INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN BELGIUM:
Ethnos vs. Demos

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BELÇİKA'DA GÖÇMENLERİN ENTEGRASYONU:
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to discuss the integration policies for migrants in Belgium. Despite the international and supra-national developments, it is still the nation-state, which overwhelmingly shapes and influences the process of integration. In line with the ethno-cultural and socio-economic differences between the two regions, the Flemish and Walloon apply diverse policies toward immigrants, those being the multicultural and assimilationist ones respectively. The two differing ways of organising integration in Flanders and Wallonia consider less the characteristics and requirements of the immigrants and their descendants and more the links that the immigrants establish with the two linguistic communities. Brussels, meanwhile, is more in a in-between position because of the authority of both the Flemish and Walloon communities in the Region and the concentration of its highly EU-origin and new naturalised Belgians among the residents. Studying these diverse policy approaches through examples from the fields of education, employment, religion, and political and associational participation reveals that the integration policies require improvements in line with a more liberal, interactionist, and inclusionary model.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı Belçika'nın göçmenlerin entegrasyonu konusundaki politikalarını ele almaktır. Uluslararası ve ulus-üstü gelişmelere rağmen, entegrasyon sürecini büyük ölçüde şekillendiren ve etkileyen hala ulus-devlettir. İki bölge arasındaki etno-kültürel ve sosyo-ekonomik farklılıklara uygun olarak, Flaman ve Valonlar, sırasıyla çokkültürlülük ve asimilasyon olmak üzere, göçmenlere karşı farklı politikalar uygulamaktadırlar. Fakat Flaman ve Valon bölgelerinde entegrasyonu düzenleyen bu iki farklılaşan yöntem, göçmenlerin ve yakınlarının özellik ve ihtiyaçlarından daha çok onların bu iki farklı dile sahip toplulukla kurdukları bağları dikkate almaktadır. Brüksel, bu sırada, bölgedeki hem Flaman hem Valon otoritesi ve yüksek oranda AB kökenli ve yeni Belçikalılaşan sakinlerinin yoğunluğu sebebiyle daha *arada* bir pozisyondadır. Bu birbirinden farklı siyasal yaklaşımları eğitim, istihdam, din ve siyasal ve örgütsel katılım alanlarından örneklerle incelemek ortaya çıkarmıştır ki, entegrasyon politikalarının daha liberal, etkileşimci ve kapsayıcı bir modele uygun olarak iyileştirmelere ihtiyacı vardır.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARGO: Autonomous Council for Community Education

CCCI: Conseils Communaux Consultatifs des Immigrés / Consultative City Councils of Immigrants

CCIF: an advisory body for migrants in the French-speaking Community

CCPOE: the advisory body for population groups of foreign origin of the French-speaking Community

CEOOR: Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism

COCOF: French Community Commission in the Brussels-Capital Region

CRI: Regional Integration Centre / Centre Régionaux d'Intégration

CVP: Christelijke Volkspartij / Christian People's Party

FOREM: Office Wallon pour L'emploi et la Formation / Walloon Office for Employment and Training

GGC: Common Community Commission

ICEM: Commission for Ethnic Cultural Minorities

IRFAM: Institut de Recherche, Formation et Action sur les Migrations / Institute of Research, Training and Action about Migrations

NIS: National Institute for Statistics

SME: small and medium-sized enterprise

VDAB: Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling / Flemish Public Employment Service

VGC: Vlaams Gewest Commissie / Commission of Region of Flanders

INTRODUCTION

Immigration has always been an element contributing to the diverse socio-cultural and ethnic composition of any nation-state. In fact, such diversity is, by definition, a characteristic of the nation-state in the modern world, since the overlap of the nation with the state is just an ideal, hardly exemplified in practice. Nation-states are composed of diverse ethno-cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic groups due to the existence of internal minorities, or the settlement of new ones through immigration flows, asylum-seeking or border changes (Kymlicka, 1996). In case of Belgium, the effects of immigrants should be considered against the socio-economically and ethno-linguisticly diverse background of the country. In Belgium, the immigrants try to settle down in a context, which is already divided along the Flemish-Walloon ethno-linguistic and socio-economic dichotomy. A state of multiculturalism to some degree has been the norm, not the exception, in the Western Europe for a long time (Isin and Wood, 1999). In this sense, Belgium embodies the different views, which compete on the topic of ethnic integration within the European framework, in a micro-cosmos.

After so many years since the first economic migrant has landed on Europe after the World War II, integration still remains as one of the basic issues discussed both politically and academically. Problems are seen to arise from the increasing demands of immigrant groups for special group rights, recognition, exemption from duties, and support from the state for their cultural identities. In the face of growing dissatisfaction on the part of immigrants, scepticism about states' capacity to manage immigration, hence integration increases (Statham and Koopmans, 2004).

It is partially this scepticism, which has triggered my interest in the study of the migrant integration policies of Belgium. Although for a complete analysis of these policies also the effects in practice are required to be studied, an account of these policies will provide an insight on the perspective of the central and local authorities. In dealing with its minorities, and the immigrants in particular, a state is confronted with various policy options. In Belgium, the Flemish-speaking North and the French-speaking South have opted for two different approaches, the multiculturalist and the assimilationist ones respectively, while Brussels with a more *sui generis* status due to its highly-concentrated EU-origin immigrants, is in-between these two positions. However, there are also some occasions when each region adapts the

approach of the other. In general terms, while Flanders supports a culturally pluralistic treatment of its immigrants, Wallonia prefers a more unitary policy outlook, which requires the melting-down of immigrants into the social, cultural structure of the receiving society and aims at civilising them.

Aims of the Study

This study aims at explaining the Belgian migrant integration policies, which have been shaped along Flemish and Walloon lines because of the requirements of the federal structure. While the federal government has the responsibility on immigration policy, the development of integration policy falls under the jurisdiction of communities and regions. Thus, one may talk about a Belgian immigration policy, however different integration policies. Under the influence of the Dutch and Anglo-Saxon models, the Flemish Community of Belgium has developed a multiculturalist approach towards its immigrants, in which they are recognised and treated differently. The French-speaking Community, on the other hand, has a republican assimilationist stance, imported from France, which prevents the acceptance of immigrants as specific ethno-cultural groups and aims at civilising them in a melting pot. One of the aims of this study is to exemplify the extent to which the policies of Flanders and Wallonia diverge and converge and where Brussels stands among these two approaches.

The minorities of a nation-state are multiple. EU-national residents, ex-colonial groups, recruited immigrant workers, refugees and asylum-seekers, accepted illegal migrants (illegal but are known to authorities and tolerated as long as they are economically useful), and rejected illegal immigrants are among the ethnic and socio-economic groups, for which the receiving state and society have to develop strategies and policies (Pettigrew, 1998). The focus of this particular study is, however, on the first wave of economic immigrants to Belgium after World War II, in the late-1940s-1970s, especially after bilateral agreements are concluded among Belgium and the respective emigrant countries. Indeed, these are the groups, who have remained quite marginalised and vulnerable to political, social, and economic discrimination, although they have arrived in Belgium through approved channels of immigration.

Despite all the transnational and supranational developments, the respective national institutions in the settlement countries still constitute the main body of decision-makers and initiators of integration in most of the spheres. It is the political establishment of and the institutional opportunities provided by the settlement country, which manage the implementation of inclusion and exclusion mechanisms. In the educational sphere, for instance, there is an institutional or even cultural core in which immigrants should incorporate in order to achieve some relevant goals. In the long run, mainly for the second generation of migrants, generalised forms of capital, such as a universally and contextually adequate language, social ties which are not limited within the sphere of an ethnic community, and knowledge proven in certificates, emerge as expectations immigrants should fulfil so that they can attain an improved position in social life (Faist, 2004). According to Ireland's (2000) institutional channelling theory, the legal and political institutions shape and limit immigrants' options for actions. It is the state and its subunits, which provide institutional opportunities or impediments for the immigrants to integrate. In accordance, the conditions for access to political and civil rights, the degree of openness of political parties and civil society associations, the electoral system are among the factors designating the political opportunity structure (Jacobs, 2000). Thus, the political mobilisation and claims-making of immigrants are strongly shaped by the context of the receiving nation-state and are not significantly oriented toward, and influenced by supranational institutions, or transnational discourses and identities (Koopmans, 2004). Although the influence of transnational structures and developments cannot be overlooked, particularly in case the state authorities have strong reservations against any procedure or decision, they still have high discretionary power.

Methodology

This study is an explanatory one, aimed at discussing the policies of integration for immigrants in Belgium. Due to the federal structure of the country, there are different approaches toward immigrant groups in each of the three regions, although they converge at some points. After a general overview of the integration policies and the legislative developments, the situation in Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels are discussed within the examples of education, employment, religion, and political and associational participation.

Literature survey constitutes the backbone of the methodology. The data to compare and contrast the divergence and convergence of the integration policies of Flanders, Wallonia, as well as the Brussels-Capital Region are collected from surveys and reports of Belgian federal/regional institutions, EU-related bodies, universities, and independent research agencies.

The concept of integration, in this study, is handled as a two-way process, involving actions of both the immigrants and the settlement state and society. It is argued that there are responsibilities for each party in this process of integration. However, since due to the limits of this study and the current material conditions, the conduct of a field research has been unattainable, the effects of the policies on immigrants could not be included in the current study. It mainly dealt with the official discourse and practices of the federal/regional authorities on the issue.

State of the Art

For centuries, migration has been a part of world history and in a sense the basis of Europe. Hundreds of millions of people in the world live outside the country in which they were born. Most of this human movement occurs within regions and in developing countries. Indeed, migratory movements have played an important role in the establishment of the modern economic, social, and political principles of Europe. Immigrants in economic, political or social terms have coupled the process of the development of the modern Europe (Sassen, 1999; Bentley, 2003; Faist, 2004).

There have been important studies on the core issues of migration in Europe (Sassen, 1988 [1999], 2006; Bauböck, 1994; Soysal, 1994; Kymlicka, 1996; Joppke 1998; Brettell and Hollifield, 2000; Pries, 2001; Rogers and Tillie, 2001; Faist, 2004). This issue has been investigated through time, space and cultures. The academic interest coupled the societal and political concern about how to understand and handle the growing numbers of immigrants in Europe. In fact, despite its long history, the issue of immigrants has only recently become part of the European political agenda, mainly since the late-1970s and early-1980s. As Sassen (1988 [1999]) points out, especially since the 1970s, European states have become similar in terms of their policies concerning immigrants, through imposing limits on further

immigration, encouraging voluntary return migration, and providing the integration of permanent and second-generation immigrants.

Integration is a process through which immigrants and other non-citizens achieve in law and in practice the same entitlements as citizens, and through which they secure the recognition of and respect for particular religious or cultural requirements (Hansen, 2003). It is a two-way process, in which two main dimensions appear as the area of manoeuvre, i.e. the countries of settlement and the immigrants themselves. Differential exclusion, assimilation, multiculturalism, and cultural pluralism are among the policy options of countries of settlement. The immigrants, on the other hand, may choose among the options of integration, separation, assimilation, or marginalisation (*Table 1*).

Table 1: Migrants' Strategies in a Bi-dimensional Model of Acculturation

		Do I want to establish good relations with the host culture?	
		Yes	No
Do I want to maintain good relationships with my culture of origin?	Yes	Integration	Separation/Segregation
	No	Assimilation	Marginalisation

Source: J.W. Beey and D. Sam, 1997 (cited in Van de Vijver and Phalet, 2004)

Assimilation, on the other hand, is a one-sided model of adaptation on the part of immigrants. It is based on the complete absorption of the norms and lifestyle of the host country, whereby immigrants are expected to discard their culture and social practices of origin (Morawska, 2003). Assimilation leaves the immigrants with two outstanding options, either melting into the culture of the host country or return to the country of origin (Leman and Pang, 2002).

A discussion of the notion of integration, indeed, paves the way for a deconstruction of citizenship. Citizenship is the expression of membership in a political community (Booth, 1997). In terms of Walzer this is a community of character, values, memories, forms of life - in short, a community of a shared identity. Thus, citizenship is not just a status, defined by rights and responsibilities, but it is also an identity, However, contrary to this ideal definition, the practice had been mainly dominated by attributing some ethno-cultural connotations to

citizenship and grounding it on the principle of jus sanguinis, the principle of blood. Thus, strong ties are constructed among citizenship, nation, and ethnicity. Only with the more general acceptance of the jus soli principle has it become attainable to distinguish one's citizenship and ethnicity.

