their right to free movement to any EU country benefit from the right to family reunification independently of national regulations, even with their non-EU and non-EEA spouses. By contrast, citizens found in 'purely internal situations', i.e. who have not moved to another EU country, cannot rely on free movement rights and their afferent right to family to reunite with their spouses and partners. Rather, they must abide by strict national regulations that weigh their rights to family life against state interests. The result has been what several commentators have labelled a situation of reverse discrimination (Berneri 2014), wherein citizens wishing to be reunited with a family member from outside the EU face many more hurdles than a EU citizen who has exercised her right to free movement in the same citizen's country, and who also wishes to be reunited with a non-EU spouse.

When it comes to family reunification in Europe, Staver (2013) argues that four regimes of rights run parallel and must be acknowledged: 'a national rule for citizens who do not move,

EU rules for citizens who move within Europe, the Family Reunification Directive for third-country nationals in the EU, and since 2011, family reunification rights based on EU citizenship status' (Staver 2013: 69). Inside each of these legal regimes, elements affecting the recognition of who is a partner or not and who can be granted which rights include (but are not limited to) the relationship's status (cohabitantes, long-term partners, registered partners, fiancés, spouses, etc.), sexual orientations (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, queer, etc.) the enactment of free movements rights (or not) as EU citizens, and formal status as citizens, residents or third-country nationals. If we add to these criteria other markers of belonging such as religion, ethnic background, family ties between the family reunification applicants (such as second degree cousins), education degree or socioeconomic status, we quickly see why theories of citizenship and civic stratification have become privileged theoretical framework of analysis to understand family migration in Europe (see the extensive literature review done by Bonjour and Block 2016; Bonjour and Kraler 2015; Kraler 2010; Schweitzer 2015). As the booming literature on family migration in Europe shows, this stratification results from an increase towards more selective (rather than simply restrictive) policies that create an 'heterogeneity of non-citizen statuses' (Schweitzer 2015: 2133) rather than denizens.

Beyond citizenry: family migration, citizenship and belonging

Ultimately, when it comes to the right to family reunification, '[t]he more the person requesting family reunification is considered an insider, a 'member' who belongs to the nation, the stronger his or her claim to be entitled to live his or her family life on national territory' (Bonjour and Kraler 2015: 1412–1413). Different theoretical takes on belonging and citizenship have been proposed to account for and critically assess the power to define and enforce inclusion, rights, responsibilities and protection that citizens and non-citizens alike can benefit from. Governmentality frameworks (D'Aoust 2014; Turner 2015), as well as securitization theory (D'Aoust 2013; Innes and Steele 2015) have been deployed to that end. However, theoretical frameworks focused on street-levels bureaucrats (Infantino 2014; Lavanchy 2013) and bureaucratic theories (Eggebo 2013a; Lavanchy 2015; Pellander 2016), as well as citizenship theories have by far dominated theoretical reflections.

Critical reviews of citizenship theories have been proposed (Bonjour and Block 2016), and new analytical takes that can better account for the stratification of rights resulting from family reunification policies have been applied, such as sexual citizenship (Luibhéid 2002, 2008) or civic stratification (Kraler 2010; Schweitzer 2015). Horsti and Pellander (2015), for instance, enjoin us to consider 'intimate citizenship' and 'cultural citizenship' to direct 'attention to the cultural conditions within which some families and family members become visible and heard, while in the case of others, these rights of belonging are denied' (Horsti and Pellander 2015: 752–753).

Various accounts have documented the fact that contemporary family reunification in Europe not only depends on the strength of membership (formal legal status), but also on its normative 'quality' (often associated with socioeconomic status) (Block 2015: 1441–1442). Policy analyses, national case studies and ethnographic accounts explored in different national settings how inclusion and belonging were defined and enacted through policies, media coverage, and discourses targeted at family migration (see e.g. Bonjour and De Hart 2013 on the Netherlands; Block 2012 on Germany; Wray 2011 on the United Kingdom; Horsti and Pellander 2015 on Finland; Eggebo 2013b on Norway; Jorgensen 2012 on Denmark; Becker, Crosgrave and Labor 2013 on Ireland; Oliveira, Cancela and Fonseca 2013 on Portugal).

