

Starting out: New migrants' socio-cultural integration trajectories in four European destinations*

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Abstract

Migration trends are highly dynamic and the recent period has seen a transformation of migration to Europe. Studies of existing migrant stocks provide only limited information on these new migration flows and their implications for receiving societies. In the Norface-funded SCIP project ('Socio-cultural integration processes among New Immigrants in Europe'), about 8000 recent migrants to four European destinations were surveyed soon after their arrival with many re-interviewed about 1.5 years later. The goal of the project was to obtain a more complete picture of integration processes in Europe and of the role of individual traits, group characteristics and reception contexts.

SCIP data shed light on a highly dynamic phase in migrants' integration that has important implications for what happens later in the adaptation process. Furthermore, these data reveal the extent to which differences in integration patterns are apparent from the very beginning of migrants' stay or evolve over time. The SCIP project is comparative on the group and country level and thus helps to clarify whether

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country-specific integration patterns reflect characteristics of host country institutions and their ethnic boundaries – or can be attributed to the particularities of the immigrants these countries attract.

This special issue demonstrates the potential of the data for addressing such questions, fundamental to our understanding of current and future migrant integration by bringing together six articles that tackle migrants' early adaptation, for example their language acquisition, the role of religiosity in finding a job, group differences in identification and acculturation, and experiences of discrimination across contexts. It also gives an insight into some limitations of the data set, describes the methodological challenges and possibilities in using it, and aims to inspire further research based on this unique data source.

Keywords

SCIP, migration, integration, Europe, ethnic boundaries

Throughout Europe, there is an ongoing debate about the structural and socio-cultural integration of ethnic minorities. In Western Europe, questions of integration of Muslim minorities in particular drove the growing scepticism towards the concept of multiculturalism (Brubaker, 2001; Joppke, 2004). More recently, the large flows of migrants from Eastern Europe following EU enlargement in 2004 put the issue of migrant integration squarely on the political and research agenda once again, and this has been further enhanced by the current increase in refugees and asylum seekers. The last couple of decades have witnessed a large number of quantitative research studies addressing issues of immigrant integration in Europe in comparative perspective, and exploiting both general and specialist data sources. These studies reflect not only major changes in the migration landscape but also increasing critical engagement with concepts of assimilation and integration, and their reworking in the face of 'new' migration to the US and debates about the realities facing the new second generation (Portes, 1996; Waldinger and Perlmann, 1998). Many of these European studies have been inspired and informed by prominent theoretical developments in the field of neo-assimilation theory (Alba and Nee, 1999; Esser, 2009), segmented assimilation (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001), the literature on ethnic boundaries (Alba, 2005; Wimmer, 2008) and psychologically oriented accounts of the integration process from the field of cross-cultural psychology (Berry et al., 2006). At the same time, a more critical stance, focusing on the specifics of the European context among writers such as Favell (e.g. Favell, 2008) and Crul (e.g. Crul and Schneider, 2010) has (further) problematised the concept of integration and foregrounded the often overlooked dynamics in migrant settlement and transnational connections, and critiqued the methodological nationalism (Amelina and Faist, 2012) of many accounts. Yet, despite these important theoretical and methodological

advances, a number of critical questions concerning immigrant integration, relating to differential selection of migrants, and speed and direction of adaptation remain unanswered. This is, we would argue, because with existing data they remained unanswerable till now.

In the European context, there is an increasing number of empirical studies – some even based on longitudinal data – that reveal how integration outcomes differ substantially between immigrants from different origins across a number of Western European countries (see Diehl and Schnell, 2006; Kogan, 2011 for Germany; Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2007; Luthra, 2013; Tolsma et al., 2007; Martinovic et al., 2009 for the Netherlands; Heath and Demireva, 2013; Longhi et al., 2013 for the UK; Beauchemin et al., 2010; Vallet and Caille, 1996 for France). But when it comes to explaining these group-specific outcomes, there is only a limited extent to which studies based on classical integration surveys can take into account migrants' pre-migration characteristics (e.g. those related to their cultural, social, regional and economic background). It is thus difficult to assess if group differences in integration processes reflect different starting points which tend to converge over time, or stable pre-existing group characteristics that persist and are reproduced, or whether group differences evolve over time in the receiving societies and reflect group-specific reception contexts. The selectivity of migrant groups relative to their origin country counterparts as well as compared with other groups may also affect their integration processes (Ichou, 2014), but the implications of such selectivity across economic and cultural domains can only be understood if we know what characteristics, resources and orientations they arrive with. This problem of disentangling post-migration integration dynamics from immigrant characteristics upon arrival (Schwartz, 2005: 299f) is particularly relevant when it comes to explaining the ongoing disadvantage of those ethnic groups whose integration appears to lag behind that of others – a phenomenon that is easily attributed to cultural or religious group characteristics in public debates on this issue (for the German debate see Sarrazin, 2010; for the Netherlands this debate is dominated by Geert Wilders, leader of the successful Party for Freedom; for the UK see e.g. Battu and Zenou, 2010; for the US Chua and Rubenfeld, 2014).