T. H. Marshall was an influential figure for the formation of citizenship literature. He mainly contributed to the explanation of the link between the national capitalist development and the concept of national citizenship, deriving from the British experience. The Marshallian model has concentrated on the development and granting of civic, political, and social rights in a linear fashion (Marshall and Bottomore, 1950/1992). However, this model is little help in explaining the developments in this area especially since the 1970s. In fact, with the increasing globalisation, embodied in migratory flows, the development of human rights regimes, the extension of responsibilities of individual nation-states beyond their borders in terms of refugees, environment, or humanitarian intervention, etc. necessitate the development of a more comprehensive concept of citizenship (Ong, 2007; Turner 2006; Kaya, 2003; Isin and Wood, 1999; Soysal, 1994). Today, citizenship is not only defined in civic, social, and political terms but also in terms of culture. Indeed, the recognition of cultural membership for individuals is an annex to Marshall's theory (Rex, 1996).

Another important aspect of the issue of citizenship is related to the status of non-citizens. Today, there are a substantial number of people in Western Europe without having the citizenship of their countries of settlement. However, their lack of this membership does not impede that they enjoy similar economic, legal, and social rights with citizens of these countries, including rights to welfare, social services, unemployment benefits, and medical insurance. These citizenship rights are extended to non-citizens on the basis of prolonged residence and from then on, they are called denizen, the term coined by Hammar in 1990 (Kostokopulou, 2002). However, these rights are not only limited for denizens. There are also some cases, in which even asylum-seekers, short-term foreign residents, those without legal documents are granted more rights than before (Isin and Wood, 1999).

In its initial introduction after the French Revolution, citizenship was aiming at the removal of inequality among the residents of a country in guaranteeing the equal distribution of rights among citizens of the same country. However, today it has, in a sense, become a tool of political exclusion, since less and less people living in the same country possess the same

citizenship (Beckman, 2006). Furthermore, it is argued that even if these groups are granted the same rights, these common rights of citizenship fall short of accommodating the special needs of minority groups (Isin and Wood, 1999). The differentiated citizenship of the multiculturalist approach functions more as a device for essentialising the diversities rather than contributing to a sense of community within the members (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994). Each different group in the society experiences citizenship at a different level. For immigrants, this differentiating attitude of the state authorities coupled with the categorising manner of the receiving society paves the way to isolation in social life.

Multiculturalism requires that states recognise ethno-culturally differentiated groups in their societies and maintain the necessary conditions providing these groups an equal status with the majority. However, it is also argued that multiculturalism should be applied in such a manner that it depicts diversity within a nation as well as within the individuals of this nation (Isin and Wood, 1999). A further prerequisite, meanwhile, is that states leave aside the ideal of "one nation, one state". In this context, at the first glance, multiculturalism appears as a challenge against nationalism, since it stipulates a split among the nation and the state (Taylor, 1994). However, multiculturalism, to some extent, is a form of neo-nationalism, in the sense that it imposes one dominant culture within a society, subordinating the others to it. It is considered as a manipulative policy, enabling the state to control and subjugate its minorities through rendering them static (Rex, 1996). In this sense, this aspect of the issue is tightly related to the problem of the essentialisation of the "other". Multiculturalist policies provide the minorities a sense of representation. However, this representation is only a pseudo one, in the sense that in return of some concessions as rights and funds, the state "buys" the loyalty of its minorities.

Although in enabling groups to enjoy their cultural differences, multiculturalist policies do not intend to restrict these groups in their cultural sphere, there are critiques against multiculturalism in this respect. It is argued that multiculturalist policies can sometimes fall in the trap of limiting individuals' –groups' in this context- options for possible identities. In applying multiculturalism, the state may dictate or implicitly impose the minorities to act according to only one identity, meaning that they have to decide among their multiple identities for a single one to define themselves permanently, that being based on ethnicity, religion, class, or gender. It is only through the determination of this single aspect of

identity to define themselves that the minorities are enabled to become subjects of recognition and differentiated treatment by the majority society (Turner, 2006).

Immigrants should be granted equal rights in all realms of society, while they are allowed to maintain their diversity. In the realm of rights, multiculturalism contributes the cultural body of rights next to civic, political, and social rights. The liberalisation of naturalisation procedures and the introduction of anti-discrimination policies are among the main elements of multiculturalist policies besides the right to collective cultural differences and the differentiated treatment, which is observed by rules (Castles, 1998). This body of rights is mainly related to the group/community rather than the individual. Multicultural policies allow for the formation and further development of different communities in the nation-state.

In fact, states have often resorted to *de facto* multiculturalism in the pursuit of their own interests. Mother-tongue education is one of the examples of such a policy. It serves the interests of the state through either keeping the return option open or allowing immigrants to acquire the domestic language and domestic "rules of the game" more easily. A further measure, applied in this manner, relates to ethnic organisations. As long as these organisations are recognised as sounding boards for grievances in need of correction by the state (Joppke and Morawska, 2003), the possibilities and capacities of their members for expressing, communicating, and maintaining themselves are hampered substantially. With such an essentialist multicultural approach, the cultural attributes of immigrants are viewed through a superficial lens, limiting them in the domains of language, food or religion. Such an exotification coupled with inadequate institutionalisation triggers the critiques of multiculturalism (Russon, 1995). In the treatment of immigrants, a pseudo-multiculturalist attitude may reveal, in which, while increasing the social capital of its population through immigration, the nation-state meanwhile appeals to a form of governmentality to sustain its sovereignty. In this case, multiculturalist policies become a tool for states to maintain and further their power and sphere of influence (Turner, 2006). It is at this point, where the boundaries of multiculturalism and assimilation blur and the policies cause almost similar effects from empirical and theoretical perspectives. It is one of the aspects of this current study to locate the integration policies of each Belgian Region within this context of policy convergence and divergence.

Scope of the Study

The study consists of two main chapters. The first chapter is on the establishment of a unitary Belgian state and its eventual transition to a federal one. The unification of south Netherlands people in 1830, after decades of French and Austrian rule, was due to face ethno-linguistic and socio-economic challenges through time. Although the Constitution had guaranteed freedom for language, in 1831, the introduction of French as the official language sowed the first seeds of a highly-intense linguistic conflict and paved the way towards Belgian federalism. The linguistic demands of the Flemish Movement were eventually fulfilled with the establishment of two unilingual zones in Flanders and Wallonia in 1962-1963. After the gradual constitutional changes (1970, 1981, 1989), Belgium was declared a federal state in 1993. The ethno-cultural and socio-economic differences among Flanders and Wallonia, leading to the federal Belgium, influenced as well as their conceptualisations of national identity, and, thus, the way they treat immigrants. After a discussion of these two different conceptualisations of national identity, the chapter concludes with a review of the process of immigration to Belgium, especially in the post-war period. In fact, Belgium's migration history initiates in the 19th century with the internal migration of Flemish to Wallonia in search for recruitment in coal and iron industries. After World War I, however, recruiting foreign workers had become necessary for the Walloon economy and industry. With the increasing shortage of labour supply after World War II, Belgium constructed more institutionalised ways of importing foreign labour and concluded various bilateral agreements with respective countries, i.e. with Italy in 1946, Spain in 1956, Greece in 1957, Morocco and Turkey in 1964, Tunisia in 1969, and Algeria and Yugoslavia in 1970.

The second chapter of the study deals with the respective integration policies of the Flemish and Walloon communities. While immigration policies manage the access, stay and removal of immigrants at the federal level, the more culturally and socially inclined aspects of integration are coped by the communities and regions. In a sense, there are two and a half integration policies in Belgium, i.e. those of the Flemish, Walloon, and the more in-between position of Brussels-Capital Region. Since integration is a multidimensional process with socio-economic, cultural, and religious connotations, the diverse stances of each region are discussed and compared within the areas of education, employment, religion, and political and associational participation.

CHAPTER I

MIGRATION AND THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE OF BELGIUM

From Unitary to Federal State

The Kingdom of Belgium, in itself, presents a rather complex configuration of territorial identity even without taking its substantial amount of immigrant population into consideration. A discussion of the migration and integration policies of Belgium, in the first place, must take account of the wider political and ethno-cultural background of the country. In fact, *the Belgian identity coexists with a strong Flemish identity in the North, with a weaker Walloon identity in the South, and with a tentative expression of Brussels consciousness in the Capital Region*, further complicated with a smaller German-speaking identity in the German-speaking Region (Lecours, 2001: 51). These linguistic cleavages date back to the initial unification of the south Netherlands peoples in 1830, although the divisions were accommodated within the founding bargain, in accordance with the Belgian tradition of compromise (*le compromise à la belge*) (Lefebvre, 2003).

After the rebellion of the Netherlands provinces against Austrian rule, in 1790, the United Netherlands States was established. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna created the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. The imperial governance of the Dutch King William I imposed the incorporation of the southern and predominantly Catholic provinces of Brabant, Hainaut and Liège into the Netherlands. The Belgians considered the new administration more as domination by Holland. Thus, the movement for freedom, initiated by Catholics and liberals, turned into a civil war and eventually into a national revolution in 1830. The unification of the south Netherlands peoples was based on a manufactured sense of national identity. The cultural tensions were not solved but only overlooked with a pragmatic search for a consensus and harmony rather than for a unity resulting from a general will (Vos, 1996).

From its initial phase on, in 1830, the Belgian state preferred the prevention of social, religious, and linguistic conflicts in accordance with the Belgian tradition of compromise (*le compromise à la belge*). The preferred means to achieve the harmony was not unity but separation, through the creation of "pillars", which are societal clusters adapted to discussion and compromise. Each pillar had its own political party, trade union, employers' association,

etc. The first ideological-religious cleavage was along the lines of a Catholic-Liberal division. In socio-economic terms, the more agricultural Flemish North and the more industrialised Walloon South of the country composed the lines of separation. Indeed, the Catholic tendency was concentrated in the more agricultural Dutch-speaking North, the socialist were in the industrial and French-speaking South, while the liberals of the bilingual service sector dominated Brussels. The Flemish-Walloon socio-economic division was also reflected on the ethno-cultural realm due to the increasing linguistic tensions. The Flemish Movement, established in 1840, supported the linguistic separation in the public sphere (Lefebvre, 2003). Although the Constitution of 1831 recognised the freedom to speak either Dutch or French, a law in the same year imposed French as the official language (O'Neill, 2000). The movement for the rejection of French as the official language began with the Flemish lower clergy and teachers, and later on included the intellectuals, who followed a romantic interpretation of identity in terms of the "cultural Flemish genius" known worldwide for its painting, literature, architecture, etc. and supported the restoration of the glory of Flanders. In accordance with these lines, the Movement also explicitly stipulated its agenda for the ethnic and territorial separation of Flanders from Wallonia. Since the 1831 Constitution was explicit in establishing freedom of language, the Flemish Movement had the legal means to advance its linguistic demands until 1970 without the need for a constitutional amendment (Lefebvre, 2003).

In the late-19th century, the Flemish Movement pursued an agenda, which was both linguistically and territorially defined. The Movement aimed at the use of the Flemish language in education, public administration, courts, as well as other areas of public and civic life. It wanted to create a Flemish Belgian culture that would make its own unique contribution to European civilisation. A Flemish sub-nation emerged within the greater Belgian nation, while a Flemish ethnic and national identity began to develop (Vos, 1996). In 1898, Dutch was recognised as an official language alongside French, which marked a major victory for Flemish nationalists.

As a unitary state, the Belgian project was bound to experience centrifugal tensions once Flemish identity began to assert itself over language rights, when the region was experiencing both political self-confidence, economic prosperity and demographic supremacy (O'Neill, 2000). The ideological promotion of ethnicity and racial origin in the 20th century has contributed to the consolidation of the Flemish identity, threatening the very existence of the country. The period between the two world wars witnessed the emergence of many points

of conflict among the prominent Flemish-speaking and Francophone groups in Belgium (Lecours, 2001). During World War II, the German *Flamenpolitik* accommodated the Flemish goals with the aim of undermining Belgian unity and resistance. With this support, the Flemish improved their position in educational and judicial fields (Cartrite, 2002).