These studies have notably emphasized the racialized components of an 'us versus them' imaginary, and revealed the implicit conception of whiteness in the idea of Europe. Specific

policies appeared to have been designed to single out specific communities, for instance Pakistanis in the United Kingdom (Charsley and Benson 2012), Turks in Germany (Aybek, Straßburger and Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu 2015) or Pakistanis in Denmark and Sweden (Rytter 2012; Liversage 2009), hence marginalizing them. Authors point to the identification of ‘the Muslim other’ as the emblematic figure whose family life is problematized and whose integration is being doubted and questioned (see e.g. Aybek 2012; Bonjour and Block 2016). Charsley and Wray also urge us to embrace an intersectional take on men’s and women’s experiences of family migration and membership. Here, membership is understood as the result of a dynamic interplay of gender, race and class, the variations of which need to be accounted for (Charsley and Wray 2015: 416). Doings so allows us to see migrant men, for instance, as fathers, rather than perennial labour migrants (de Hart 2015a and Griffiths 2015).

Policies such as the establishment of a minimum income requirement for non-European spouses or proof of a certain accommodation size (number of bedrooms or square metres) to allow for family reunification reveal that family reunification policies in Europe encourage a neoliberal citizenship, with self-reliance at its core value, that can trump issues of race and gender at times (Staver 2014). For instance, the 2012 increase in the minimum income requirement in the United Kingdom also led to public outrage when publicity was made around (white middle class) British citizens who could not sponsor their spouses. This classist element, while acknowledged in the literature, could benefit from more empirical and theoretical unpacking to explore civic stratification inside the EU itself.

Considering family migration in relation to issues of belonging helps us understand how it came to be viewed as a political issue or ‘problem’. Several authors have noted that the ‘problem’ of marriage migration in Europe is not necessarily new, and can be traced to the early establishment of current regimes of controlled mobility in Europe in the late nineteenth century. It only became presented as a European problem after the Second World War, as bureaucratic distinctions between family and labour migrants formalized, when labour migrants wishing to be reunited with their family became an issue in a reconstructing Europe. There is a consensus that at least from the early sixties on, concerns about the mobility of non-white migrants wishing to move from former colonies to metropolises became *the* most pressing issue justifying restrictive measures and increased scrutiny of spouses (see Turner 2015; Wray 2011 on the UK; de Hart 2015b on the Netherlands). Kraler and Kofman identify three key areas that have monopolized public debates on marriage migration in Northern Europe and framed it as a problem:

- (1) the unsolicited nature of family migration, its alleged abuse as a migration channel and associated debates on ‘bogus marriages’;
- (2) the migrant family as a potential obstacle to integration ...;
- (3) the migrant family as a patriarchal institution, which is seen as a contradiction to liberal democratic norms of gender equality.

(2009: 4)

What these measures consisted of, how they were justified and which racialized ‘Others’ were targeted has been the focus of studies in different national settings. For instance, Denmark developed the notion of an ‘attachment requirement’ for family reunification. Through a complex point system, applicants need to show that their attachment to Denmark is greater than to any other countries. Denmark, Austria, the UK, France and the Netherlands developed entry tests for family migrants designed to test their ability to integrate (Bonjour 2014). Germany implemented a language requirement: incoming family members must show proficiency in German (level B2 of the European Common Language framework) prior to moving to Germany. Citizenship tests and language requirements as specific policy tools used to control and prevent

family reunification have been studied and questioned (Blackridge 2016). These policies were notably criticized for the ways in which they represented a burden for family reunification under pretences of improving 'integration'. Grandparents for instance, could not necessarily easily develop high proficiency in a foreign language, and members of Muslim communities could negatively be targeted in integration contracts through explicit references to burqa and polygamy (Alaoui 2012).