A similar problem arises in cross-national comparative research dealing with integration outcomes in different European destinations, which provide a wide variety of institutional practices that can impact immigrants and their descendants (Crul and Schneider, 2010). Despite compelling theoretical arguments that various macro-level factors impinge upon the opportunities and constraints affecting migrants' integration strategies (e.g. Joppke, 1999, 2004; Wimmer, 2008) studies that analyse comparable origin groups in different destinations and can thus test how the societal context shapes integration patterns remain rare (see e.g. Ersanilli and Koopmans, 2011; Haberfeld et al., 2011; Tucci, 2004; Van Tubergen, 2006). Furthermore, they typically study established migrant cohorts (for an exception see Kogan, 2006 on new migrants' labour market integration) or focus on the second generation (Crul et al., 2012). Accordingly, we do not know to what extent differences in migrants' integration trajectories across destinations reflect

country-specific immigrant selectivity or reception contexts including ethnic boundaries, integration policies or the broader institutional setting. A number of researchers have been at pains to emphasise that national contexts may be overly narrow for interpreting the experience of those many migrants who do not live in one nation, but hold strong transnational relations and travel between countries (Amelina and Faist, 2012; Favell, 2008; Snel et al., 2006). It is, nevertheless, an open question how levels and development of transnationalism are dependent on the receiving context, over and above the relationship between transnationalism and patterns of integration (Snel et al., 2006).

Increasing debate in Europe about the socio-cultural integration of migrants, especially those of Muslim background (Brubaker, 2001; Joppke, 2004) has led to a new emphasis on migrants' cultural identities. For a long time, there was a lack of sociological, theory-driven, and quantitatively based research on this topic. This has started to change during the last decade with a number of quantitative studies on immigrants' social ties, religiosity and identities (Diehl and Koenig, 2013; Kanas and Van Tubergen, 2009; Kanas et al., 2012; Leszczensky, 2013; Maliepaard and Phalet, 2012; Maliepaard et al., 2010; Maliepaard et al., 2012; Nandi and Platt, 2015; Platt, 2014; McAndrew and Voas, 2014). However, cross-nationally comparative research on these issues is still at an early stage, mostly due to a lack of data. Existing data sets that are used for comparative research such as census or labour market data often include only a limited number of indicators on migrants' socio-cultural integration. Accordingly, comparative studies on immigrant integration mostly tackle their integration in the labour market and the educational system (although see De Hoon and Van Tubergen, 2014; Ersanilli and Koopmans, 2010; Fleischmann and Phalet, 2012; Jacob and Kalter, 2013; Van Tubergen and Sindradóttir, 2011). Research on the relationship between structural and cultural dimensions of the integration process – and group and country-specific differences in these relationships – depends on cross-nationally comparative data covering a broad set of dimensions of immigrants' integration processes. If such data are to provide evidence for the causal relationship between, for example migrants' social networks and their labour market integration, they also need to be longitudinal. That is, they need to provide at least two time points at which both socio-cultural indicators and structural measures are evaluated.

In the Norface research programme on migration (<http://www.norface.org/>), several projects set out to tackle these open questions in migration research. Among these projects, the Socio-Cultural Integration of New Immigrants (SCIP) project had a specific focus on new immigrants in several European destinations. It was initiated in 2009 and more than 8000 recently arrived immigrants in four European countries were surveyed as part of the study. The project was driven by the recognition that migration trends are highly dynamic and the recent period has witnessed a transformation of migration to Europe (data available at GESIS, see Diehl et al., 2015).

On the one hand, we have seen the opening up of the EU to new countries with freedom of movement for their citizens, and, on the other hand, there has been a move

towards increasingly ‘managed’ migration for third country nationals. This has enabled intra-EU movers to be very flexible in where they work and live, providing interesting opportunities to question the extent to which migrants from these countries actually intend to stay and to ‘integrate’ as conceived of in the traditional classical assimilation literature (Favell, 2008). We know that there is a substantial degree of return and circular migration among Eastern European migrants in Western Europe (Engbersen et al., 2013; White, 2014), which was already identifiable in the pre-accession period (Kalter, 2011). But we do not have a good understanding of the implications of such mobility for early integration processes.

Non-EU, or third country migrants, do not face the same opportunities for flexibility and are highly constrained, as well as increasingly selected, in the era of managed migration. Yet, it cannot be assumed that their integration trajectories will follow the same path as those of long-settled immigrants. Recent migrant cohorts from ‘traditional’ migration countries differ strongly from established cohorts in terms of background, skill and life chances, as well as in the shifting contexts of reception. Hence, studies of existing migrant stocks, which typically include only small numbers of newcomers, provide only very limited information on these new migration flows and their implications for receiving societies.

The first years after migration are dynamic and deemed to be highly relevant for subsequent integration processes. Conditioned by intentions to stay in a destination country, migrants typically acquire the receiving society language and start interacting with majority members, many have to find a job and some begin to develop emotional attachments to their host country. Much of what happens later on can be expected to reflect and be shaped by these early experiences. For example, migrants’ first jobs in the destination country affect their opportunities for developing skills, the quality of their work experience and their work-related social contacts, which largely determine their further career development. In a similar vein, those who arrive with high expectations, face their new environment with the often-cited ‘immigrant optimism’ (Kao and Tienda, 1995); but the experience of discrimination and exclusion soon after their arrival may engender social and emotional distance from the majority, which may turn into self-fulfilling prophecies in the long run (Röder and Mühlau, 2011, 2012). Due to a lack of data, these early dynamics have so far remained an unexplored terrain in integration research. Studying new migrants, therefore, has the potential both to provide important descriptive information on recent immigrant flows to Europe and to help settle such unresolved questions of current integration research.