The linguistic divisions had reached their peak by the 1960s. The government, aware of the strength of Flemish and Walloon nationalisms, preferred to contain both of them through a strategy of linguistic pacification. Eventually, with the linguistic laws, Flanders secured unilingual status in 1962 and the cultural autonomy with it. The country was divided into two unilingual zones of the Flemish-speaking and the French-speaking, but the status of Brussels was to be determined at a later time (Lecours, 2001). Prior to 1960s, language rights were mainly a Flemish grievance, and Walloon concerns were primarily economic. Thereafter, economic and cultural issues became fused in both communities. The increasingly strong identity within Flanders was confronted by an anti-Flemish feeling in Wallonia and to a lesser extent in Brussels. The established national parties, once ranged along the traditional Left-Right ideological spectrum, divided into linguistic groups. Each linguistic community has its own ideologically-differentiated party. Indeed, this differentiation renders the negotiation of stable coalition governments difficult, since each party, in one respect, develops its political agenda in accordance with its linguistic concerns (O'Neill, 2000).

The rise of separatist tendencies meant that reconciling both communities to the idea of a unitary state was no longer achievable. The concern was to accommodate competing territorial interests within a federal structure rather than allowing partition. The reform project was launched in 1970, for the beginning concentrating on issues where compromise was more likely to achieve. The constitutional amendment in 1970 created three cultural communities, *the Flemish-speaking Community, the Francophone Community, and the German-speaking Community* (EMN, 2006b). An obligation was introduced to have an equal number of French-speaking and Flemish-speaking ministers in the government. In addition, it was accepted that all further institutional reforms were to be made under the principle of double majority, which corresponds to two-thirds of the parliament (Lefebvre, 2003). This equal representation right, provided for the French-speaking Community at the federal level, found its correspondence for the Flemish at the regional level with the settlement of the status of Brussels. The French-speaking Community, a minority at the federal level, and the Flemish-speaking, a minority at

the regional level in Brussels, are represented in an equal manner with the majority in the governments of the corresponding levels.

In the 1980s, two language communities were instituted, with their jurisdictions being extended beyond cultural policies. While the regions of Flanders and Wallonia were established, Brussels remained the principal outstanding issue. The Flemish Community and the Region of Flanders merged in the late-1980s, thereby the Community acquiring the representative position for the Flemish (ibid. : 127). In financial terms, the main source of revenue for the Communities remained grant aid from the centre, with the central revenue department continuing to collect taxes and direct the national finances. Between 1980 and 1993, a programme was implemented, including the establishment of an arbitration court, introduction of extra fiscal powers for communities and regions, additional devolution from central government in education, culture and language policy, transport, public works, energy policy, environment, supervision of local authorities, town and country planning and scientific research (Fitzmaurice, 1999). These have been some of the steps enabling the federalisation of the Belgian state.

With the eventual settlement of the status of Brussels in 1989, Francophones secured regional status for the city, while the Flemish minority community secured a guaranteed role in the governance of the new region in proportion to its demographic size (Swenden and Jans, 2006). The resolution of the Brussels question, however, has confirmed an asymmetrical federalism in Belgium. In fact, the Council of the Brussels-Capital Region divides into its linguistic constituencies when dealing with community matters, but sits as a composite body when common or regional issues are discussed. In order to ensure maximum consensus, as well as to reassure the Flemish minority, some responsibility for the city's affairs remains with central government, and the city-region's legislation has less formal authority than that of the other two regions. The arbitration court retains the right to overrule Brussels' legislation if it is deemed to be contrary to an acceptable national standard of communal equity and non-discrimination. The executive must also be communally balanced (O'Neill, 2000). The government of the Region of Brussels-Capital consists of one prime minister, four ministers and three secretaries of state. The prime minister is chosen by the parliament of the Region of Brussels-Capital, which in turn is elected on linguistically-divided lists. While there is no guaranteed minimum representation of the Flemish in the parliament, they enjoy a guaranteed representation in the government, since each language group appoints its own two

ministers for the regional cabinet. In addition, the government has to take decisions on a consensus basis. There is an alarm bell system that can stop any decision which the Flemish deems to be unacceptable. The advantageous position of the Flemish in Brussels is balanced by a favourable situation for the Francophones at the national level. Although the Francophones are in a minority in Belgium, they have been granted the right to an equal number of ministers in the federal government. There is also an alarm bell system at the federal level, in which both language groups can block decisions, which they deem to be detrimental to their own situation (Jacobs, 2000).

Eventually, the gradual territorialisation of the linguistic divisions led to the emergence of the Belgian federal state. In federal Belgium, the society is still organised along ideological and socio-economic pillars, however, now, these pillars are divided along linguistic lines of Flemish and French (Jacobs and Rea, 2006). Since around 1970, the significant national Belgian political parties have been split along their linguistic lines. They have been not national but regional political parties. In order to minimise the vertical political fragmentation between the centre and the regions, the most important regional legislatures were elected indirectly. Until 1995, these were made up of directly elected MPs who served in the central lower house or Senate and were split up into separate Flemish and French language groups. The Flemish and Walloon parliaments have been directly elected since 1995, however, their election coincided with that of the federal parliament until 2003. Thus, until then, parties could conduct federal and regional election campaigns simultaneously, pre-select candidates for both elections and form federal and regional coalition governments thereafter (Swenden and Jans, 2006).

Policy Competencies of Communities and Regions

In the federal structure of Belgium, decision-making is distributed between the federal and the regional level. The federal state retains considerable powers in the devolved areas and many other services, which apply to all Belgian citizens. Foreign policy, national defence, justice, finance, citizenship, social security and the bulk of public health and home affairs are among its responsibilities (Farrell and van Langenhove, 2005). The language-based Communities, on the other hand, are responsible for culture, personal issues such as aid to people, health and

education, whereas the territory-oriented Regions are responsible for non-personal issues, such as farming, water policy, housing, public works, energy, transport, the environment, land and town planning, rural development, credit policy, and the supervision of provinces, municipalities and associations of local authorities. While the Regions are in charge of more economic matters, the Communities are responsible for cultural-linguistic issues. Also in the area of foreign affairs, the communities and the regions are competent in establishing relations with foreign countries in the domains for which they have responsibility (EMN, 2006b).

In economic terms, the Communities are entirely dependent on federal grants because their partly non-territorial character prevents tax autonomy. On the other hand, since Regions have a more clearly identifiable territorial basis, their levels of fiscal autonomy could be more easily extended. Today, Regions depend on federal grants or shared tax revenues (VAT and personal income) for about three-quarters of their expenditures (Swenden and Jans, 2006). The Flemish Community, in this respect, is at a more advantageous position, since the existence of a common executive body for both the Flemish Community and Region due to their merger enables the finance and management of the budget in favour of the Community.

Since 1980, the Flemish Community and Region are merged into one Community governed by a single parliament and executive. Thus, the Flemish Community government is responsible both for the Region of Flanders and the Flemish-speaking population of the bilingual Region of Brussels-Capital. This institutional merger was due to the fact that the Flemish-speakers in the Brussels-Capital Region represent less than 3 per cent of the total group of Flemish-speakers in Belgium and tend to identify more readily with Flanders than with Brussels. For the Francophone Community, on the other hand, a French-speaking Community parliament and executive still exist alongside a Walloon Regional parliament and executive. This reflects the much larger demographic weight of the Brussels-based French-speakers among the total amount of French-speaking Belgians (approximately 18 per cent) and the distinct socio-economic and political preferences of the French-speakers who live in Brussels and Wallonia. In fact, the Francophone Bruxellois generally do not identify with Wallonia and tend to side less with the Social Democrats (Fitzmaurice, 1999).

In fact, the federal and regional competencies have been divided as sharply and precisely as possible in order to decrease the volume of decisions, which Flemish and

Francophone politicians must take together (ibid.). Limits were placed on the discretion of community councils. The supremacy of the national parliament, which is the embodiment of sovereignty in the unitary state, has been ensured by the requirement that all law under the new jurisdictions needs to pass by a two-thirds parliamentary majority (O'Neill, 2000).

Brussels is a Region, but it is not a Community of its own. In Community affairs, the authority of the Flemish and French Communities extends into Brussels. The Flemish and the French Community parliaments enact primary legislation in Community policies for the needs of the Flemish- and French-speakers in the capital. The Brussels Regional Parliament is split into Flemish- and French-speaking groups and each language group can propose supplementary legislation (secondary legislation) with a goal of implementing Flemish or French Community policies in the Region. Thus, the members of the Brussels Regional Parliament act as legislators in Regional policies of the Brussels-Capital Region, on the other hand, as administrators in Community policies within the same region (Swenden and Jans, 2006).

Despite all the transnational and supranational developments, the respective national institutions in the settlement countries are still the main body of decision-makers and initiators of integration in most of the spheres. According to Ireland's (2000) institutional channelling theory, the legal and political institutions shape and limit immigrants' options for actions. It is the state and its subunits, which provide institutional opportunities or impediments for the immigrants to integrate. In accordance, the conditions for access to political and civil rights, the degree of openness of political parties and civil society associations, the electoral system are among the factors designating the political opportunity structure (Jacobs, 2000). Thus, the political mobilisation and claims-making of immigrants are strongly shaped by the context of the receiving nation-state and are not significantly oriented toward, and influenced by supranational institutions, or transnational discourses and identities (Koopmans, 2004). Thus, the Belgian federal structure is a main factor in the development of immigration and integration policies. While authority on issues related to immigration rests with the federal government of Belgium, the policies on the integration of immigrants in social, cultural, economic, and educational terms is the responsibility of the regions and communities (Hooghe, 2003; Lefebvre, 2003).

Notions of National Identity

The emergence of the Belgian federal system has been a consequence of the gradual ethno-cultural and socio-economic divergence between the Flemish and Walloon. Although the official national identity is the Belgian one, the Flemish and Walloon have emerged as the two main sub-national entities. While the Flemish identity imposes more pressure on the survival of the Belgian nationality, the Walloon are more likely to identify themselves with Belgium (Billiet et al., 2006). In Flanders, the nation-building process is ideologically shaped by an ethno-cultural conception of the Flemish people, which is manifested in a strong emphasis on cultural and linguistic homogenization and hegemony of the Flemish nation. The nation-building process of the Walloon community, on the other hand, is dominated by a focus on citizenship rather than on cultural or linguistic membership (Hooghe, 2005). These two different perceptions of the nation can be summarised in the dichotomy of *ethnos* vs. *demos*. While the Flemish reference to the ethnos has ethno-cultural connotations, the Walloon emphasis on the demos privileges a political vision of the nation (Jacobs and Rea, 2006). Indeed, these two notions are historically conditioned and are grounded on cultural differences and economic divisions. In the 19th century, the Walloon welfare and prosperity was in rise during the Industrial Revolution. While Wallonia was rich in coal mines, in the largely agricultural Flanders, there was widespread poverty. It was only after World War II that Flanders became again the more prosperous region of Belgium with its industry and service sectors. Thus, the Flemish and Walloon nationalisms have been shaped by either cultural or socio-economic factors. While the Flemish nationalism has cultural roots, the French-speaking nationalists have more socio-economic considerations (Farrell and van Langenhove, 2005).

Consequently, the opposing ideological preferences of the two Communities also reflect on the way they deal with the issues of migration and the integration of immigrants. While authority on issues related to immigration rests with the federal government of Belgium, the policies on the integration of immigrants in social, cultural, economic, and educational terms is the responsibility of the Regions and Communities (Lefebvre, 2003). The ethnos-demos divergence also influences the Flemish and Walloon conceptualisations of immigrants. While in Flanders immigrant groups are mainly treated in accordance with their

ethno-cultural traits, the Walloon authorities are less in favour of admitting them as specific and separate groups in the society and more as groups with socio-economic importance. As a consequence of different historical conditioning, in Wallonia, an ethnic identity relatively lacks and the conventional conduct of policies and societal relations bases on a class-based culture (Hooghe, 2005). Accordingly, while those Belgians, identifying themselves more with the Flemish identity than the Belgian one, have a negative attitude towards immigrants, the Belgians identifying themselves more with the Walloon identity tend to have a more positive attitude. Flemings usually recognise immigrants as a threat to their cultural individuality and are less likely to establish social contact with them. The Francophone Belgians, on the other hand, feel most threatened at economic level and in terms of social provisions (Billiet et al., 2003). This difference in attitudes is strongly related to how the both communities define themselves according to the ethnos-demos opposition. The Flemish identity is associated with the protection of the Flemish cultural heritage and, therefore, poses a certain defensiveness against other cultures. The Walloon identity, on the other hand, is primarily associated with the socio-economic emancipation of the Walloon region and emphasises its open and non-racist nature.