The 'problem' of marriage migration: forced marriages and marriages of convenience

Most of the literature focused on family migration policies in Europe has focused on heterosexual marriage migration. The latter expression tends to be used loosely to refer to a family reunification process where the spouse or partner of a migrant 'is a national or long-term resident' of a European country and 'where the relationship is the basis of the entry rights' (Wray 2011: 1). However, recent scholarship has pointed out that the term should be replaced with the more accurate one of 'partner migration', which encompasses a broader range of relationships without privileging marriage and heterocentrism (Ahlsted 2016: 52–60). Still, one sees great variation between European countries. For example, countries such as Italy, Romania, Bulgaria or Germany do not allow same-sex marriages, even though some recognize common law spouses (see Waaldijk 2015 for a review of diversity in non-marital legal family forms). But even if some countries (e.g. Italy) do not recognize same-sex marriage inside its borders, approval of family reunification applications filed by same-sex partners of EU citizens is possible if the couple is legally married in a country that recognizes same-sex marriages.

Several authors have noted how various policies targeted at marriage migration instrumentalized gender norms to justify specific policies (Bonjour and De Hart 2013), creating tension and dissent among feminist communities. The issue of forced marriages, for instance, created a political coalition between liberal forces pushing for human rights and gender equality, and the proponents of a conservative agenda seeking to restrict family migrations in the name of 'proper integration'. To be sure, forced marriages is a real issue affecting certain communities (Chantler, Gangoli and Hester 2009; Wilson 2007). In the name of protecting vulnerable women and girls, states like Denmark and the United Kingdom have implemented policies that officially aim to fight the issue, yet end up participating in tightened immigration controls over specific communities and marginalizing them (Charley and Benson 2012; Rytter 2010). Proposals to raise the minimum age to marry for migration purposes to 21 years were endorsed by the British government in 2005 and applied in 2008, with the stated purpose of preventing forced marriages (Wray 2011: 161). Myrdhal (2010) also documents how Danish immigration officials treat all marriages between cousins as being forced marriages, despite the fact that they are legal among Danish citizens.

Arranged marriages involving people from Indian, Turkish or Pakistani descent are often treated as suspicious, and authors have also discussed how the political attention given to forced marriages contributed in stigmatizing other marriages practices, such as arranged marriages. In Nordic countries, such as Finland and Sweden, 'respect for gender norms and gender equality' has been identified as key to the countries' national identity (Schmidt 2011) and instrumentalized to regulate marriage migration. Romantic love has also been extensively studied as a key implicit norm of immigration control forming the cultural backdrop against which immigration officers assess spousal applications for family reunification (e.g. Bonjour and De Hart 2013; D'Aoust 2014; Eggebø 2013b; Fair 2010; Lavanchy 2013; Myrdhal 2010). This results in what authors have labelled 'moral gatekeeping' (Ahlsted 2015; Pellander 2016; Wray 2006). But

couples are not passive in the face of bureaucratic intimate enquiries: some adjust and purposefully display specific emotions or carry out specific actions to meet perceived expectations of what a 'real' relationship looks like (Carver 2014).

Along with forced marriages, marriages of convenience (marriages entered into to circumvent immigration regulations) also became the most important family migration concern that European countries sought to address since the early 2000s. The phenomenon, as well as its social and political undertones and technical legal definitions, bears several names: grey marriages and *bezness* in France, *Scheinehe* in Germany and Austria, sham marriages in the United Kingdom, to name but a few. There are stark differences among European countries regarding how much of a threat or problem the issue was perceived to be, with Eastern European countries not really considering it a threat, and countries like France and the United Kingdom labelling it a serious issue (EMN 2012).