Opening up a black box of integration research

The SCIP study, which provides the basis of this special issue, therefore, helps to open up this black box of integration research. By studying new migrants, it makes it possible to account for the fact that migrants’ individual resources and other characteristics, and integration processes do not start from scratch, and also vary with their intentions to stay. Many have begun to learn the language of the

destination country prior to migration, others have already spent time in the destination country or have friends and acquaintances there; while others will have no incentive to learn the language because they anticipate a short stay. Some will be travelling to jobs already contracted before departure; others will be more speculative in their search for work; and even those who have never been to the destination country will differ in terms of their regional, cultural and social background, their ethnic and religious identities, their values and attitudes, language skills or expected duration of stay. While these characteristics can be expected to influence their integration processes they cannot be measured (or only rudimentarily) retrospectively, after several years in the destination country, since elapsed duration will shape subsequent responses. The SCIP survey was able to capture these characteristics in some detail because migrants were first interviewed soon after their arrival (for the questionnaire see www.scip-info.org). SCIP data thus allow researchers to shed light on the extent to which differences in integration patterns existed from the very beginning of migrants' stay or evolved over time.

A second advantage of the SCIP project is that it is comparative in focus on the group and country level. As noted, current research has demonstrated considerable variability in integration strategies between groups of migrants. Of course, the concept of group is not unproblematic itself in this context. Ideally, ethnic groups are not predefined by the researcher but 'groupness' is considered as a variable. This, however, raises many practical issues. Not sampling by country of origin leads to an ethnically extremely heterogeneous population and raises serious challenges for own-language interviewing. The SCIP team, therefore, decided to sample by origin, to include similar groups in different countries and to survey two groups in each country that vary in terms of size, social status, national origin and religious identity. Moreover, the survey provided space for the migrants to express to what extent they identify with ethnic groups from the country of origin as well as with the country of origin and country of destination.

To capture both the implications of intra-EU 'liquid' migration (Engbersen et al., 2010), and of managed migration for third country nationals, the SCIP project surveyed Poles, in addition to an old colonial or guest worker group such as Turks in Germany and the Netherlands and Pakistanis in Great Britain. These groups make up a substantial share of the total migrant population in the chosen destination countries and vary along a number of dimensions, including, notably, religion (Catholics versus Muslims), but also social status (medium to high-skilled versus less-skilled migrants) as well as the primary distinction between EU citizens and non-EU-citizens.¹

To take this diversity of migrant inflows into account is important not only from a policy perspective but also for theoretical reasons. Some authors have questioned the relevance of the concept of integration – and even more so 'assimilation' for recent inflows (Favell, 2013). This is not only because it has been argued for the US context – most prominently by Portes and colleagues (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001) – that becoming similar to the majority does not necessarily come along with economic upward mobility but can also imply 'downward assimilation' to the

black urban underclass. In the European context, some authors point out that internationally mobile and highly skilled individuals (Faist, 2013; Favell, 2011), especially intra-EU movers, are not even immigrants in the strict sense and integration is irrelevant for them (Favell, 2013: 56). In particular, they are often economically successful without taking many of the steps that have been described in the literature as the classic paths to success, such as acculturation and naturalisation. Yet, such narratives have themselves been challenged by recognition of the differentiated citizenship that exists among EU migrants (Shutes, 2016), and qualitative accounts of the complexities of negotiating social and structural boundaries for EU migrants in Europe (see e.g. Scott, 2006). We started out from the assumption that it is an empirical question whether the relationship between migrants' cognitive, social and cultural adaptation on one hand and their structural integration on the other hand (most importantly in the educational system and the labour market) is less strong for some groups than for others; and that it is a question that can only be answered by comparing integration trajectories of 'old' and 'new' groups that differ substantially in terms of their social and legal status and cultural background.

The different immigrant groups included in the SCIP project have been studied in four destination countries: Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and Ireland. In this respect, the SCIP project followed the approach of comparative European projects such as The Integration of the European Second Generation (TIES) project that have started out from the assumption that the role of national integration contexts has not received enough attention in research primarily shaped by North American perspectives on integration. As Crul and Schneider (2010: 1250) put it 'The most interesting difference from the US is that Europe consists of different countries'. It is clearly an advantage that studying integration patterns across European countries renders it possible to look into the role of contexts by studying similar groups in different national reception contexts. However, given the numerous dimensions of reception contexts including integration policies, ethnic boundaries and more generic policies affecting the labour market and educational system, it is necessary to start out with clear assumptions about which dimensions are important and why.

The selection in the SCIP project aimed at covering various migration dynamics which are known to affect integration in European countries. Great Britain is an example of a country which relied on populations from its former colonies to compensate for labour shortages (Joppke, 1999) while Germany is the archetypical case of the 'Gastarbeiter' (guest worker) regime. The Netherlands may be considered as a mixed case, whereas Ireland is a new immigration country. The selection also covers major types of symbolic boundary configurations as expressed in the attitudes of the majority population. In Bail's (2008) categorisation, Britain, Germany and the Netherlands are old immigration countries in the European core which emphasise cultural and linguistic boundaries, whereas Ireland belongs to new immigration countries on the European periphery, where religious and racial boundaries prevail. To explore newcomers in different receiving society contexts, and to compare the experiences of newly arrived immigrants from the same

origin countries across these contrasting reception contexts helps us to clarify whether differences in country specific integration patterns reflect characteristics of host country institutions and ethnic boundaries – or can be attributed to the particularities of the immigrants these countries attract, i.e. to country-specific immigrant selectivity.