Migration to Belgium

Belgium's history of migration was initiated with the internal migration of massive Flemish populations to Wallonia in the 19th century. The Flemish peasants were attracted by the advent of industrialisation in Wallonia. After World War I, on the other hand, the Walloon industries were forced to recruit foreign workers, initially from neighbouring countries, later on also from Poland and Italy. In the 1930s, the Belgian government restricted immigration and introduced a law on immigration, which is also the basis of Belgium's current immigration policy (Martiniello and Rea, 2003).

However, the post-war economic conditions, by 1945, led the Belgian government to retreat to its pre-war policy of labour recruitment. The decline in the number of mine workers in the coal industry affected the whole economy, since coal production was strongly related to production in other industrial sectors. The authorities applied measures to improve the working conditions and salaries for coal miners. However, they did not contribute much to attract more Belgian workers. Eventually, the government was forced to turn to foreign

labour, and signed bilateral agreements with various countries, i.e. with Italy in 1946, Spain in 1956, Greece in 1957, Morocco and Turkey in 1964, Tunisia in 1969, and Algeria and Yugoslavia in 1970 (ibid.).

In the early-1960s, when the demand for labour was still high, the Ministry of Justice began to apply the legislation on immigration less strictly. A work permit was no longer a prerequisite for a residence permit, thus, the public policy, in a sense, was encouraging clandestine immigration. In fact, many immigrant workers arrived in Belgium as tourists and got employed. Only later did they formalise their residence in the country. This arrangement was implicitly accepted by employers and tolerated by immigration authorities. The worsening economic conditions and the rising unemployment in the late-1960s, however, necessitated the development of a new policy, in which the migration flows to Belgium were controlled and regulated in line with economic needs. In 1967, the government returned to the strict application of immigrant legislation, thereby preventing the clandestine route of entry (O'Neill, 2000).

In Belgium, unlike the former groups of immigrants, the Muslim immigrants were employed only for one generation. The economic crisis, which led to the immigration ban on 1 August 1974, negatively affected the employment possibilities of immigrants. From that time on, the image of the Muslim immigrant worker deteriorated in the public opinion. The xenophobic attitude expressed by certain autochthones, and in the last twenty-five years developed by extreme right parties, seems to be directed against the immigrants or the new naturalised Belgians, who belong to the lower social class, and who are the most marginalised (De Raedt, 2004). Indeed, compared to the EU-origin immigrants, those from third-countries experience more difficulties.

The EU factor has been an important element for the immigrant question in Belgium. The immigrants have been divided into two categories: one composed of EU-nationals, and the other of the so-called third-country nationals from non-EU member countries. While the former enjoyed the legal rights of the supranational political sphere of the EU, which encouraged equal treatment for the nationals of a member country and the EU-origin residents in it, the latter faced various forms of legal discrimination. Starting from 1968, immigrants from other EC countries were able to cross into Belgium as tourists without any visa. They had the right to find paid employment without a work permit and were considered the same as

Belgian workers, except in the public sector. Consequently, the benefits of these legal provisions were extended to other immigrant groups, i.e. Portuguese, Spaniards, and Greeks, however, not according to the duration of their residence in Belgium, but because their countries of origin had become members of the EC (Martiniello and Rea, 2003).

Foreigners make up nearly 10% of the Belgian population. While EU-origin residents constitute the larger part of the foreign population, the Moroccan and Turkish origin immigrants are the largest among the non-EU origin foreign residents. In April 2006, there were 1,003,437 foreigners residing in Belgium. The EU-nationals constituted nearly sixty per cent of the total population of foreigners with 175,912 Italians, 123,076 French, 113,320 Dutch, 43,254 Spaniards, and 16,368 Greeks. The number of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants, on the other hand, was 81,339 and 42,733 respectively (http://www.dofi.fgov.be/nl/statistieken/Stat_ETR_nl.htm).

Table 2: Population in Belgium, 2000-2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Brussels	959.318	964.405	978.384	992.041	999.899	1.006.749	1.018.804
Flanders	5.940.251	5.952.552	5.972.781	5.995.553	6.016.024	6.043.161	6.078.600
Wallonia	3.339.516	3.346.457	3.358.560	3.368.250	3.380.498	3.395.942	3.413.978
Belgium	10.239.085	10.263.414	10.309.725	10.355.844	10.396.421	10.445.852	10.511.382

Source: NIS, http://statbel.fgov.be/figures/d21_nl.asp#5

Table 3: Population of foreign origin in Belgium, 2000-2006

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Brussels	273.613	262.771	260.040	260.269	263.451	265.211	273.693
Flanders	293.650	280.962	275.223	280.743	288.375	297.289	314.202
Wallonia	329.847	317.952	311.471	309.065	308.461	308.362	312.578
Belgium	897.110	861.685	846.734	850.077	860.287	870.862	900.473

Source: NIS, http://statbel.fgov.be/figures/d21_nl.asp#5

Since, originally, the immigrants had the idea of eventual return to their home countries, they settled in the least expensive neighbourhoods in order to save money. In the 1960s, these were the city centers, which were abandoned by the autochthones, who moved to the suburbs. *In the cities, immigrants separated themselves more as a function of their earning than as a function of their nationality (De Raedt, 2004: 29).* In certain Brussels

neighbourhoods, Moroccan and Turkish immigrants constitute half of the total population, while in some others, they even reach 80%.

With the modifications throughout the 1960s, Belgium's immigration policy shifted from a *laissez-faire* to a restrictive implementation of the legislation. In the late-1960s, the government hardened its immigration policy due to the worsening economic conditions and the rise in unemployment. An official ban was introduced on immigration and employers, who looked for new immigrant workers, were subject to an increasing number of sanctions. Such limitations continued through a government decision on 1 August 1974, which allowed entry only for people with qualifications that were not available in Belgium (De Raedt, 2004).

If immigration to Belgium was considered as the solution to the labour shortage in the country, the family reunifications were the answer to the demographic recovery of the aging Belgian population. The goal of the Belgian policy of immigration, like those of other European countries at the time, was not to improve the situation of immigrant workers and their countries of origin, but rather, to improve the economic and demographic situation of Belgium. In fact, Belgium's preference of immigrations coming with their families was intended to limit the transfer of their salaries to their countries of origin, so that the immigrants' salaries are kept within the Belgian economy, as well as to prevent the immigrants to prefer Germany, France or the Netherlands for countries of immigration (De Raedt, 2004). A clause about family reunification was already included in the first agreements signed between Belgium and Italy and accordingly in the following ones signed with other countries in the 1960s. A regulation in 1965 introduced the reimbursement of half of the travel expenses for the spouse and children accompanying a worker, provided that the family had at least three children under the legal majority age of 21 (Jorgen Nielsen, 1995) However, in nearly two decades time, the Belgian family reunification policy, which had been considered as quite liberal, signalled the introduction of some limitations. From 1984 on, the age for children's entry was reduced from 21 to 18 and the spouses had to join the immigrant by the end of the year following his/her entry. Unlike the situation of Belgians and EU-national residents of Belgium, dependent ascendants and the descendants between ages 18 and 21 or older and still dependent on applicants who reside in Belgium cannot join applicants who are third-country nationals.

However, international conventions binding Belgium may include more favourable provisions concerning third-country nationals. Thus, for example, the agreement concluded between Belgium and Turkey concerning Turkish worker occupation in Belgium on 16 July 1964 provides the possibility for regularly engaged workers in Belgium to be joined by their family members (Gratia, 2004). However, these provisions imply that the treatment of third-country nationals vary according to their country of origin. Although they may all be residing legally in Belgium, third-country nationals enjoy more favourable conditions, once they are from a third-country which has concluded a bilateral agreement with Belgium.

CHAPTER 2
POLICIES OF INTEGRATION

In Belgium, asylum and immigration issues are dealt with at the federal level, whereas integration related matters come within the scope of the communities and regions. Hence, one can distinguish among two different approaches followed by the Flemish-speaking and French-speaking Communities, with some policy similarities to be discussed later on. In accordance with their conceptualisations of identity, Flanders and Wallonia treat their immigrants differently. While the Flemish-speaking Community favours an ethnic attitude in line with the Anglo-Saxon and Dutch models of group-based multiculturalism, the Francophone Community pursues a socio-economic one based on the French individual assimilationist approach (*Table 4*). Brussels-Capital Region, meanwhile, with its highly concentrated EU-origin foreign residents, new naturalised Belgian population and the jurisdiction capacities of both the Flemish- and French-speaking communities, presents a rather *sui generis* position (EMN, 2006b). In this chapter, after underlining some of the major characteristics of the three regional approaches for the integration of immigrants, their similarities and differences will be discussed by focusing on the areas of education, employment, religion, and politics.

The Flemish government has a clear preference for supporting active participation of immigrants through encouraging collective mobilisation, embodied in immigrant self-organisations. It has financially supported local participatory initiatives, which aim at urban renewal and integration of deprived groups in disfavoured neighbourhoods (Jacobs et al., 2006). The Flemish Community Commission (VGC) actively subsidises and cooperates with immigrant self-organisations in Flanders and Brussels. However, there are some criteria the organisations should meet for funding. To be eligible for subsidies, an organisation has to be oriented towards emancipation, education and integration; has to function as a meeting point; and has to fulfil a cultural function. In addition, the organisation has to operate using (also) the Dutch language - if not always, then at least at the executive level (Bousetta et al., 2005).

Both in Wallonia and the Francophone Community in Brussels, on the other hand, the immigrants and their descendants are not considered as specific ethnic groups, but as an intrinsic part of the society, since they are members of the working class and the working

class is the essential part of the Walloon collective identity. They want to insert immigrants into existing Walloon/Belgian structures, organisations and networks. Policy initiatives, directed to immigrant groups, are often framed in such a way that immigrants are not specifically defined as target groups (Jacobs et al., 2006; Jacobs and Rea, 2006).

Table 4: Policy Approaches of Flemish and Francophones towards People of Immigrant Origin

	Policy emphasis for integration of settled immigrants	Policy for Newcomers	Foreign inspiration
Flemish approach	- recognition of the existence of ethnic-cultural minority groups - general and categorical policies - cooperation with, and support of, immigrant self-organization	Citizenship trajectories (include language courses)	Dutch (and Anglo-Saxon) ideas of group-based multiculturalism Dutch model of *inburgering*
Francophone approach	- individualistic approach - general policies using socio-economic indicators - only indirect targeting of immigrant groups (for instance, in certain neighbourhoods)	No specific policy (but punctual projects are being financed)	French assimilationist/republican model

Source: Jacobs and Rea, 2006.

In Brussels, there are differences between the Flemish and Francophone approaches for dealing with the immigrant groups. There is a set of well-established Flemish multicultural policies. The Flemish (Community) policy of support for immigrant associations in Brussels was in accordance with the policy in Flanders. However, a further motive for the Flemish government in Brussels to incorporate immigrant (often Francophone) self-organisations into its policy networks was the hope to strengthen the sphere of influence of the Flemish Community within the Region of Brussels-Capital. The Francophone Community government, on the other hand, in accordance with the Walloon policy, has not been willing to recognise the participation of immigrants in society as specific ethnic-cultural groups. Policy initiatives, directed to immigrant groups, are often framed in such a way that immigrants are not specifically defined as target groups. However, the large numbers of foreign residents and the de facto residential concentration of ethnic minorities have forced

officials in Brussels towards a more multicultural stance. The Brussels Parliament, the Flemish Community Commission (VGC), the Francophone Community Commission (COCOF), and the Common Community Commission (GGC) have thus put forward a special Charter (Charte des devoirs et des droits pour une cohabitation harmonieuse des populations bruxelloises – Charter of duties and rights for a harmonious cohabitation of people of Brussels). A mixed consultative commission on immigrant issues, composed of an equal number of elected politicians and representatives of immigrant groups, was created in Brussels in 1991 and installed in 1992. The commission had a consultative power. However, instead of starting its second term in 1995, the mixed commission was split up into two separate Flemish and Francophone mixed commissions.