Several perspectives on marriages of convenience and marriage migration have been offered, ranging from historical analysis (Messinger 2012; Wray 2011), to analysing the role of key non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in either the rights of mixed and transnational couples or in defending the rights of the victims of sham marriages (Odasso 2017). Policy analysis highlighted the intended and unintended consequences of policy aimed at targeting sham marriages in various European countries (Charsley *et al.* 2011). Fernandez and Jensen (2014), for instance, show how Danish regulations unexpectedly ended up affecting the Latino and Cuban communities, when the law was created with Muslim communities in mind. On the topic of marriages of convenience, one finds a clear dominance of ethnographic, and participants' observation accounts of street-levels bureaucrats in consulates and visa offices (Alpes and Spire 2014; Infantino 2014). These studies provide nuanced accounts of the motivations behind decisions made by the officers, such as a sense of duty towards protecting one's country, compassion for the couples or even a sense of solidarity with a perceived victim of fraud, etc. (Lavanchy 2013). While access to bureaucracy is not necessarily easy to obtain, this appears to be a peculiarity of the European literature. For instance, because of the rare access granted to researchers by the Canadian government, Vic Satzewich's study of Canadian overseas visa posts (2015), which notably covers family reunification, gained much attention for the privileged access to the bureaucracy it offered.

It is worth noting that in some European countries, the issue of false paternity has been politicized and raised as a problem resulting from family migration. This issue has been far less documented than marriages of convenience (but see EMN 2012). However, some studies have examined the political, ethical and legal ramification of establishing what constitutes 'true paternity' for family reunification purposes through DNA testing (Heinemann and Lemke 2013; Weiss 2011).

Conclusion

The fact that academic reflections on issues of family migration and membership in Europe have mostly focused so far on marriage and partner migration leaves open the question of children and grandparents, a puzzling yet telling absence (but see Horsti and Pellander 2015). Most of the literature focused on children and family reunification consists of a specialized niche in legal studies, notably asylum law, and emphasizes issues of protection and trafficking. Still, according to Allen White *et al.*, the relative absence and analytical silence over children in the literature on family migration stems from the fact that 'migrant children are represented as passive, needy and different' (2011: 1159; see also Mustasaari 2014).

Recent developments in the literature on family migration offer promising avenues of enquiry for the future. Ethnographic accounts and anthropologies of institutions provide us

with a fresh look on the complexity and messiness of the enactment of family migration beyond policy discourses. This agenda could be pushed further to look more closely into family migration policy design and agenda-setting (see e.g. Paquet 2015 on Canada). Also, critical examinations of family migration and civic integration policies as a defining nexus of public discourses and policies have also started to emerge (Bech, Borevi and Mouritsen 2017; Bonjour and Kraler 2015; Charsley, Bolagni and Spencer 2017; Spencer and Charsley 2016). This literature notably points out that the available empirical evidence on the integration consequences of intra-ethnic marriage migration is surprisingly limited and has, as yet, not produced definitive support for the suggestion that marriage migration is an 'integration problem' (Bonjour and Kraler 2015; Spencer and Charsley 2016: 15). Finally, as requirements for family reunification (such as minimum income, housing or pre-departure language proficiency) increasingly become justified in terms of economic integration and the need to protect the welfare state, more research remains to be done on how class intersects with gender and race in family migration policies. Neoliberal and 'flexible' citizenship has been widely discussed in relation to labour migration to highlight how economic status appears to sometimes trump gender and race in the politics of belonging, but how this translates into the field of family migration, especially in relation to gender and race, remains to be further explored. Ultimately, long-distance relationships and separations resulting from family reunification policies lead couples and families to re-imagine spaces and practices of intimacy, parenthood and family. All of them read as vibrant testimonies of what it means to belong in contemporary Europe.

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SECTION COMMENTARY

Integration at a crossroads: some thoughts on the non-Western varieties and their recent implications

Katya Ivaschenko-Stadnik

Integration debates through a non-Western eye: main observations

The current volume asks whether Western European concepts of integration are relevant for other countries in Europe, outside Western and European Union (EU) academia. Just a quick look into the ‘non-Western’ European literature reveals that integration debates only appear sporadically in the up-to-date academic scholarship. This comes as no surprise: the intensity of scholarly debate resonates with the regional migration context dominated for a long time by the outgoing or transit flows, or arrivals of culturally and ethnically similar groups. Indeed, as it stands now, both immigration and integration are relatively novel topics for the non-Western part of European continent.