A third contribution of the SCIP project is its emphasis on the socio-cultural dimension, including migrants' core networks, their acculturation attitudes, cultural consumption, identification and religiosity. By collecting data on a broad set of dimensions, the relationship between these characteristics and migrants' integration in other spheres such as the labour market or their spatial assimilation can be studied. This makes it possible to shed new light into whether, for example, ethnic or religious ties and identifications are a resource or a barrier in the structural integration process, as well as how this relationship varies across groups and countries (Kroneberg, 2008). To highlight the importance of these dimensions of the integration process by no means comes with empirical or normative expectations that migrants will or should eventually adopt identifications and attitudes of the majority. But it is an interesting and unresolved question who does and who does not; and whether the different paths reflect, for example feelings of exclusion or are free and mainly symbolic choices. It is also of substantive interest whether the consequences of these different paths for migrants' structural integration are the same for all groups, or are themselves mediated by status and flexibility.

In sum, the goal of the SCIP project was to obtain a more complete picture of integration processes in Europe and of the role of individual traits, group characteristics and reception contexts. This was achieved by collecting data among different groups of new immigrants in different Western European countries, by interviewing these newcomers twice during their first years in the country, and by developing a survey instrument that captures various dimensions of the integration process. The articles compiled in this volume tackle well-known topics of migration research such as migrants' language acquisition, their labour market integration, their religiosity, their experience of discrimination and their identity patterns; but by using SCIP data, they all focus on newly arrived migrants in Europe. By treating a variety of aspects of integration, the papers provide initial insight into the questions raised above, namely the nature of the new migration flows, the relevance of group specific early integration trajectories, the relationship between structural and 'cultural' aspects of integration, and the tricky issue of separating reception contexts and immigrant selectivity in explaining cross-country differences. The coverage is, however, by no means exhaustive. The aim of this special issue is to showcase what can be done with SCIP data, to give an insight into its limitations, and to inspire further research based on this unique data set.

In the remainder of this introduction, we describe data collection, outline the methodological challenges that arise from the two-wave data structure and the most important strategies for dealing with it, provide a brief overview of the papers and discuss the implications of our findings for further research.

Surveying mobile members of a fuzzy group

Notwithstanding the compelling reasons for surveying recently arrived migrants, actually doing so turned out to be a challenging task. Many new migrants are not yet involved in host country institutions, rendering the use of sampling frames commonly exploited for cross-nationally comparative projects such as school registers not feasible. New migrants are also a dispersed and diverse population that cannot be identified and approached via agencies responsible for specific groups such as refugees. In Germany and the Netherlands, local population registers include information not only on newcomers' names and addresses but also on their date of arrival. In Germany, drawing on these registers, the survey was restricted to five large cities, both to make the sample more comparable with the British and Irish samples, which had to be confined to their respective capital cities, and to contain costs. However, since the absolute number of new migrants to even the largest cities in the Netherlands is far smaller than the migration stream to large German cities, it was necessary to select more municipalities from national register data in the Netherlands in order to reach target numbers of respondents. Ireland and the UK do not have comparable registers that can be used as a sampling frame. This posed a considerable challenge for collecting representative survey data. Respondent-driven sampling (RDS) was implemented in these countries but had to be modified and supplemented by other methods because new migrants turned out to be only weakly linked to each other (Platt et al., 2015; see Gresser and Schacht, 2015 for a full description of sampling, fieldwork and response rates across all four countries).

Sampling was not only challenging for practical reasons but because new migrants are a 'fuzzy' population. Migration is a continuum that involves short-term stayers such as tourists on one hand and permanent settlers on the other hand. Students, seasonal workers, families accompanying business people who plan to stay abroad for several years, or brides or grooms who join their partners already living in the destination country can all be considered migrants. They all cross a national border and start to adapt to the receiving context to varying degrees. Many of them eventually settle down even though the intention to do so may evolve much later than the decision to migrate. This is because the longer migrants stay, the more social and institutional ties they tend to develop in the receiving country (Massey, 1986), even if some groups continue to characterise themselves as sojourners even after a long period (Bonacich, 1973). On arrival, many migrants plan to stay temporarily unless they are forced to do otherwise, for example because of restrictions that limit their international mobility (Piore, 1979: 51). This renders it impractical and theoretically problematic to screen new arrivals by their envisioned duration of stay in order to achieve a sample of immigrants rather than tourists. Not only are their plans poor predictors of what actually happens; but at the same time, early intentions may be relevant for understanding integration processes among those who (finally) settle. For example, even the illusion of return can hamper migrants' willingness to invest in language skills or education (Dustmann, 2000).

Typically, when migrants are sampled from registers, short-term stayers are both small in number, because the stock sample over-represents relatively longer stayers, and under-represented because those who plan to stay in the country for a very short time often do not register. This was to some extent the case in Germany and in the Netherlands. Furthermore, there was a certain time lag between sampling and contacting new migrants. The high number of outdated addresses in Germany and the Netherlands suggests that in the weeks between sampling and the onset of fieldwork many had already moved – either within or out of the country.² Finding recent migrants in countries without population registers was likewise challenging because they are a very small share of the population; so the use of active recruitment and incentives was indispensable. However, the likelihood of including very recent migrants in the sample was higher in these countries because contacts were not limited to those individuals included in lists. Re-interviewing such a mobile population was the second major challenge for fieldwork. Similar to comparable surveys in the US, and in line with other studies in the four participating countries, the share of those who participated in both interviews was only about 50%, despite extensive efforts to keep in touch such as sending respondents emails, texts, early findings and season's greetings between waves.