Until the late 1980s, Belgium had not an all-encompassing policy on immigration and integration in terms of the issues dealt with. The control of entry and settlement in the country, the regulation of access into the labour market, and the procedure for the acquisition of nationality were among the rather modest areas covered by these policies (Ireland, 2000). Such a neglect in the policy field can be grounded on the general preoccupation that the stay of these immigrant groups would not be permanent. After fulfilling a temporary demand in labour shortage, they were rather expected to turn back to their countries of origin, which, in fact, was a tendency also shared by a substantial number of immigrants. On the other hand, the internal ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural tensions of the country, indeed, prevented the working-out of a comprehensive immigration and integration policy, which required an agreement among the diverse Belgian political levels. At this initial stage, the civil bodies of Catholic institutions and trade unions played an important integrating role for foreign workers and their families rather than the state (ibid.: 251).

An important step in the development of integration legislation was taken in 1984 with the introduction of the double jus soli principle. It entitled Belgian citizenship to children born on Belgian soil of foreign parents, who themselves were born in Belgium. However, the parliamentary debates on the liberalisation of the nationality legislation were important in revealing the differences among the Flemish and Francophone attitudes towards immigrants. In attributing Belgian citizenship, a majority of Flemish politicians wanted to maintain a number of more subjective criteria, like the degree of cultural integration or the loyalty to the receiving society, and language related criteria. A majority of the Francophone politicians, on

the other hand, preferred only to retain objective criteria such as the length of legal stay on the territory (Jacobs and Rea, 2006).

Until the 1980s, immigrants in Belgium, in accordance with the tendency in other European countries, were mainly considered as temporary guest workers, who in time will return to their home countries. However, in the second half of the 1980s, the authorities started to realise that these migrants had become an integral part of the Belgian population (Soysal, 1994). In 1989, after the breakthrough of the *Vlaams Blok* in the local elections of 1988, the Royal Commissariat on Migrant Policy was established at the federal level.[1] It was a semi-official government body, attached to the administration of the Prime Minister, and was the first federal step for the development of a general policy on migrants. Headed by the former Christian-Democrat Minister Paula D'Hondt, the Commissariat outlined an integration policy (RAXEN, 2004). In a report, in 1989, the Royal Commissariat provided the definition of integration and distinguished among four elements crucial for the concept:

1) assimilation, where the public order demands so;
2) a consistent promotion of an optimal insertion according to the guiding social principles that are the basis of the culture of the host country and that revolve around 'modernity', 'emancipation' and 'full-fledged pluralism' - in the sense given by a modern western state;
3) unequivocal respect for cultural diversity as a process of mutual enrichment in all other domains of social life;
4) Integration is accompanied by a promotion of the structural involvement of minorities in the activities and the objectives of the authorities (Blommaert, 1997: 5).

This definition was actually located at the crossroads of the multicultural and assimilationist traditions. According to the definition, the condition for accepting migrants, and respecting their culture, is that the culture of the host society remains untouched. Thus, the responsibility lies with the immigrants to accommodate to the Belgian cultural, social values and structure, but not with the Belgian official and societal bodies to adapt to the changing socio-economic and demographic status of the country. Moreover, migrants'

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[1] In 1993, the Royal Commissariat was replaced by the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR). CEOOR ensures that the rights of foreign nationals in Belgium are respected and fights all forms of racial discrimination (Martiniello and Rea, 2003; RAXEN, 2004).

"structural involvement in the objectives and activities of the authorities", such as employment at public posts or taking part in elections, is conditioned on a complete insertion and cultural adaptation (ibid.: 6). A further criticism of the activities of the Commissariat has been that economically prosperous groups of foreigners -such as Eurocrats, Jews, Japanese- were never included in the framework of migrant policies. In fact, however, these were the groups of foreigners, which cause problems (e.g. rising real estate prices) to the autochthones through concentration in certain regions (e.g. Brussels) and present no significant signs of integration (Blommaert and Martiniello, 1996). The Belgian integration policy, embodied in an equal opportunities and diversity policy, is criticised to be discriminatory in application. The target groups of the policies are mainly the numerically larger groups of immigrants and ethnic minorities, while the refugees from Indochina, Chile and Iran, who arrived in the late-1970s and early-1980s, have been less the focus of proper attention. In addition, it has been advocated that the policies are applied in a unilateral manner. Although integration should be (at least) a two-sided process, the Belgian attitude in general considers the responsibility to be on the part of immigrants, who have to be active to integrate (Leman and Pang, 2002). The larger society with the public establishment, on the other hand, is regarded to be exempted from the task of adapting to the socio-demographic changes.

In fact, the formula outlined in the report of the Royal Commissariat has been adopted by the various governments as the basis of their migrant policies. It has never been officially revised or revoked substantially (Blommaert, 1997). The first Flemish policy outline on the integration of immigrants, the migrant policy (*Migrantenbeleid*), was presented in 1990, and modified into a minority policy (*Minderhedenbeleid*) in 1996. The policy was designated in a multiculturalist manner based on intercultural exchange, in which the residents from different socio-economic status and/or ethnic origin are recognised by the authorities, regardless of their citizenship status (Jacobs and Rea, 2006). In Flanders, while the competent ministers, their departments and the Flemish public institutions are responsible for carrying out the policy on minorities within their own policy areas, the Interdepartmental Commission for Ethnic-Cultural Minorities (ICEM) fulfils the function of coordination. The Flemish minority policy is aimed at five target groups: established immigrants, refugees, travelling population groups, newcomers speaking other languages and undocumented migrants (EMN, 2004).

After the Flemish community gained competence over the reception and integration of migrants in 1980, there was a shift from employment guidance for guest workers to care for

integration of them and their dependents. The Flemish policy was based on a group specific welfare policy. The ICEM elaborated a strategic plan for the Flemish policy concerning ethnic-cultural minorities. It aimed to prevent and fight discrimination systematically and to develop communication between autochthonous persons and persons of foreign descent. The decree of 28 April 1998 constituted a further step in the development of the minorities' policy. After 2000, the Flemish government introduced an experimental insertion policy for newcomers, which, indeed, has been criticized for having assimilationist connotations due to the imposition of compulsory Flemish language courses for some groups of foreigners. The Decree of 28 February 2003 formalised this insertion policy into a legal document. The policy consists of an individual trajectory of language learning, social orientation and support to find a job (RAXEN, 2004). Starting from 1 April 2004, compulsory integration courses have been organised in Flanders for recognised refugees, asylum-seekers ruled admissible, specific labour migrants and regularised foreign residents. Integration courses were initially not obligatory for partners of naturalised Belgians, which gave rise to criticisms, since the people concerned were principally immigrants and the integration decree should also apply to them. One year later, in 2005, the Ministry (N-VA, New Flanders Alliance) made an evaluation of the one year of the integration policy. The study revealed that 58 per cent of the courses were attended by newcomers, who were not obliged to do so, i.e. chain migrants. It was reported in *De Standaard* (2 June 2005, 28 June 2005) that approximately a tenth of the 25,000 newcomers, who enter Belgium annually, take the complete integration route. Thus, the target group has to be adjusted and the number of the courses offered should be increased. In addition, it has become obvious that there is a need for an increased budget for integration courses, since this is a very expensive process, €2,500 per each naturalised newcomer (EMN, 2006b).

The French-speaking Community, influenced by the French model of assimilation, advocates that immigrants or "new" naturalised Belgians have to assimilate to the autochthon population and identify with either the people of Wallonia or that of the Brussels-Capital. In either case, however, they can not represent themselves as ethno-cultural minorities (De Raedt, 2004). The Walloon integration policy aims at improving the socio-economic position of people of foreign origin. The 1996 Walloon decree related to the population of immigrant origin includes clauses, which allow the integration policy to opt for positive discrimination in order to promote equal opportunities. However, there has not been any legal application of such an option yet. Immigrant associations can get a funding as a result of the decree,

however, not based on their ethnic identities, but in accordance with the activities they offer for social insertion. The assimilationist position of the French-speaking Belgium on immigrants can be explained in the following lines. In the federal Belgium, the Francophones are a minority against the demographic domination of the Flemish and dependent on Flemish financial solidarity due to the federal revenue-sharing model. Thus, there is a Francophone strategy to transform the naturalised Belgians into Francophones to be able to take a stand against the powerful Flemish (Jacobs and Rea, 2006).

In 1981, an advisory body for migrants in the French Community (CCIF) was created. The French community favoured a migrant policy focusing on the societal insertion in the host community in order to facilitate equal chances and the recognition of cultural identities. In 1986, CCIF was renamed as the Advisory body for population groups of foreign origin of the French Community (CCPOE). The switch from "migrants" to "population groups of foreign origin" indicated the acceptance that population groups stemming from migration were settling for a long time on the Belgian territory. From the beginning of the 1990s, the attention shifted from integration and intercultural exchange to processes of social exclusion (RAXEN, 2004). The French community transferred the competency over issues concerning support to individuals to the Walloon region and the COCOF.

Until 1996, the Walloon regional approach for organising cultural matters was limited within an all-encompassing model of integration. In this assimilationist manner, it did not allow any diversification of policies (ibid.). However, with the Decree of 4 July 1996 on the integration of people of foreign descent, the Walloon policy was transformed from a general policy towards a more specific one. The Decree recommended not to neglect the national and cultural specificity of migrants, which differentiates them from the autochthonous underprivileged. Thus, contrary to the French Community Commission (COCOF) in the Brussels-Capital Region, the Walloon government has a specific policy against social exclusion and a reception and integration policy towards people with a foreign nationality and those of foreign descent. Such a policy shift was triggered by the ongoing process of globalisation, the arrival of new migrant groups as asylum-seekers and refugees, and the increasing tensions with and demands of the second and third generations of immigrants (Florence and Martiniello, 2005).

Education

In Belgium, the Communities are responsible for education, the Regions coordinate school transport and the federal government pays out the pensions of teachers and recognises professional qualifications. Thus, each of the three Regions of Belgium has its own variation of the national education system (Swenden and Jans, 2006). Schools are subsidised by the regional governments. However, the concerns and requirements of minorities in the Regions are mainly overlooked. In Flanders, courses are taught exclusively in Flemish, and in Wallonia, in French. Thus, Brussels is the only region where a choice can be made between Flemish and French. In being public and free to all, the Belgian education system aims at providing a comparable education to each student, regardless of his/her social or cultural background (De Raedt, 2004). However, the school system fails in integrating the pupils from foreign origin into its system. The system has not developed adequate pedagogical methods or courses to help prevent academic failure of these non-autochthon groups. The number of pupils who have to repeat one year is higher among immigrant groups than among autochthones (RAXEN, 2004).

The primary education in Belgium is the same for all pupils and lasts six years. The second language is taught from fifth grade on and is always the other national language. The secondary education comprises of schools of technical or professional track, of specialised education track and of normal schools. While schools of technical or professional track lead to manual professions, the specialised education track is developed for students with learning disabilities. There are more non-autochthones in the technical or professional track. The disabilities of students of non-autochthon origin in specialised education track are not only intellectual, but they also suffer from psychological problems caused by having to constantly live within two different cultures and languages. In the normal track of the secondary education system, students have to choose a second and a third language, English or French in Flanders, and Flemish or English in Wallonia. The fourth language is usually German and sometimes Spanish. However, neither Turkish, nor Arabic or Italian is taught in the regular curriculum of Belgian education. They are taught through programmes outside the regular school system (De Raedt, 2004). Thus, the fact that the students of immigrant origin are not taught their mother-tongue adequately impedes, in many cases, in their ability of learning further languages.

In 1988, with a reform, the power of the Communities over education was expanded except for a few issues. The beginning and end of the study year, minimum requirements for diplomas and teachers' pensions were issues in which the federal level retained legislative and administrative competence. In Flanders, a public agency – the Autonomous Council for Community Education (ARGO) – was established with an agreement of the major Flemish political parties to supervise schooling on behalf of the Flemish executive. The 1998 reform strengthened local autonomy and allowed for more differentiation between ARGO schools, which have been highly politicised and centralised until then. The reform strengthened the decentralised aspects of the system and the influence of parents and/or other civil society representatives as a control mechanism for the more extensive powers granted to school professionals. In the French-speaking Community, on the other hand, no structural changes were made and the traditional role of the state remained intact. The belief that equity depends on a strong public service remained central to the Socialist Party ideology and supported its belief in the pivotal role of the state bureaucracy in education delivery. This tendency for a central control of the education system was at the forefront, when in 1992, the Parti Socialiste (PS) proposed a regulation, giving the monopoly for delivering public education at primary level to the municipalities. The purpose was to put the French-speaking Community in a more independent position with respect to less direct involvement in organising delivery. However, provincial and municipal executives immediately mobilised against the proposal, fearing the anticipated involvement of parents in school management. By some French-speaking Community Socialists, such an involvement was called an *unacceptable semi-privatisation*. Under pressure from the state-oriented faction, the manifesto of the PS has been modified and foresees that only directly elected representatives can be responsible for school management, excluding the creation of any agency type of reform (De Rynck and Dezeure, 2006).