In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which, since their membership in the EU have only now begun to discover the challenges of growing immigration, the relatively low volumes and low levels of diversity in immigration flows have not inspired any intense integration debates thus far.¹ In non-EU Europe,² which largely remains the corridor for migrants to reach the EU and sending territory, some integration debates, specifically related to the mass internal migration, conflicts and forced displacements, have been boosted in the affected countries. Similarly to Georgia in 2008, between 2014 and 2017 Ukraine lost parts of its territory and become a country with the highest number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Europe, currently estimated as 1.6 million (GRID, 2017). As integration of IDPs from war zones is a challenge to both state welfare systems and peacekeeping for the host communities, a new turn in localised academic discussions to focus on civic integration would be welcomed as a timely and long-awaited development. The first research into these populations is currently underway in Ukraine,³ and it is a novel phenomenon, going against the mainstream European integration research focussing mainly on ethnically and culturally different minorities.

A promising start to current integration discussions in the region can be observed with the recent launch of international projects which incorporate regional collaborators from non-EU Europe and look at the ways the temporary migrants from Asia and Africa are being accepted in transit countries.⁴ Presumably, as established migration patterns eventually change, research and conceptualisation will follow, and we can expect more academic production in the field.

There is, however, an exception to this pattern of low-level immigration, high-level emigration and resulting low interest in integration studies: the Russian Federation (RF) has been the

largest European country hosting 11 million immigrants within its borders, and one of the longest-standing immigration destinations for ethnically and culturally different immigrants in the non-Western world.⁵ Russia merits attention as a case study not only as regards the evolution of integration models in a non-Western European host country, but also as a possible paradigm of integration outside of the Western liberal democracy. Has integration become a fully-fledged subject of the academic debate there? If so, do the main concepts develop in line with the established Western tradition analysed in this volume?

Non-Western integration model in the making: the Russian path

Despite the lack of general consensus on what ‘integration’ means as a concept, it is largely understood to be a two-way process involving both *opportunities*, enshrined in state legislation and supported by formal and informal networks, structures, communities, etc. in a country of immigration, and *abilities and motivations* to use them on the part of newcomers. In the case of Russia, as the primary country of destination in the post-Soviet space and a huge multi-ethnic society, currently going through a period of instability, integration seems to have become a two-way problem with both a lack of opportunities on the host part and a lack of motivation on the part of migrants facing an uncertain future (Karpenko, 2016: 170–171).

In this section, Cristophe Bertossi and Jan Willem Duyvendyak launched their discussion by mapping out Western European models of national integration. The authors point out that integration of immigrants became an important public issue in Europe in the 1980s, with the permanent settlement of postcolonial foreign migrants as well as ‘guest workers’: bearers of other languages/dialects, ethnicities and cultures. Apparently, that rather exceptional experience can be linked to a comparable case on the East of the continent.

Mass immigration to Russia, which began in the 1990s after the break-up of the Soviet Union into fifteen independent states, might also be seen as postcolonial, but the profound difference is that most immigrants from neighbouring states into the then newly-fledged RF belonged to one of two groups. The first group was made of people of the same ethnicity as the majority host community, such as ethnic Russians resettling from former-USSR republics, notably from Transcaucasia and Central Asia,⁶ where they did not constitute a dominant group. The second group was made of non-ethnic Russians, immigrants, who were however well assimilated into Russian language and culture long before their arrival to RF as a result of the Soviet state policies. That unprecedented wave was not fully characterised as immigration, because even non-Russian newcomers were seen as repatriated ‘compatriots’.⁷ (Malakhov, 2015; Prokhorova, 2017: 15). Experts argue that the relatively homogenous ethnic and cultural composition of some of the early wave’s immigrants explains why integration has long been disregarded as an issue in official Russian discourse. When, later on, most notably different kinds of migrants arrived, not influenced by a previously united historical past, values and norms, it finally became an issue of concern, and the search for appropriate integration model(s) occurred to be overwhelmed with a set of political biases and xenophobic stereotypes⁸ (Mukomel, 2005: 66–75, 2014: 66–75; Drobizheva and Golovakha, 2007: 159–166; Iontsev and Ivakhniuk, 2013: 2; Tishkov, 2008).

