

Social Integration of Immigrants and the Attitude of the Native Population in European Countries¹

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Abstract

In this paper, I focus on the relationships between the attitude of the native population towards immigrants and immigration (ATII) in 20 European countries and the level of social integration and perceived discrimination of first and second generation immigrants in those countries. The stringency of naturalization policies in the host countries is also taken into consideration as a mechanism of the development of these relationships.

The results confirm that a country's naturalization policies fairly represent most ATII indicators, and that immigrants feel less discriminated against in more welcoming societies. However, no systematic relationship was revealed between the attitude of the native population and the social integration of immigrants. On the other hand, the results suggest lower perceived discrimination and higher social integration of first generation immigrants in countries where the naturalization status of immigrants is more secured, and the possibility of dual nationality is more restricted.

The results also show that the perceived discrimination of immigrants does not decline with the duration of residence in the host countries, but the latter revealed a positive relationship with the social integration of immigrants.

Keywords: naturalization policy, social integration, perceived discrimination, attitude of the native population.

JEL Classification: J10, F22, K37, Z13

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