Following the ethnic differentialist approach towards immigrants, in Flanders, in the early-1990s, schools with large numbers of "target pupils" were entitled to extra subsidies, in which target pupils were the children of immigrant origin. In the French-speaking Belgium, on the other hand, few public policies have been designated specifically for the schooling of pupils of foreign origin. The most policy measures were structured around the notion of equality of opportunities, carrying universalistic connotations (Florence and Martiniello, 2005). In the same lines with these ethno-cultural and socio-economic divisions, in Flanders and Wallonia respectively, the Francophone schools in Brussels, fearing Flemish expansionism, have favoured a uniform system, discrediting social and cultural differences.

However, the Flemish Community in Brussels has created bilingual schools to provide immigrant children with a Flemish cultural base, and, in some sense, to turn them into the future constituents of the Flemish political minority in Brussels (Blommaert and Martiniello, 1996). Thus, the education policies in Brussels have been a ground where both Communities confronted each other in terms of communal interests.

Although the general attitude of the French-speaking Belgium in dealing with societal differences is one of a general policy, without allowing policy-differentiation, there are some policy areas where the measures are specifically designed for immigrant groups. In the area of education, the 1998 Decree on positive action, aims to foster equal opportunities for pupils in the primary and secondary education, organised or subsidised by the French-speaking Community. The schools for subsidisation are selected on the basis of social, cultural, economic, and pedagogical criteria and supported by financial means and personnel. Such differentiated approach aims at preventing the early drop out of pupils of immigrant origin, guaranteeing the access to education for children of irregular migrants, and preventing the occurrence of violence (Leman and Pang, 2002).

While, in general, the Flemish Community allows some aspects of decentralisation in the management of its education system, the French-speaking Community mainly follows the national policy legacy of centralisation. Even at points where policy convergences are, the policies are not adequate to respond to the requirements of students of immigrant origin. Above all, these students score less or fail in many courses compared to the performance of autochthon pupils, since they experience difficulties in learning the main medium of education – the language. In addition, when the students from immigrant origin are compared among each other, their performance varies according to their countries of origin. Those from EU-member countries perform better than the immigrant-origin students. The Belgian education system, in general, requires further development to accommodate the education of those groups.

Employment

In Belgium, the responsibility for employment is assigned to the Regions. In terms of integration policies regarding employment, the ILO Report of 1997 had a great impact on their development in Belgium at the federal level. The findings have proven the hypothesis

that applications of autochthon Belgians and Belgians of Moroccan origin with equal qualifications in terms of diploma and experience during the application procedure are treated differently. Besides prompting a series of campaigns and seminars, these findings have also led to the establishment of a specific unit within the Ministry of Labour to combat discrimination. In collaboration with CEOOR, the Unit of Colourful Entrepreneurship was established on 1 July 2001 (EUMC, 2003). The Unit is tasked with promoting equality of treatment amongst employees with a foreign nationality or of foreign origin and native employees in the private sector. A similar organisation has been set up for the federal public sector in 2005 (EMN, 2006a).

In Flanders, a policy of proportional labour participation and diversity is pursued. The Decree on proportional participation in the labour market passed in the Flemish Parliament on 24 April 2002 based on two EU directives of 29 June 2000 and 27 November 2000 respectively. The Flemish government prioritises the proportional labour participation into the market in the framework of a general diversity policy with equal treatment. The Ministry of Employment has established specifically adapted subsidy regulations for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Flemish SMEs can claim a once-off subsidy of a maximum of €10,000 if they pursue an active diversity policy. The UNIZO (Union of Independent Entrepreneurs) has set up a service point "Diversity", which together with the Flemish Department For Employment-Finding organises suitable language courses in the work place. However, in general, there have not been substantial improvements of migrants' employment prospects yet (EMN, 2004). Meanwhile, the Walloon Region has a specific policy against social exclusion on the one hand and the reception and integration policy towards people with foreign descent on the other. In the Brussels-Capital Region, the Commission of the French Community has the authority to issue decrees. Through the integration policy, the Commission promotes the social integration of neighbourhoods in crisis. The policy does not refer to ethnic descent but is rather a general policy of integration encompassing all vulnerable groups.

According to NIS 2000 statistics, the share of employees of foreign descent in the total Belgian economy accounts only for 7,2% for males and females. For non-EU immigrant women, it is a mere 1.4%. Since these figures are based on nationality, the real figures, most likely, are higher given the naturalisation of some workers from foreign origin (*Table 5*).

Table 5: Employees according to nationality and gender in Belgium

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
EU-origin foreigners	103.113	5,9	51.449	4,1	154.562	5,2
Non-EU-origin foreigners	45.458	2,6	17.091	1,4	62.549	2
Subtotal	148.571	8,5	68.540	5,5	217.111	7,2
Belgians	1.595.023	91,5	1.184.092	94,5	2.779.115	92,8
Population	1.743.594	100	1.252.632	100	2.996.226	100

Source: NIS, 1997 (cited in EUMC, 2003: 13)

A research, conducted in 2000 by the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB), states that the Belgians and foreigners from neighbouring countries have a greater share in the employed population of Flanders. The other nationalities, including Moroccans, Turks and Southern Europeans, on the other hand, are three times more represented in the unemployed population than the employed one. The same figures are valid also for Brussels. The position of immigrants in the labour market is relatively weak compared to that of autochthon Belgians. Immigrants from non-EU descent are over-represented in semi-skilled and labour-intensive sectors. Discrimination at the recruitment level as well as on the work floor is substantial.

In assessing the situation of employees of immigrant origin, it is necessary to compare them with the autochthones and as well as with each other. A study carried out by the University of Antwerp and the Belgian National Statistics Institute found out that, in the labour market, non-nationals are at a great disadvantage compared to their Belgian-born counterparts. The non-nationals group comprises four sub-groups: naturalised Belgians, non-Belgian EU citizens, Turks and Moroccans, and non-EU citizens. The subgroup of Turks and Moroccans have an unemployment rate equal to 30%, a figure five times higher than the unemployment rate among Belgian workers. A further outcome of the study is the fact that contrary to all other subgroups in the study, the percentage of unemployed Turks and Moroccans does not change in line with their academic achievements (EMN, 2006b).

In the Walloon Region, the main policy instruments for the job-market integration of foreigners are the seven Regional Integration Centres (Centres Régionaux d'Intégration, CRI), established under the Decree of 4 July 1996. They are tasked to develop co-ordination, incentives, regulatory and evaluation activities for local social and occupational integration

projects and mechanisms for Wallonia's immigrant communities. In 1997, the CRIs developed a policy of regional actions to promote the socio-professional integration of workers of foreign descent. They have cooperated with public bodies, such as FOREM (Office Wallon pour L'emploi et la Formation), and private research centres, such as IRFAM (Institut de Recherche, Formation et Action sur les Migrations), aiming at instituting ad hoc systems of training, guidance, counselling and employment. However, in order to go beyond the pilot initiatives, there is need for further institutionalisation in this policy realm (Manco, 2004).

In 1974, Belgium officially ended its federal policy of accepting foreign labour force and issuing work permits for them. However, in accordance with the EU regulations, labour force from EU-national origin continued to enter Belgium. Today, Belgium mainly prefers to accept highly-skilled staff to enter her labour force and market. As *Table 6* depicts, indeed, the non-EU origin workers constitute a substantial portion (85 per cent in 2005) of the total number of workers issued work permits (EMN, 2006a).

Table 6: First labour permits issued to highly-qualified or management staff (non-EU nationals)

Region	2003	2004	2005
Flanders	1037	1117	1430
Brussels-Capital	601	738	933
Wallonia	164	193	247
Belgium	1802	2048	2610

Source: EMN, 2006a: 35.

Table 7: Work permits issued for highly-skilled workers, 2005 (EU countries excluded)

Country	Number of permits issued	%
India	726	27.80
USA	427	16.36
Japan	423	16.20
Turkey	146	5.60
Canada	83	3.20
China	82	3.14
Romania	78	3
Russia	77	2.95
Brazil	57	2.18
Australia	46	1.76
Morocco	38	1.46
South Korea	35	1.34
Total	2218	85
Total Belgium	2610	100

Source: EMN, 2006a: 36.

Studies reveal that, in Belgium, there are impediments in front of the workers from foreign origin to access the labour market on the parts of both the immigrants and the receiving society. Relating to the former, poor knowledge of Flemish and/or French, lack of networks in the receiving country, the lack of an equivalence of their foreign diploma, and the legal or illegal status of residency of immigrant groups constitute the common impediments. On the part of the host society, on the other hand, negative preconceptions, direct/indirect discrimination, and the criteria of EU-citizenship for public employment are among the factors curtailing the employment opportunities of immigrants (NGO Focal Point of Integration Networks, 2006).

Religion

The Belgian state guarantees freedom of religion for all its residents. The Belgian secularism is grounded on the concept of neutrality of the state vis-à-vis the internal organisation of religions. However, the financial organisation for the payment of the salaries of ministers of religion and the provision of religious education are at the expense of the state, regularised by

a law of 1870. According to this law, the recognised religious communities were Roman Catholic, Protestant, Anglican and Jewish. The Parliament has jurisdiction over the granting of the label of "officially recognised religion", whereas the government is the only competent body in the practical organisation of this procedure. This procedure involves the recognition of a chief interlocutor between the concerned religious community and the Belgian state, which, thus, requires the unification or federation of decentralised churches. The subsidisation of the officially recognised religions is the further step in this procedure on the other hand, however, lack of recognition does not limit the freedom of other communities to practice their religion, to establish their places of worship or to organise their own religious instruction outside school (Nielsen, 1995).

Concerning Islam, in 1969, the Islamic Cultural Centre was founded in Brussels, which was substantially funded by the Muslim World League.[2] After the foundation of the Centre, support began to be raised in the Parliament in favour of the recognition of Islam, on the grounds that the Islam community was larger than both the officially recognised Anglican and the Jewish. The supporters especially noted that their support was based on the expectation that a significant proportion of the Muslim residents would settle permanently in Belgium. Recognition of Islam would contribute positively to this process of settlement. On the other hand, however, foreign policy considerations in relation to the Arab world at the time of the 1973-1974 oil embargo could not be deemed irrelevant to such a support. After the first attempt to legislate a bill in 1971, the law recognising Islam was finally passed on 19 July 1974 (Nielsen, 1995). In that respect, Belgium was the first country in Europe to provide Islam with public status. However, in fact, for several years, complementary decrees and laws had been issued and the legislation remained inactive, apart from in the educational field. For many years Muslims could not receive their share of these funds because there was no representative institution to negotiate with the state. This lack of an institutional body was due to the extreme difficulty encountered by both the Muslim communities and the Belgian government to let emerge and recognise a representative head of the Islamic religion. The decision taken by the Belgian federal government on 3 May 1999 has almost ended the ambiguities, by recognising a Muslim Council as the official interlocutor of the Muslim community (De Raedt, 2004). The Muslim Council is selected by the assembly of the Muslim

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[2] The board of trustees of the Islamic Cultural Centre is chaired by the ambassador of Saudi Arabia. The land for the Centre was handed over to King Faisal in 1967 as a gift in exchange for donations he had made. The Centre was build with the financial support of the Muslim World League, which is a Saudi Arabia based organisation, providing ideological and financial support for Islamic extremists worldwide (IHF, 2004).