Currently, in the official Russian political discourse, a high level of anti-immigration public attitudes persists (Shnirelman, 2011; Gudkov, 2013; Gulina, 2017: 167–169) and is often used by the elite to justify a utilitarian immigration model. The approach is based on the acceptance of foreigners who are qualified workers (interestingly called *Gastarbeiters*, a term widely used to indicate migrant workers) as a temporary measure. In essence, ‘they just work/temporally live here, and we don’t need them integrated into society’ (Malakhov, 2015; Karpenko, 2016:

157–159). While integration has recently become the catchword of political debate, it seems that it is only used in a superficial way, without a deeper conceptualisation or relevant policy design.⁹ Indeed, the Russian government tends to adopt a variety of different models for dealing with different groups of migrants: from the complete civic integration policy of ‘compatriots’ and Russians abroad (Molodikova, 2017), to, at the other end of the spectrum, partial exclusion of ethnically different temporary migrant workers. Experts argue that, regardless of the intentions, the plight of the newcomers has not been successfully explored in the terms of their actual integration needs which require more grounded research, conceptualisation, and, ultimately, creation of more consistent policy tools to address those needs (Iontsev and Ivakhniuk, 2013: 6; Vorobieva and Topilin, 2016: 134–140; Prokhorova, 2017: 70).

Civic integration challenges in Russia and beyond

Some state-imposed obstacles regarding the application of an inclusive integration model are discussed by Costica Dumbrava. Therein it is argued that across Europe, citizenship often remains ‘a privileged tool of integration’. In this section, Sara W. Goodman examined how civic integration policies, conceptualised as individual-oriented, replace national models of membership. Although such discussions have not often been present in the Russian academic literature, the latter thesis can be fully adopted in the Russian case: access to Russian citizenship and to civic rights in RF depends on the migrant’s origin. Different passports mean different possibilities of access, and national and even supra-national models of membership, though based on nationally-defined values and belonging, prevail¹⁰ (Iontsev and Ivakhniuk, 2013: 8–16).

In fact, the access to citizenship seems to be shaped by the geopolitics. The Russian imperial policies in ‘its former provinces’ (Inozemtsev, 2017) make the access to rights for migrants an element of bilateral relations. Once neighbouring states fall away from the ‘Russian integration core’,¹¹ they are treated as hostile, and the mechanism of the ‘alienation scenario’ is put in place. This notion is picked up by the media and the attitudes of the public change. Soon after, surveys capture a growing social distance between the host population and the newcomers from the states which are ‘no longer pro-Russian’, making more generous policies on citizenship unpalatable.¹² Thus citizenship policies and ‘rights-based approach’ are not dependent on generalised policy responding to the very Western question: who are we and how we want to construct the ‘us’. Instead, the ‘us’ seems to be a rather tight group monopolised by the state:¹³ migration, rights and belonging in contemporary Russia are tailored to meet the political needs of the ruling elite and is often used as a foreign policy tool (Gulina, 2017: 173), making use of the public sentiment.

Yet, the focused discussions on citizenship issue can hardly be avoided: recent reports illustrate that, facing an increasing pressure from both state institutions and host communities,¹⁴ immigrants are seeking legal status because the illegal or semi-legal stay is troublesome, if not dangerous now (Gusenko, 2017). This suggests that the new immigrants, a majority of whom represent non-Slavic ethnic groups (Uzbek, Tadjik, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Azeri, etc.), are ready to take more responsibilities for becoming a part of host society, be it temporary or permanent, and expect that the receiving state offers newcomers some secure status, protection and opportunities for inclusion and civic participation from its side, too. This development serves as an important lesson for the neighbouring countries for two main reasons: (1) they also should be ready to secure status and safety of the different groups and individuals flowing across their borders to the RF which still remains among the key centres of gravity for the economically dependent regions; (2) they should learn lessons from the Russian experience of dealing with mass immigration, be that experience positive or negative, as it will save them the trouble of

rediscovering typical yet painful problems that might suddenly unfold if the flow of newcomers grows.

