PROSINT conference Austria

Shaping immigration for integration? Reflecting on the links between immigration and integration policy

Promoting Sustainable Policies for Integration (PROSINT)

Thu 6 October 2011

Venue: Haus der Europäischen Union Vienna, Wipplingerstraße 35, 1010 Vienna
Conference languages: English and German. Simultaneous translation will be offered during the morning session (held in English). The afternoon sessions will be in German only.

Background

Over the past decades, integration has turned into one of the main public policy issues in the major countries of immigration in Europe and has led to the emergence of targeted integration policies. Integration policy can be broadly understood as a policy aimed at providing an overall framework as well as specific targeted measures for immigrants’ incorporation into receiving societies after arrival. As such, integration policy goes considerably beyond immigration policy. At the same time, immigration policies constitute one of the main opportunity structures shaping immigrants’ incorporation into receiving societies well beyond the initial settlement and there is therefore a close link between integration and migration policies.

Since the turn of the millennium there has been an increasing – and explicit – linkage of immigration and integration policy, above all on the level of political discourse, but also institutionally and in terms of policies adopted. The migration/integration policy nexus has in particular been strengthened through the introduction of specific integration conditions for newcomers such as in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands or Switzerland. The trend towards a stronger linkage between migration and integration can also be observed elsewhere in Europe, although it is often much weaker.

Aims of the conference

The impact of the changing rationale, objectives and patterns of integration policy making and the increasing linkage of admission and integration policy remain little understood. What is, can or should be the role of immigration law in facilitating integration? What is the (expected) impact of mandatory ‘integration’ courses? What is the (expected) impact of other conditions for immigration on integration such as income or housing requirements? What is the role of national policymakers in integration? Is there a role for the European Union? And what is the role of the local level?

The aim of this conference is to reflect on these various questions based on findings of a recent comparative European research project called ‘Promoting Sustainable Policies on Integration’ (PROSINT) which studied the linkage between integration and migration policies in nine European countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). More information on the project can be found under http://research.icmpd.org/1428.html#c3150.
Conference format

The conference will be structured in two parts. In the morning plenary, members of the PROSINT team will present key findings of the study, which will be complemented by comments from policy makers and academic experts and followed by general discussions with the audience. The plenary sessions will be held in English (simultaneous translation will be offered). The morning plenary will be followed by two parallel workshops in the afternoon on pre-entry tests (workshop 1) and the migration/integration policy nexus from a local and practitioners’ perspective (workshop 2), respectively. These will be held in German only. The number of participants for the workshop will be limited to ensure a fruitful informal discussion. Registration is obligatory.

Workshops (held in German)

Workshop 1 – pre-entry tests: integration before immigration?

Workshop 1 will focus on pre-entry integration, introduced in Austria as the most recent reform of immigration legislation in April 2011. Pre-entry tests have first been established by the Netherlands (2006) and subsequently were introduced by several other countries, including Germany (2007), France (2008), Denmark (2010) and the United Kingdom (2011). Although pre-entry measures are legitimated as a means to promote integration, there is little knowledge of their actual impact and whether the stated aim to promote integration is achieved remains an open question. Moreover, the tests have an inherent gendered dimension, as they are primarily targeted at family members and reflect the gendered composition of family flows, mainly affect female spouses from third countries. The workshop will aim at an informal discussion. Experts from relevant German institutions (Goethe Institute, Verband binationaler Familien und Partnerschaften (tbc)) will participate in the workshop to share experiences with pre-entry measures in German.

Facilitation: Bernhard Perchinig (ICMPD)

Workshop 2: The integration – migration policy nexus: the local perspective

Municipalities are important actors in the integration field: they usually have a role in the implementation of national and regional policy measures, and at the same time also initiate and implement their own programmes. While municipalities enjoy a certain room for manoeuvre within the areas of their competence and financial constraints, they have to act within the national or federal regulatory context. The national policy context, however, often follows an understanding of integration which is quite different from local policy frames. Thus, while the migration-integration policy linkage has become increasingly important on the national level, it may be less important from a local perspective. This workshop will focus on the relationship between local and national level integration policy making. In particular, it will address the role of cities in the formulation and implementation of pre- and post-entry integration and admission policies, as well as the effects of national policies on the local level. Like WS 1, the aim is to facilitate an informal, moderated discussion between relevant actors and practitioners. Experts from Zurich, Vienna and Malmö and relevant national institutions will participate in the workshop to facilitate the discussion.

Facilitation: Christina Hollomey (ICMPD) and Brigitte Suter (MIM/ Malmö)
Programme

8:30–9:00  Registration of participants

9:00 - 9:30  Opening Session  
Welcome address  
Huberta Heinzl, European Parliament Information Office & N.N., EC Representation in Austria  
Introduction  
Albert Kraler, PROSINT coordinator, ICMPD

9:30-10:30  Results Session I  
Chair: Albert Kraler  
The national policy frame for the integration of newcomers  
Bernhard Perchinig, ICMPD  
The introduction of pre-entry integration tests  
Christina Hollomey, ICMPD  
Discussant: Verena Plutzar, University of Vienna

10:30-11:00  Refreshment break

11:00-13:00  Results Session II  
Chair: Albert Kraler  
The local policy frame for the integration of newcomers  
Madalina Rogoz, ICMPD  
Discussant: Karin König, City of Vienna, MA 17- Integration and Diversity  
Panel discussion  
Promoting integration? Reflecting on the migration/integration policy nexus  
Panelists: Astrid Podsiadlowski, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (tbc), Carolus Grütters, Centre for Migration Law, Radboud University Nijmegen, Henrik Emilsson, consultant (ex-Integration Board and Ministry of Integration, Sweden), Johannes Gstir, Office of the Tyrolean Regional Government – Abt. JUFF - Integration, Verena Plutzar, University of Vienna. Moderation: Bernhard Perchinig (ICMPD)

13:00-14:00  Lunch break

14:00-17:00  Workshop Session  
Workshop I: Pre-entry tests: integration before immigration  
Workshop II: The integration – migration policy nexus: the local perspective  
Parallel working groups

17:00-17:30  Closing session  
Wrap-up and conclusions

17:30-19:30  Informal closure with wine and cheese