Given these unavoidable differences in sampling procedures and the lack of any sort of sampling frame in two of the countries, the data set is not strictly representative in the sense that all new migrants from the relevant groups had the same chance of being included in the survey. Descriptive analyses, especially comparative ones, thus need to be sensitive to differences in the samples. Most importantly, researchers need to consider that migrants living in less urban contexts are included in the Netherlands, but not in the other countries. However, given the complete lack of comparative data on new migrants and given that we are mostly interested in relationships between theoretically relevant variables such as, for example migrants' feelings of exclusion or their social ties to majority and minority members, on one hand, and their integration trajectories in spheres such as identification or labour market integration, on the other hand, the SCIP data do allow us to draw generalisable conclusions about the dynamics of integration processes.

The longitudinal research design comprised a two-wave panel study of new immigrants. The first wave of data collection took place soon after the immigrant's arrival (generally not exceeding 18 months from the date of immigration); and the follow-up survey was carried out about one and a half years later. In order to collect comparable data across the four countries, the team developed a harmonised survey instrument. Many questions were adopted from established survey instruments, such as the New Immigrant Survey, the European Social Survey or the World Values Survey in order to facilitate comparisons with other studies and to ensure they were already validated. Since it was anticipated that many new immigrants would not yet be able to conduct an interview in the host country language, the questionnaire was translated into immigrants' native languages. In the first wave, Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) were conducted in all

countries. This method is usually preferred over a telephone interview when the questionnaire is long and complex as with the first wave of the SCIP questionnaire (Holbrook et al., 2003). Furthermore, response rates in the CAPI mode are typically higher than in the CATI mode (Holbrook et al., 2003; Hox and De Leeuw, 1994) and there is more control about who actually answers the questionnaire. In the second survey wave, the national research teams were able to select and combine interview modes adapted to their samples and fieldwork options. The choice between different survey modes was possible because many respondents provided further contact details in the questionnaire at the first wave or contact details were updated later on. The available contact information determined the options for choice of mode (for further details, see Gresser and Schacht, 2015).

Studying integration trajectories with SCIP data: methodological challenges

Cross-sectional analysis of all migrants observed at the first wave can still provide dynamic insights into migration-related shifts in behavioural patterns (for religiosity see Diehl and Koenig, 2013; Van Tubergen, 2013) and provide evidence about migration biographies and immigrant selectivity. In addition, longitudinal data are available for about half of the migrants surveyed in the SCIP project. For those characteristics that were also measured retrospectively, information is available for three time-points: time before, soon after, and about 2–3 years after the migration event. These longitudinal data about recent immigrants make it possible to describe the integration processes and to map the integration trajectories of the sampled immigrants groups for the first years in their destination country. They further enable the researcher to test theories that suggest causal explanations of these integration processes more stringently than is possible with comparable cross-sectional data. However, there are a number of implications of the data structure for conducting the substantive analyses presented in this issue.

A first and obvious challenge is posed by panel attrition. Comparisons between the first and the second wave are problematic if the attrition is not completely at random. All papers included in this issue describing integrations trajectories base their analyses on the sample participating in both waves. This restriction to the ‘balanced panel’ may create sample selection problems that limit the generalizability of the evidenced pattern if those who dropped out differ in the relationships of interest from those who took part in the second wave. A careful comparison of the sample staying in the panel and the sample exiting the panel is used to assess whether this is a problem.

A second challenge for the proper description of integration processes is that the integration trajectories may not be linear. Non-linearities cannot be picked up by a simple comparison of two waves. Here, however, the data have the advantage that respondents differ with regard to their length of stay by the time of the first interview. The combination of cross-sectional and longitudinal information can help to

map the integration trajectories over time in a continuous fashion and to reveal non-linearities. The paper of Diehl et al. (2016) illustrates this approach for identification with the residence country. The differences in months since arrival between the respondents and between the waves are exploited to provide a smoothed description how identification changes over time.

Most of the papers aim to test theoretical arguments as to why groups and individuals differ in their early integration level or in their change of integration in the period under consideration. There is, however, considerable debate as to how change should best be modelled. The question that is particularly relevant is whether to use change scores as dependent variables or regress the second measure on the initial level (i.e. lagged dependent variable). The emerging consensus is that regressions of change scores are generally preferable as the results are less affected by error in the initial measurement. Important exceptions are when the lagged dependent variable exerts a direct causal effect on the dependent variable or the lagged dependent variable is causally related to the independent variable of interest (Allison, 1990; Johnson, 2005). For the analyses in this special issue, these exceptions are relevant as in dynamic processes such as language acquisition 'state-dependency' is common, for example additional proficiency gains strongly depend on initial proficiency levels (see Kristen et al., 2016), or self-selection makes it likely that initial differences causally affect independent variables of interest, for example immigrants with strong social-conservative attitudes may avoid exposure to 'liberal' host-country media (see Röder and Lubbers, 2016). In the context of this study, where the first measurement point is very soon after migration, and there is a particular interest in this initial situation and subsequent changes, separate regressions for the initial values and the change scores may present a viable approach.