In the search of common solutions

All the above shows that the Western concepts and debates have an apparently limited scope in the Russian context but there is light at the end of the tunnel: although the political contexts of applying the integration models are different, the social and cultural mechanisms of integration have much in common. In both Russian and Western discussions, integration is seen not only as a state-led top-down process: grassroots integration through networks and civil society is seen as an extremely powerful, yet not sufficient tool (Tkach and Brednikova, 2016). It is worth mentioning that individual, micro-level integration of immigrants is kept in focus of many valuable ad-hoc studies in Russia, specifically dealing with the issues of gender, family and membership (this is also covered in the concluding section's chapter by Anne-Marie d'Aoust). Special attention is given, notably, to the changing notion of home in female migration, as well as to the three lines of integration: between immigrants and host societies, within immigrants' communities (ties with diaspora) and between immigrants and stayers (ties with home) (Brednikova and Tkach, 2010; Tiuriukanova, 2011). This scope of research embarks upon a new human dimension of integration that has been largely overlooked by researchers before. Still, both in Russia and in Western Europe, researchers point out the contradictory and fragmented nature of integration that implied both inclusion (through horizontal ties) and exclusion (through vertical control by the state) (Brednikova and Tkach, 2014). Both in the West and in the non-Western world, integration finds itself at the crossroads with many uncertainties. This calls for a high commitment in further theoretical assumptions and shared responsibilities in future practical applications.

Acknowledgement

I express my appreciation to Olga Tkach for her insight on the Russian scientific debate on integration, Svitlana Odynets for her up-dates on the new research in the region and to Ben Hicks for his editorial assistance.

Notes

- 1 See Pawlak this volume. The analysis of the ongoing political, non-academic debates concerning possible future inflows of culturally and ethnically diverse groups is beyond the scope of this chapter.
- 2 I do not refer in my analysis to Turkey, as a transcontinental Eurasian country which deserves a separate analysis.
- 3 Several Ukrainian research centres conduct surveys with a focus on the social and economic inclusion of IDPs. The fieldwork is supported by the international donors such as International Organisation for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHRC) *et al.* The study of civil inclusion is rare but the issue is receiving growing attention. See, for example, the recent Report on the Results of the Ukrainian Public Opinion Survey of the Internally Displaced Persons and Citizens of the Hosting Communities by Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (conducted with the financial support of the Government of Canada, pp. 8–14). Available at: www.kiis.com.ua/materials/pr/20160111_Shpiker-report/KIIS%20survey%20for%20Internews111.pdf. Accessed 12 December 2017.
- 4 See, for example, the ongoing project 'Transnational Migration in Transition: Transformative Characteristics of Temporary Mobility of People (EURA-NET)'. Available at: www.uta.fi/edu/en/research/projects/aura-net/index.html. Accessed 20 November 2017.
- 5 See United Nations Population Division (UNPOP) statistics and Di Bartolomeo, this volume. See also *30 Countries Hosting the Most Immigrants*. World Atlas, 25 April 2017. Available at: www.worldatlas.com/articles/highest-immigrant-population-in-the-world.html. Accessed 10 September 2017.

