

REVIEWS:

THE DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT IN EUROPE: A STATE OF THE ART

Rinus Penninx, Maria Berger and Karen Kraal (eds.)
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*Galina Cornelisse**

In all European states, immigration and integration policies occupy the centre stage of contemporary political and public discourse. This acute interest is driven by a great diversity of factors, one of which is certainly the steep increase of resident immigrants in Europe over the last two decades. Moreover, international migration is changing in character, and likewise the connotations of integration have shifted in contemporary societies: from a mere focus on work, education, and political and social participation to encompass a far wider field of social and institutional relations. Patterns of migration and settlement – policy areas that are becoming increasingly intertwined – are uneven and shifting, complex and specific. The “new geography of immigration” and changing forms of settlement are intricately linked to the diffuse process of globalisation, as one of the editors of this book writes in the introductory chapter. These diverse developments have prompted a sharp proliferation of research on migration and integration in Europe. This book provides a much needed state of the art of such research and in so doing, it aims to identify important gaps in current research and to recommend directions for future research. This is effectively done by presenting a thematic overview of research in nine areas, which have been grouped together under three overarching themes.

Chapters 2-3 focus on processes of international migration in a substantive manner. Chapter 2 describes and analyses the influence of the economy and the society of destination countries in Europe on international migration. As the chapter signals *inter alia* a lack of empirical data on “illegal” immigration and prioritises the development of better insight in this phenomenon in future research, it is somewhat disappointing that a more substantive review of existing literature on the intricate relation of this (extremely diverse) phenomenon with contemporary admission practices *and* economic structures in receiving countries is lacking. Chapter 3 addresses factors that determine why some people do and some do *not* migrate from a sending country perspective and it discusses the link between migration and development with a specific focus on remittances sent home by migrants. These two chapters taken together show that, even though research in this area has moved beyond traditional explanations merely in terms of push-pull factors generated by an uneven world, it still lacks essential analytical tools and empirical data to comprehensively analyse other relevant dynamics. A good example of this constitutes the lack of *adequate mise en oeuvre* of the intriguing concept of a *culture of migration*, a discourse that portrays migration as the dominant strategy for social mobility while ignoring local strategies for success (p. 46).

* Lecturer, Institute of Constitutional and Administrative Law, Utrecht University.

Chapters 4-7 deal with research on different dimensions of the process of settlement and integration. In Chapter 4, the literature on migrants' citizenship is reviewed with the help of three analytical concepts: *political opportunity structure*, *political integration* and *political transnationalism*. This threefold perspective is inspiring, not only because it integrates and sheds new light on existing research in this area, but also because it provides clear directions for future research in under-explored areas, such as the link between institutional opportunity structures and migrants' political choices and activities; the way in which migrants combine or choose between various political identities and statuses; and the impact of interaction between citizenship policies in sending and receiving states. Also stimulating is the authors' observation that current research has not sufficiently addressed the question how European citizenship has affected the status of third-country nationals (p. 81). Recent legal developments prove that researchers can indeed no longer afford to ignore this complex and ambiguous relationship.

In Chapter 5, migration research in economics is reviewed according to the concept of economic integration – “the general ability to pay and the effort to gain this ability by either selling services or goods” (p. 100). This formal concept in economics exposes the link between processes of immigration and settlement, and if only therefore (but there is much more), any researcher working in the field will benefit from the chapter's analysis of the strength and weaknesses of economic approaches to migration research.

Chapters 6 and 7 respectively address the social and the cultural/religious/linguistic dimension of integration processes. In Chapter 6, the authors propose a relational approach to the study of social integration, entailing a focus on the ways in which people interact and form mutual interdependencies, as a more fruitful analysis of various processes of social integration of migrants, in contrast to one that merely concentrates on any category or group of people. The second part of Chapter 6 is mainly concerned with literature on residential segregation, and the main concern of the authors is the development of adequate methodologies to measure actual spatial segregation; perceptions of this phenomenon; and related issues such as accessibility of education and health resources.

The subject matter of Chapter 7 – cultural, religious and linguistic diversity – is ambitious in its range. The authors' success in providing a comprehensive analysis of existing research, and in identifying the main tasks for future research, is without a doubt also due to the fact that this contribution stands out in the volume by its readability. The concepts of multiculturalism and diversity are red lines running through the chapter and it points at important shifts in current public debate, such as the reassessment of multiculturalism, that need to be further explored in the future. My only regret is that the section on theoretical and normative perspectives regarding religious diversity does not include literature that may contribute to placing contemporary developments in Europe in a broader perspective of global trends such as the resurgence of religion, the mobilisation of secularism and the growth of trans-national religious networks.

The remaining chapters before the conclusion deal with a number of inter-related themes. Chapter 8 provides a review of research relating to identity, interethnic relations, and discrimination. Issues of representation are included in this chapter's overview of theories and methodologies that have been developed to describe and understand relations between immigrants and receiving societies.

Chapter 9 takes a very different approach by attempting to bring “time into the conceptualisation of migration” (p. 259). The authors show convincingly that in the field of migration related research, the linkage between historical and geographical approaches can bring to light novel insights and interesting venues for future research, which are also relevant for other topics dealt with in the book, such as transnationalism; processes of migration and their regulation; and identity related issues. The remainder of the chapter addresses the socio-demographic dimensions of processes of migration in Europe with a specific focus on family, gender and generations. Although the four axes of analysis in this chapter are clearly related, gender deserves a more independent state-of-the-art report in the book. The authors are right to mention that overstressing the gender dimension as a response to the gender ignorance of many scholars is unproductive (p.259), but the two pages that the book explicitly affords to the gender dimension are too meagre and they do not do justice to existing literature addressing the way in which not only processes of migration are gendered, but also the laws and policies dealing with them.

In chapter 10, the multilevel governance of migration and integration is dealt with by focusing on various governmental levels of policy making; and the informal or semi-formal processes of policymaking that involve participation of non-governmental actors. Again, this chapter has important interfaces with other chapters in the book, such as the discussion of the impact of immigrants’ mobilisation and political participation on policy making processes, topics that were also dealt with in Chapter 4.

The conclusions in Chapter 11 synthesise the findings of the previous chapters by calling attention to the fragmented nature of research in international migration and settlement in Europe. Such fragmentation seems to be mainly due to a lack of interdisciplinary research and comparative approaches; a lack of useful empirical data; and the contested nature of some of the central concepts in this field. In addition to remedying these methodological shortcomings, the authors recommend the development of new theoretical and analytical perspectives on immigration, such as a reconceptualisation of the relation between immigration and settlement, and between migration and the core structures of immigrant-receiving societies.

In this respect, it is unfortunate that this book pays relatively little attention, with a few notable exceptions, to contemporary developments in the disciplines of law, history and political philosophy. For example, in chapter 8, theories on the link between the identity of the body politic, state sovereignty, and the legal and political regulation of international immigration are conspicuously absent. More generally, as the very concept of international migration is contingent on that of the nation state, the inclusion of research that deals with the intricate link between the development of the nation state, its sovereign claim to distinguish the “inside” from the “outside”, and the legal regulation of human mobility would have been welcome.

Overall, this book is a timely and immensely valuable state of the art review. It provides essential reading for any researcher working in the field of migration and settlement, who cannot afford to remain ignorant of important developments in other disciplines, as the book as a whole convincingly demonstrates. Even more importantly, it calls attention to the fragmentation of current research and proposes

constructive and practical ways forward to augment our knowledge about a phenomenon that will be of growing importance in the years to come.

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