Another issue for the analyses of change is that the direction of change can have substantive implications. In standard change score (or 'first difference') models, it does not matter in which direction the dependent variable changes and the effects of positive and negative changes of independent variables are assumed to be the same in both directions. However, this is not the case for many aspects of integration processes. For example, getting a job is fundamentally different from exiting the labour force (see Koenig et al., 2016) and the relationship with exposure differs for the development of language skills and for the deterioration of language skills (see Kristen et al., 2016).

Finally, change score or fixed effects (first difference) regressions analyse whether the dependent and independent variables co-vary between the two measurement points and interpret changes in the independent variables as events triggering change in the dependent variable; but with only two waves, we cannot prove the temporal order of the variables. However, for many variables measuring exposure to the residence context, we can reasonably assume that their value at the first measurement represents the change between the pre-migration state and the first measurement point. These variables enable us to get a better grip on the temporal order as they can be used as time-lagged independent variables for changes in the dependent variable occurring between the two measurement points.

Contribution of the special issue

The articles compiled in this issue exemplify the richness of SCIP data by bringing together a series of studies that focus on: the interplay between socio-cultural and other dimensions of integration (Koenig et al., 2016; Röder and Lubbers, 2016); groups of immigrants that have so far received little attention such as students (Luthra and Platt, 2016); topics that mostly make sense when they are studied soon after arrival, such as language acquisition (Kristen et al., 2016), and integration dimensions that show pronounced differences between groups (see Diehl et al., 2016; Gijsberts and McGinnity, 2016)

In all the contributions, the central issue is the socio-cultural position of the recent migrants directly after migration, and what happened in the first years after migration. The contributions mostly focus on socio-cultural changes, since, as outlined above, a strength of the SCIP data is its inclusion of questions on socio-cultural domains. In almost all articles, however, the relationship between economic integration and socio-cultural integration is tackled. There remains, therefore, considerable scope for analysis focusing on changes in economic position of migrants in their early years (e.g. Lubbers and Gijberts, 2013, for a SCIP-based analysis of the Dutch labour market situation among recent migrants). The papers treat change in language proficiency, religiosity, national identification, perceived discrimination, attitudes towards homosexuality and the extent to which student migrants reveal diversity in their economic and social-cultural position. In all cases, they investigate whether there are differences between destination countries or between ethnic groups, and whether the results support the article's theoretical expectations, derived from existing literature.

Despite the variety of topics covered in this special issue, and notwithstanding the variety in ethnic origins of the migrants and destination countries, we find a general pattern that integration progresses where adaptation is necessary to manage everyday life. Kristen et al. show that language proficiency increases among most migrant groups – even more strongly in those countries where migrants only possessed a minimal knowledge of it upon arrival (e.g. Dutch in the Netherlands). Interestingly, the process fostering language proficiency follows a general logic among the different migrant groups in the different destinations. When looking at employment, Koenig et al. find that migrants typically become more integrated in the labour market over time. This is a highly relevant finding, since we studied migrants in a period when the destination countries were passing through hard economic times.

Migrants' socio-cultural integration, in turn, seems to stagnate in the first years after migration, or at least, to be more strongly dependent on the context of the destination country. With respect to their identification with Germany, for example, Diehl et al. show that even though both Poles and Turks start out from similar levels and their identification with the receiving country increases initially, it declines later on for Turks – partly as a reaction to increasing perceptions of discrimination. Röder and Lubbers document that the attitudes towards homosexuality of Polish migrants changed considerably after migration in all destination countries.

They observe an increasing cleavage between Poles adapting to the social-liberal attitudes of the majority population and those whose social-conservative attitudes hardened after migration. Interestingly, migrants who perceive their host country as less welcoming acculturate less on attitudes towards homosexuality. Gijssberts and McGinnity reveal differences between the destination countries in perceived discrimination among recent migrants from Poland and find that Poles in the UK and the Netherlands report more discrimination over time. An overall impression arises that migrants arrive rather optimistically in their countries of destination, but after a period of positivity react less favourably to the country, and, in that case, are more likely to value the country of origin and its related norms and values. This finding is origin group and country specific, and would seem to reflect differences between contexts in the reception of specific migrant groups.

Even though contextual claims cannot be formally tested, given the limited number of origins and destinations in the study, tentative explanations are presented to account for the findings across the different contributions. Migrants to the Netherlands and the UK have witnessed a radically different reception environment than migrants to Ireland and Germany. Yet, although Germans tend to hold more positive attitudes towards migrants than the British (see Figure 1 with results from the European Social Survey from 2010), there are no differences between the Irish and the British and no differences between the Dutch and the Germans in those attitudes. But we have to acknowledge that the political and media discourses around migration have been very different – in particular around East European migrants.

In Ireland and Germany, migration from Poland has hardly been problematised. In the UK and the Netherlands, perceived problems with migration from Eastern European countries have caused parliamentary storms and front-page stories in the (tabloid) press. Nationalist populist parties, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) have made successful political capital out of the subject and placed immigration high on the electoral agendas in both countries, gaining significant support in national and European elections. In the Netherlands, the PVV even launched a ‘Poles’-hotspot, where citizens could complain about Eastern Europeans. It could, therefore, be expected that Poles in the UK and the Netherlands experience a rather different context than in Germany and Ireland; and that is supported by the findings in this special issue. The strong evidence of the relevance of context also comes to the fore in the study on German identification, which makes strikingly clear how reception contexts differ even within European nations. Whereas in the UK and the Netherlands, the problematisation of Eastern Europeans for a while trumped negative discourses targeted at Muslims, in Germany, a more critical debate continued to take place about the Turkish community (see e.g. Sarrazin, 2010). This is associated with the finding of declining German identification among Turks and increasing German identification among Poles.