- 6 In 1989–2003 the total number of ethnic Russians immigrating to the Federation has been estimated at 3.4 million, including 1.2 million from Kazakhstan, 1.6 million from other Central Asian states (Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), and 1 million from Transcaucasia (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia). See: *State Policy of Overcoming Demographic Crisis in Russia*. Moscow: Ekonomika. Nauchnyj Expert, 2007. pp. 150–151.
- 7 As one of the central tenets of Russian migration policy, ‘compatriots’ are defined in the corresponding Federal Law as ‘persons (and their descendants) born in one state, living or residing in that state or abroad and possessing common language, history, cultural heritage, traditions and customs’. See Federal Law ‘On the state policy of Russian Federation towards compatriots’. Available at: www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_23178/4733d92796950eff2201181bdbcf75ca68fa7ddc/. Accessed 20 November 2017.
- 8 Because the open ethnic intolerance was normally stigmatised in the official Soviet discourse, largely neutral or positive attitudes towards migrants provided rather firm ground for the successful integration of newcomers into the ‘national fold’ in the initial post-Soviet period. However, such ‘safe inertia’ was contested during further remarkable political shifts. Currently, the authorities-led Orthodox-nationalist awakening in Russia accepts the emergence of the segregation and increased inter-ethnic tensions.
- 9 Notably, the Concept of the state migration policy of the Russian Federation till 2025, adopted in June 2012, admits that ‘exclusion of migrants in the host community has been the direct consequence of the lack state programs of adaptation and integration in RF’, see section 17 of the Concept. Full text available at: www.demoscope.ru/weekly/knigi/koncepciya/koncepciya_migr.html. Accessed 13 December 2017. Several years later, in 2016, the institutional mechanisms and allocated resources for integration were still not articulated in the regulations of the state bodies implementing migration policy in RF. See Report of Migration Committee under President of RF, available at: www.ruvek.ru/?module=articles&action=view&id=10378&theme=11. Accessed 12 December 2017.
- 10 As Vladimir Putin put it in November 2016, during an awards ceremony for geography students, ‘Russia doesn’t end anywhere’. This has been taken on as a new doctrine for taking care of Russian interests and those of ethnic Russians (or Russian-speaking populations) wherever they live.
- 11 The popular Russian term that describes the circle of close partners that give preferences to the economic, political and cultural involvement in the projects initiated and supervised by the RF (*‘rossijskoje integratsionnoje yadro’*).
- 12 Just to give an example, the attitudes towards Ukrainians in Russia dramatically deteriorated right after the Euromaidan, being viewed by the Russian newsmakers and analysts as an anti-constitutional right-wing nationalistic coup sponsored by the West. See experts’ comments in *Russians and Ukrainians Divided by a Gulf of Distrust* // DW, 1 February 2016.
- 13 On the authorities-led nationalist awakening in Russia, see, for example, Mirovalev M., ‘White supremacism gathering underscores Russia’s nationalist trend’ (reporting from Moscow), *LA Times*, 22 August 2015. Yet, the rise of the populist nationalist movements is observed not only in Russia. This challenges the very idea of European egalitarian legacy. The doctrine of ‘becoming great again’ as an obsessive turn for too many nations might become a growing challenge to the pluralist integration models in the West, too. This suggests that no model is safe and stable, that is why any cases of stigmatising ‘others’, discriminating, violating, excluding and marginalising should be closely watched everywhere (even if strong egalitarian integration models prevail in the discussions).
- 14 Belonging to ‘visible minorities’ is still a challenge in Russia, which limits employment and housing opportunities (for example, ‘only Slavic people are accepted’ has been a widespread candidate requirement in the Russian ‘work’ and ‘room to let’ advertisements). See, for example, a typical work announcement with ‘racial eligibilities’ at: <http://active-personnel.ru/otkrytye-vakansii/>. Accessed 13 December 2017. See also An Alternative Report on Racial Discrimination in the Russian Federation by Anti-Discrimination Centre MEMORIAL and SOVA Center for Information and Analysis submitted to the UN in 2013 (it’s dissemination, however, is prohibited in RF by the court’s decision). Available at: www2.ohchr.org/English/bodies/cerd/docs/ngos/SOVA_ADCM-IPHR_FIDH_RussianFederation_CERD82.pdf. Accessed 12 December 2017.

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PART IV

Irregular migration



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