Executive of Belgium, which was set up by a Royal Decree on 3 July 1996 and has been functioning since 1998. The assembly, on the other hand, is elected by the Muslim community all over Belgium (Bousetta et al., 2005). Although the previous Muslim Council was dominated by the Moroccan origin Muslims, on 20 March 2005 elections, Turkish candidates have won 40 of the 68 seats. The positions of the president and deputy president are filled by two Turkish origin people, Coskun Beyazgul and Hacer Duzgun respectively. Kissi Benjelloul has been appointed as the French-speaking deputy president (http://www.expatica.com/actual/article.asp?subchannel_id=48&story_id=26439).

In Belgium, the other religious tradition recognised officially was the Orthodox Church. It was officially recognised in 1985, after the Greek and the Russian Orthodox churches federated administratively. However, compared to the experience of the recognition of Islam, the Orthodox case did not cause much political opposition (Bousetta et al., 2005).

In 2005, the Flemish government approved a decree laying down the conditions for the recognition and funding of local religious communities. This was particularly important for the Islamic faith, since although the Muslim religious service had been officially recognised in the early-1970s, the official recognition had never been implemented in comparison with the other officially recognised religious services. The Flemish Minister for Integration decided that the government would offer financial resources solely to imams who meet the integration requirements and have a sufficient knowledge of Dutch. For a mosque to be recognised, the local religious communities must invariably use Dutch in their dealings with the government and during their activities Dutch should be used as much as possible, and any extremism has to be resisted. The foreign clergy are required to take part in a state integration curriculum (*Inburgeringstrajet*). When a mosque is recognised, Flanders will provide financial support equal to 30% of the building costs. Meanwhile, the Walloon government also has taken further steps in the official recognition of the Islam religious service. It has announced that mosques will be subject to the same rules as other religions. In Brussels, on the other hand, the matter is still under consideration by the government. Recognised religions provide teachers at government expense for religious instruction in schools. The state pays the salaries, retirement for clergy and subsidises the construction and renovation of church buildings. Positions of clerics are allocated by royal decree, but there are no training requirements. Although there are exceptions, in general the state has tried to ensure that new imams come from the Belgian population (EMN, 2006b).

In the mid-1980s, like the official authorities, the majority of the Muslim immigrants began to realise that their stay in Belgium would be longer than they had anticipated. Thus, the public presence of Islam in the Belgian society increased through creating of Qur'an schools; organising of pilgrimages to Makkah; opening of Muslim butcher shops and bookstores; broadcasting of religious radio programmes; wearing of headscarf in schools and on the street; etc. (De Raedt, 2004).

In the summer of 2005, the press reported court decisions approving the policy of headscarves ban by certain schools in both the Flemish- and French-speaking Community. The debate primarily emerged in 2003-2004 as a result of the headscarf ban in France and the discrimination against ethnic minorities on the labour market. However, no general legislation has been announced for wearing headscarves in schools at the beginning of the school year 2005-2006. It is, indeed, the individual right of each school in Belgium to decide on this matter. The governments of both the Flemish and French communities have handed this responsibility over to public schools (EMN, 2006b). According to educational authorities, 87 per cent of Muslim girls wearing headscarf in public schools under the authority of the City of Brussels and 88 per cent of those in Catholic schools were refused to enrolment, while 41 per cent in the French Community schools (IHF, 2004).

In education, public school students under 17 must choose between religious instruction in recognised religions and non-denominational ethics classes. For older students, however, these classes are voluntary. Presently, teachers are appointed by the state after the recommendation of the Muslim Executive. The curriculum is developed by officials proposed by the Muslim Executive and then subject to approval by the state. Religious communities have the right to establish private schools that can receive state funding. There is currently one private Muslim school that is supported by the state (ibid.).

Despite the quite early official recognition of Islam in Belgium, the Muslims could not enjoy its implementations immediately. Some bureaucratic and regulatory requirements have belated the enforcement of a number of rights and benefits. The regulation requiring the representation of the Muslim community in Belgium under one organisation has been one of main obstacles until the late-1990s. In fact, like for each religion, this requirement is one hard to fulfil, since defining one representing body for each religion does not reflect the nuances of

sects under these religions. Hence, such a recognition can be considered as a superficial attempt which fails to recognise the requirements of the religion in question.

Political and Associational Participation

The first mobilisation for the rights of immigrants for political participation and for voting took place in the 1960s, when the trade union movements were at their peak. In 1967, the EEC-origin foreign workers were granted rights on equal footing with Belgians in order to participate in social elections of worker councils within private and public companies of a certain size. Pressure of the trade unions led to the same opening for non-EEC workers in 1971. The right to vote and to stand as a candidate in social elections regardless of nationality was considered by trade unions as a model. The same trade unions lobbied for extending similar participation and representation rights to local elections (Bousetta et al.). In the 1960s, Consultative City Councils of Immigrants (*Conseils Communaux Consultatifs des Immigrés; Stedelijke Migrantenraden*) were established in 35 towns. The CCCI was tasked with cultivating and maintaining dialogue between the representatives of the immigrants and the city authorities. In fact, the authorities were supposed to consult the CCCI, when decisions concerning the immigrants were to be taken. The official rhetoric presented these councils as institutions, which could teach democratic principles to immigrants, assuming that immigrants were lacking the interest in politics, democracy or citizenship. However, the authorities were miscalculating in this respect, since at that time, the immigrant associations were highly involved in the politics of their countries of origin. In this sense, one contribution of CCCI was to reorient the political interest of these associations from their home countries to Belgium. On the other hand, however, CCCI did not have much power, and especially the second generation of immigrants, being aware of this weakness and having acquired Belgian citizenship, turned to the established Belgian political structures rather than participating in these councils. This tendency also helps in explaining the close-down of many of the CCCIs in one decade's period (De Raedt, 2004).

It was only in the mid-1980s that the government began to develop policies to encourage immigrants to settle in Belgium and to foster their inclusion in society (Martiniello and Rea, 2003). Until 1984, Belgium, like France, restricted the associational rights of foreigners. Immigrant groups were not allowed to form their own associations or apply for public subsidies unless three-fifths of their members and contributors held Belgian nationality

(Ireland, 2000). The policies developed for the incorporation of immigrants were mainly based on fostering naturalisation (Nielsen, 1995; Blommaert, 1997; De Raedt, 2004). The Law of 15/12/1980 on the access to the territory, stay, establishment and removal of aliens was passed unanimously. It provided more legal security regarding residence. In the mid-1980s, however, immigrants had become the scapegoat for persistent unemployment in Belgium. In order to overcome the tensions, the government introduced two policies, one to encourage immigrants to return to their home countries, and the other to regularize their integration. The new Nationality Code of 1984, also known as the Gol Law, named after the Minister of Justice supporting it, reformed the Code of 1932 and established the principle of *jus soli* as the basis of citizenship. Thus, the basic principle of access to Belgian citizenship, *jus sanguinis* - the intergenerational transmission of citizenship, was coupled with jus soli. In one respect, this Code simplified the naturalisation process, in that children born on Belgian soil of foreign parents, who themselves were born in Belgium, became Belgian citizens. In addition, minor citizenship was introduced, which was available to foreigners, aged 16-22, who had entered the country before their 14th birthday and had been resident for three years (Nielsen, 1995). However, although simplified, the naturalisation process still required individuals to demonstrate a "desire to integrate", which was measured arbitrarily by the authorities. This clause could only be reformed on 1 March 2000 after several revisions, so that foreigners legally residing in Belgium for at least seven years can become Belgian with a simple declaration, without a control of his/her "desire to integrate" (Wets, 2006). Moreover, foreign nationals, legally resident in Belgium for three years, and refugees, resident for two years, are allowed to submit an application for naturalization. The application is processed by the district attorney in one month (Bousetta et al., 2005).[3]

The advantage of immigrants becoming Belgian citizens is that they are entitled to the same rights as autochthon Belgians. They are able to apply to public positions reserved to nationals and have the right to vote and stand as candidate at each level of elections. However, surveys indicate that employment in government service is virtually closed to the naturalised Belgians (Martens, 1997; Manco, 2004). The immediate effect of the Gol Law was that between 31 December 1984 and 1 January 1985, 75,629 foreigners became Belgian

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[3] Before the 2000 amendment, the time for investigation was four months and it was the responsibility of the district attorney to investigate the applicant's "will to integrate". The application is then sent to the Chamber (lower house of the Parliament). The naturalisation decision is made politically by the Parliament. In this sense, naturalisation, adjudicated by the Parliament, is discretionary. It is not a right one can make use of but a favour one can be granted (Bousetta et al., 2005).

citizens. 42.7 per cent of these new Belgians had the nationality of one of the neighbouring countries of France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, or the UK, 30.3 per cent had Italian nationality, 6.9 per cent had Maghrebi nationality, but only 0.6 per cent had Turkish nationality. Although between 1 January 1985 and 1990, 50 per cent of all acquiring Belgian citizenship was those born in the Maghreb, Turkey or other non-EC countries, for Belgium as a whole, only 30 per cent of all naturalisations were for non-EC residents (De Raedt, 2004).

The Royal Commissariat on Migrant Policy, established by a royal decree on 7 March 1989, helped in shaping the Belgian integration policies (Jan Blommaert, 1997). The Commissariat was introduced following the electoral success of the extreme right party Vlaams Blok in Flanders and especially in Antwerp with 18% of the votes.[4] Through developing new social policies, the government aimed at cultivating relations among Belgians and foreigners and improving conditions for many fields, including regional planning, education, culture, professional training, and the fight against petty crime. The Commissariat's view of integration -as individual inclusion through naturalisation and social treatment of social problems- provided the basis for the governmental policy established in 1992 after the second victory of the extreme right in November 1991 elections (De Raedt, 2004).

The discussions around granting the voting rights in local elections to immigrants have started in the late-1960s, however, resulted in refusal by the Christian Democrat-Liberal government in the period of 1981-1987 (ibid.). In the late-1990s, in both the Chamber and regional assemblies, support has grown for extremist parties in both communities -especially Vlaams Blok in Flanders-, with a separatist agenda and xenophobic celebration of what they deem ethnic/racial virtues. Meanwhile, in Brussels, the Flemish politicians have resisted an EU directive that permits non-nationals voting rights in local elections, arguing that as these immigrants speak French rather than Dutch, they are more likely to vote for Francophone candidates. The Minister for Brussels in the Flemish regional government, a leading CVP leader, refused to allow the change, unless the federal government guaranteed automatic representation for the Flemish community in the Brussels assembly (O'Neill, 2000).[5] The struggle for enfranchisement of non-citizen residents of Belgium was a movement beyond

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[4] Vlaams Blok has obtained no less than 25% of the popular vote in the June 2004 regional and general elections In November 2004, it changed its name to Vlaams Belang, after a judicial conviction in court for its racist propaganda (Bousetta and Jacobs, 2006).
[5] The party changed its name from CVP to CD&V on 29 September 2001.

ethnic connotations. Since next to the immigrants associations, also the antiracism activists and self-appointed non-immigrants advocates were involved in the struggle, the movement involved immigrant as well as non-immigrant actors on an equal basis (Jacobs, 1999). The struggle had an anti-racist agenda, since it was positioned against the anti-immigrant voting campaign of the extreme right.

In the Parliament, constituted through the 2003 federal elections, the issue of granting voting rights to non-EU residents of Belgium re-emerged as an important concern of the political agenda, mainly with the efforts of the Socialists in the government (De Raedt, 2004). The Treaty of Maastricht introduced, from 1996 on, the granting of rights to vote and stand in local and European Parliament elections for non-citizens, who are legal residents of a Member State. It has produced new categories of European citizenship and its associated rights for the nationals of EU member states (Feldblum, 1998). However, in Belgium, it was not until early-1999 that the EU-nationals resident in Belgium were enfranchised. The delay was due to the Flemish fears for a potential increase of Francophone votes in Brussels and its periphery in case the EU-national residents were enfranchised, since a substantial number of these residents were Francophone. After the necessary legal amendments, the EU-national residents of Belgium have been enjoying the right to vote in local elections since 2000, which, in fact, could only be achieved through the provision of a constitutional guarantee that protects the representation of the Flemish Community of Brussels (Jacobs, 2006).[6]

Concerning the granting of the same rights for non-EU nationals, the constitution had been changed in 1998 allowing non-EU nationals to equally enfranchise from 2001 onwards, but the electoral law could not be amended until 2004. While, in 2003, the Flemish political parties were still in opposition to these rights for non-EU residents, fearing a white backlash and further success of the racist Vlaams Blok, the Francophone parties were in favour of the law proposal. After long debates in the Parliament, with the final decision on 19 February 2004, also immigrants from non-EU origin in Belgium have been granted voting rights for local elections, applied for the first time at 2006 local elections on October 8. However, the granting of the right has been subject to three conditions: 1) the immigrant has to prove five years of residency in Belgium; 2) he/she has to register to vote; and 3) while registering,

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[6] In order to take part in the elections, the resident foreigners have to register themselves. In fact, Belgium imposes mandatory voting on citizens, who are automatically registered in the electoral polls. However, once registered, immigrant voters will be held to the same mandatory voting system as Belgian citizens.

he/she has to declare to respect the Belgium Constitution, the laws of Belgium and the European Convention of Human Rights, by signing a document. In addition, although of EU-national residents in Belgium may both vote in municipal elections and stand for office, non-EU residents are not be allowed to run for office under the new Law (EMN, 2004).