With respect to the forms of migration, a first attempt is made in this special issue to locate student migration more centrally within developing discourses of

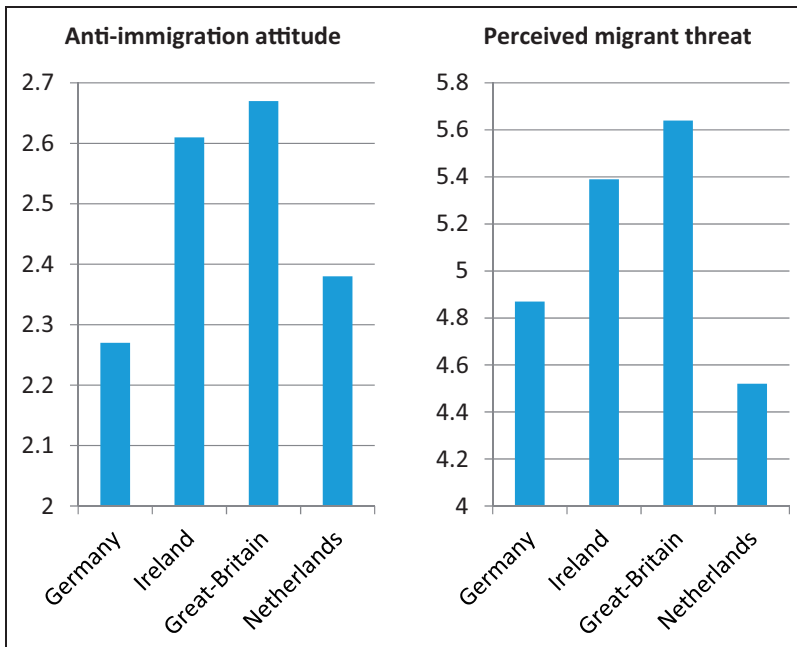


Figure 1. Average anti-immigration attitude¹ (on a scale from 1 to 4) and perceived migrant threat² (on a scale from 0 to 10) in Germany, Ireland, Great Britain and the Netherlands. Source: European Social Survey round 5 (ESS, 2010).

¹The anti-immigration attitude is constructed out of three questions: to what extent do you think [country] should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [country] people to come and live here; How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people; And how about people from the poorer countries in Europe? Respondents could answer (1) 'allow many'; (2) 'allow some'; (3) 'allow a few'; and (4) 'allow none'.

²Perceived migrant threat was measured with three items on a bi-polar scale from 0 to 11, asking respondents to indicate whether it is generally good or bad for the economy that people come to live [in country] from other countries, whether [country's] cultural life is enriched or undermined and whether [country] is made a better or worse place to live by people coming to live here from other countries.

forms of migration that sit squarely neither with labour migration theories nor with the network approaches to family reunification, and that migration and integration research has largely neglected. The contribution by Luthra and Platt broadens the scope of existing research on migration by showing that a large share of recent European migrants comes as students. That is the case among Poles and more particularly Turks in Germany, among Bulgarians and Antilleans in the Netherlands, and it is especially the case among Pakistanis in the UK, particularly those in London. Using the case of current Pakistani student migrations to the UK, the importance of context, in this case in the degree of managed migration, is demonstrated as shaping the type of migration (i.e. student compared to family

or labour), even while leaving many traditional aspects of network migration intact (cf. De Haas, 2011).

Open questions and implications for further research

This review of the contribution of the specific papers raises a number of implications for migration research and highlights areas where our knowledge is still very tentative. In terms of resituating the debate on socio-cultural integration of immigrants, the findings have demonstrated how structural and cultural integration follow rather different pathways in the early years. While structural and economic trajectories are more aligned with classical assimilation theory, as we see, for example, from Kristen et al.'s study of language development, the patterning of cultural and social integration is harder to explain, and the two do not necessarily run in parallel. Hence, it remains necessary to further develop empirically based theoretical accounts of integration processes that can continue to illuminate these findings. From a policy perspective, the findings highlight the potential for capitalising on positive early experiences in the initial stages following migration to support more engaged participation in the host society of new immigrants.

In terms of seeking common theoretical explanations for integration processes across contrasting ethnic groups, the papers have also shown the limitations of such an enterprise. Even though it remains a valid ambition to 'explain' ethnic group effects through better-realized constructs, Koenig et al. illustrate that religiosity, when explored across Catholic as well as Muslim migrant groups, offers little general explanatory power to help account for structural integration trajectories. Instead, they reveal, despite some variation across contexts, that it is the brightness of boundaries between destination and receiving society populations that distinguishes migrants' initial participation and hence overall trajectories. This then leaves the factors implicit in such boundaries to be further explored. The paper, therefore, acts as a salutary reminder against extrapolating the role of religious practice and faith from either religion-specific or context-specific studies. The implication is that migration researchers need to continue to develop our understanding of the interplay between religious behaviour and ethnic/cultural norms. This is a research enterprise that remains challenging, given the strong overlap between ethnic and religious boundaries.

The salience of ethnic boundaries is also an issue highlighted by Diehl et al.'s study of identity trajectories among Turks and Poles in Germany. They show that, while Poles and Turks react in similar ways to triggers for changing identification, the result is that their identity patterns move in opposite directions. Their paper thus highlights the risks of assuming that identity patterns measured after a period of settlement reflect stable identity traits deriving from the country of origin. This can result in cultural explanations for observed differences in identification, rather than seeing them as part of differential social integration processes, linked to bright or blurred ethnic boundaries (Alba, 2005). The paper demonstrates the sensitivity of identification to early discrimination experiences, a relationship that also

features in Gijsberts and McGinnity's study of the determinants of discrimination. Diehl et al. also demonstrate the potential value of longer-term longitudinal follow-up for understanding how identification continues to develop over time from more and less 'optimistic' starting points.

Responsiveness to context is also revealed in Röder and Lubbers' study of acculturation in attitudes towards homosexuality. They demonstrate the complex interplay between orientations towards a society and movement towards normative attitudes in those societies. While current comparative migration research recognises the importance of taking account of both origin and destination characteristics, Röder and Lubbers show how diversity among those from a single origin context complicates the picture. Differential selectivity of migrants across destination countries remains an important issue even when analysing those from the same country and migration cohort. Such selectivity potentially comprises attitudinal as well as socio-demographic factors. Moreover, they highlight the importance of orientation towards the destination country in terms of, for example, intention to stay in shaping attitudinal assimilation. The implication is that researchers need to be careful in extrapolating country of origin attitudinal norms to migrants in diverse destinations, as increasingly occurs in cross-national research, without taking account of how selectivity and migration intentions shape the relationship from the outset. The paper also highlights the need to recognise the diversity, cultural distinctiveness and potential value incompatibility among those who can (and do) exercise freedom of movement throughout Europe.

This latter point is one also made in Gijsberts and McGinnity's paper, but from the perspective of the destination country responses to new migrants. Their paper stresses the need to acknowledge the extensive racialisation of white minorities following EU enlargement. European intra-EU migrants have traditionally been considered 'unproblematic' in much of the previous literature due to the tendency of white migrants to assimilate rapidly and often to represent privileged migration flows. However, there is now an increasing recognition of the ways in which Eastern European migrants are 'othered' and distinguished as 'culturally' problematic in national discourses (MacDowell, 2009). While politicians and civil servants typically focus on the economic contributions and challenges of immigrants, popular opinion has been shown to be much more concerned with cultural distance. And problematisation extends to issues of 'tolerance', such as the attitudinal differences highlighted in Röder and Lubbers' paper (Ryan, 2010). Yet the limited extant evidence on antagonistic attitudes towards Eastern European migrants has largely come from single-country qualitative studies or from opinion polling of majority populations (e.g. Duffy and Frere-Smith, 2014; <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/ipsos-global-advisor-wave-22-immigration-july-2011.pdf>; see also the discussion in Burrell, 2010). Gijsberts and McGinnity use the SCIP data to quantitatively illustrate the extent of perceived discrimination from the perspective of the different new migration populations at the outset of their period of stay. They also illustrate its development over time, with the apparent paradox that has been shown in second generation studies, that increasing

familiarity can lead to increased sensitivity in perceiving sociotropic discrimination. Moreover, the expression of such opinions has the potential to negatively impact migrants' engagement with overtly hostile societies, leading to some extent to self-fulfilling prophecies. Their paper highlights the need for migration studies more comprehensively to acknowledge that racialisation of immigrants is not restricted to 'non-white' or to Muslim populations, and to adopt a more holistic account of ethnic-immigrant antagonism.

As these contributions show, the SCIP project has provided the opportunity to take account of the new configuration of migration in Europe following EU enlargement and the implications of that for the further development of migration research. But recent migrants from third countries are also showing new configurations. Luthra and Platt's paper illustrates how more selective migration regimes and response to expanded intra-EU migration are changing the nature of third country migration. Yet migration theory has not yet caught up with such reconfigurations and both the increasing dominance and the changing meaning of student migration. The time is ripe to exploit longitudinal resources such as SCIP and analysis of migration flows to investigate and extrapolate the likely shape of future foreign-born populations and their position within society. Our study has illustrated that a large part of the new migrant population is highly mobile and moves back and forth between countries of origin and destination, whereas others have a clearer intention to stay. Such intentions – and whether they are realized or not – are shaped, but not determined by migration (visa) status. They also relate to the existence of longstanding ties and to circumstances and dynamics within the origin society and how these articulate with the context of reception. At a time when the migration landscape in Europe is once again being dramatically reshaped, the issue of how newly settling populations interact with their new societies takes on an added resonance. For both migrants who intend to stay longer and those who did not intend to do so, but end up staying longer than anticipated, the data can teach us about the early dynamic trajectories and thus effective routes to a cohesive society.

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Notes

1. More ethnic groups than just two had to be included in the Netherlands in order to reach targets in this small country; while in Ireland, only Poles could be surveyed because unlike the other three countries Ireland has become a country of immigration only recently.

2. In Germany, everyone has to register who plans to stay in the country for more than two months. New migrants could only be identified as such when they registered at their first address in Germany. In the Netherlands migrants have to register once they stay longer than 4 months in the country.

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