Both EU and non-EU origin foreigners of Belgium are highly involved in associational activities in Belgium. There are 150 Italian associations, which are still active. The associations are established on the basis of the differences among the immigrants, even among those from the same country-of-origin. They reflect the diversities along the line of political tendency, religious sect, or ethnic origin. The Turkish community, for example, has associations, which are tied to a local mosque, as well as non-religious associations and leftist ones. Multi-ethnic organisations, recruiting members from various countries-of-origin, have been developing only recently. For these associations, Islam or the Arabic identity functions as a common denominator. Since 1995, the regional government of Flanders has been subsidising ethnic associations. However, the associations can only become eligible for official recognition and subsidy if they join umbrella associations (Hooghe, 2005). Since the diversity between and within the members of immigrants groups prevent them from acting together, only a limited number of immigrant associations take advantage of the subsidies.

As a result of the economic and demographic conditions after World War II, migration has become a crucial component of the Belgian political agenda and shaped the socio-economic and ethno-cultural structure of the society. The period between early-1950s and mid-1970s was subject to substantial amounts of migrant flux into Belgium, without much quantitative difference among the three Regions.

Until the mid-1980s, the official treatment of immigrants was not highly institutionalised, since initially the immigrants were considered mainly as permanent guest workers, who would leave for their home countries after a while. Although they became important elements of the Belgian economics, in social and political terms, the immigrants were weak members of the Belgian society. The need for a more institutionalised approach towards immigrants was realised as a consequence of the increasing societal opposition to them following the worsening economic situation after the mid-1970s and as well as of the acknowledgement that the immigrants should have been better accommodated in the country, since there were less sign of any future return to their countries of origin.

The further accommodation of immigrants to Belgium has been structured around policies of integration. Although, officially, the responsibility for the development of these policies rests with each individual Region in Belgium, there has been an almost complete absence of any specific or coordinated local public policy, since the local authorities were subordinated to the regional and national authorities in the federal system. In fact, the Royal Commissariat on Migrant Policy in 1989 laid down the basis for integration policies, accepted and implemented by the regional authorities almost without criticism, where integration was formulated as naturalisation of immigrant groups through a more or less assimilation into the existing economic, social and cultural structures. Thus, the responsibility to integrate is sided with the immigrants rather than the host country. They are the immigrants themselves, who have to take action, learn the official language, adapt to the established rules. The Belgian authorities and society, on the other hand, take on less responsibility. There has not been enough effort to ease the social integration through providing employment, adequate education, etc.

Another important aspect of migration in Belgium is the discriminated treatment applied to the immigrants, both in positive and negative terms. In case of family reunification, for example, immigrants from non-EU origin countries can not be accompanied by their families and legal descendants, unless their country of origin has signed a bilateral agreement with Belgium. Thus, besides the discrimination applied to the EU-origin and non-EU origin foreigners, immigrants from non-EU origin countries are treated differently among themselves according to their nationality. A further criticism derives from the observation of immigrant groups that are included in the framework of migration policies. In the federal and regional integration policies, compared to the Moroccan, Turkish or North-African origin immigrants, the economically prosperous groups of foreigners -such as Eurocrats, Jews, Japanese- are not included. In fact, however, these are the groups of foreigners in Belgium, which cause problems (e.g. rising real estate prices) to the autochthones through concentration in certain regions (e.g. Brussels) and present no significant signs of integration (Blommaert and Martiniello, 1996). Thus, before designating the policies, one important step is the adequate definition and determination of immigrant groups in the country and the inclusion of each of them under the policies.

CONCLUSION

In case of Belgium, the issue of migrant integration should be considered against the socio-economically and ethno-linguisticly diverse background of the country. In Belgium, the immigrants try to settle down in a context already divided along the Flemish-Walloon ethno-linguistic and socio-economic dichotomy.

In dealing with its minorities, and the immigrants in particular, the Flemish-speaking North and the French-speaking South have opted for two different approaches, the multiculturalist and the assimilationist ones respectively, while Brussels with a more *sui generis* status due to its highly-concentrated EU-origin immigrants, is in-between these two positions. However, there are also some occasions when each region adapts the approach of the other. In general terms, while Flanders supports a culturally pluralistic treatment of its immigrants, Wallonia prefers a more unitary policy outlook, which requires the melting-down of immigrants into the social, cultural structure of the receiving society. This distinction is in line with the Flemish-Walloon dichotomy of *ethnos-demos* in terms of defining their national identity. While the Flemish identity emphasises ethno-cultural characteristics, the Walloon identity is based on political and socio-economic considerations. Thus, the Flemish attitude toward immigrants is to treat them as specific ethnic minority groups, which in case of integration and naturalisation have to fulfil the criteria of knowledge of the Flemish language. For the integration of immigrants, the Walloon approach, on the other hand, privileges the development of a political citizen (demos) rather than an ethnic one, in line with the socio-economic characteristics of the settlement society.

Integration takes place at different dimensions of public and private life, ranging from education to political participation. The educational, economic, cultural, and political achievements of immigrant groups signify mainly their level of incorporation into the receiving society. However, the characteristics of such integration are highly structured by the perspective of the receiving state and society. Only if the state and society consider integration as a two-way process, in which there are also some responsibilities for them, can the process become more acceptable for immigrants. Moreover, the institutional constraints, deriving from the perspective the state pursues, play an important role for the integration of

immigrants. These constraints specify the borders, within which immigrants can decide about the means and ways to contact with the settlement society (Ireland, 2000).

In terms of naturalisation policy, the integration policy of Belgium has been quite successful. Now, Belgium has one of the most liberal nationality laws with easy access to citizenship. However, drawing the attention from policies to implementation, when the high rate of drop-out in schools, the overrepresentation in vocational schools and lower participation in higher education, the direct and indirect discrimination in labour market, and the high concentration in unemployed labour force among immigrants are taken into account, the Belgian integration policy signals failure (EMN, 2004). In fact, the immigrant groups as well as the naturalised Belgians to some extent are still at a more disadvantaged position than the autochthon Belgians, both Flemish and Walloon. Moreover, a comparison of the regional policies, which have been shaped in multiculturalist and republican assimilationist manners, reveals a slightly differentiated picture of migrant integration in social, economic and political terms. While in Flanders immigrant groups live in their cultural enclaves, those in Wallonia are generally prevented to present themselves as specific ethnic, cultural groups.

Although immigrants have been granted a substantial number of social, civic, cultural as well as political rights equal to those enjoyed by autochthon Belgians, without the legal membership to the settlement state, indeed, citizenship remains an important instrument for incorporation in Belgium, like in many other European societies (Vink, 2003). This may be explained on the grounds that citizenship provides the whole body of political rights for immigrants. With citizenship, they can vote and stand as a candidate in all levels of elections, thereby mobilising along with the Belgian political parties rather than turning to ethnic, cultural, and religious mobilisation. However, in fact, the exclusion of non-citizen residents from national politics is in contradiction with the basic understanding of the democratic idea. Based on the "all affected" principle, which covers people, who are subject to the legal authority of the state, voting rights should be guaranteed for non-citizens also at national elections. Since also the non-citizen immigrant groups are under the influence of the laws and policies of the state, they should have a say in the formulation of legislation and politics (Beckman, 2006). However, taking the long debates about the granting of even the local voting rights for non-citizen residents into consideration, federal/national enfranchisement is unlikely to obtain in Belgium as well as in other European countries in the near future.

The Flemish and Walloon approaches of migrant integration consider less the characteristics and requirements of the immigrants and their descendants and more the links they establish with the two linguistic communities, although, in fact, they pursue differing strategies in organising integration in Flanders, Wallonia and the bilingual Brussels-Capital Region. The three communities in Belgium, which are considered to be autochthon, enjoy a collective existence in the Belgian federal political system. The populations of foreign origin, on the other hand, are incorporated on an individual basis into these communities. For integration, Belgium encourages individual integration through naturalisation. The naturalised Belgians enjoy the same rights as the autochthones, however, they can not attain the same level of performance in many basic areas. Due to the lack of proper institutionalisation of integration policy, there have not been enough efforts to ease the social integration through providing employment, adequate education, etc. One may hope that the naturalised Belgians can help in drawing attention to and solving the problems of the immigrant groups, from which they are initially originating. However, the current integration manners, which nearly oblige the new naturalised Belgians to adhere to the political and social structures of Flanders, Wallonia or Brussels, arise as an important obstacle against this alternative (De Raedt, 2004). If only the regions allow the naturalised Belgians to integrate on a more liberal manner without Flemish or Walloon connotations, can these groups be considered as a means of strengthening and promoting Belgian identity rather than the Flemish or Walloon affiliations. In fact, however, when ones they gain presence in the political arena, the naturalised Belgians are more the representatives of the political parties they are member of, rather than the ethno-cultural or socio-economic group they are coming from (Hooghe, 2005).

The case of migrant integration in Belgium provides evidence for the fact that nation-states still preserve their influence on the process of policy development. Despite the arguments of increasing effects of post-nationalisation, supra-nationalisation (Faist, 2004; Soysal, 1994), still nation-states overwhelmingly determine the policies on immigrants (Statham and Gray, 2005). In the EU framework, in contrast to the issues of asylum, illegal migration and border controls, economic migration and immigrant integration remain issues dealt with by individual member states, although in 2005 the European Commission developed a policy plan and launched a debate on legal migration. The relative influence of the EU legislation on Belgium is exemplified by the discussions about the enfranchisement of non-nationals at local elections. The Treaty of Maastricht introduced the principle of granting voting rights to EU-national residents of the Member States at local and European Parliament

elections as well as a fine for non-compliance. In addition, although the non-EU residents were not entitled to the same local voting rights, complaints to the European Ombudsman may be made by any person, who resides in a Member State, regardless of his/her nationality (Feldblum, 1998). Belgium, however, despite the EU decision and the non-compliance fine, provided the local voting rights quite lately, in 1999 and 2004, for EU-national and non-EU national residents respectively. The delay was mainly a consequence of the political concerns of each individual community and political pillar. While the Flemish-speaking population of the Brussels-Capital Region feared a Francophone dominance in case of enfranchising EU-national residents, regarding the enfranchisement of third-country nationals, the liberal, socialist as well as Christian democrat parties had concerns about the possibility of extreme-right mobilizing the anti-immigrant votes and about an electoral defeat. In this regard, it has been difficult for the federal government to negotiate the EU decision with regional authorities in Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels. From the perspective of a two-level game (Putnam, 1988), in order to take a decision at the supra-national level, the state should be able to persuade the domestic level, which is a difficult and complex process in Belgium with the presence of the ethno-cultural and political divergences. For voting in the Council of Ministers of the EU, for instance, the Belgian federal government must work out the domestic compromise position to incorporate the interests of all the communities and groups before the national vote is cast (Farrell and van Langenhove, 2005).

It is evident that the Belgian migrant integration policies, both Flemish and Walloon, still require improvements as well as amendments, when the low level of economic, educational, professional, and political participation of immigrants and the substantial amount of discrimination are taken into account. Besides the case with economic migrants of the post-war period, Belgium's performance in the treatment of the asylum-seekers and refugees of the late-1980s and early-1990s and the new economic migrants from the new EU Member States of 2004 should be tested in order to obtain a more accurate picture of migrant integration in Belgium. In any case, the migrant integration policy should be grounded on diversity, which in turn is negotiated on the basis of equality of all groups. Both the immigrants and the receiving society should be open to dialogue and interaction and take the responsibility in transforming themselves, without overlooking the fact that integration is a (at least) two-way process.

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