
THE CENTRALITY OF EMPLOYMENT IN IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

By Randall Hansen

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Executive Summary

There are two deeply entrenched sides in contemporary debates about immigration and integration in Europe. One side holds that problems associated with immigration have come about because political elites have encouraged policies that allow cultural differences to endure, rather than requiring that immigrants take on their host societies' norms and values. The other side believes that precisely the opposite is true. It holds that problems have emerged because of intolerance and hostility toward diversity, that political elites have not done enough to support immigrant groups, and that the new civic integration requirements being introduced across Europe border on racism. Both sides, however, share the underlying assumption that the problem is cultural, even as they disagree on whether it is the result of too much or too little respect for cultural differences.

Both sides get it wrong. The problem is not a result of culture; it is rooted in employment and income. The failure of European immigration policies has been their inability to ensure that immigrants acquire and retain work. Unemployment rates are far higher for immigrant groups than for natives. What distinguishes Europe from the classic receiving countries of Canada and the United States is not poor language skills or poor earnings among the first generation, but rather their ongoing existence in the second and even third generations.

If immigration is going to work, new immigrants will have to be fully incorporated into society, and most importantly into the economy. Employment, not culture, needs to be the basis of immigration policy in Europe, and policy should be designed to get new (and old) immigrants into jobs as soon as possible. Doing so will not be easy, and it will require — to adapt the old adage on assimilation — a two-way street. States will have to ensure fair access to the labor market and that welfare, educational, and training systems provide real opportunities and incentives for immigrants. But immigrants themselves will have to want these opportunities, and will have to believe that educational success is the basis of their future.

The failure of European immigration policies has been their inability to ensure that immigrants acquire and retain work.



I. Introduction

Scholars and journalists debating immigration and integration in Europe are divided into essentially two warring camps. Both sides are entrenched in their positions. The first camp¹ holds that the problems associated with immigration and integration in Europe are rooted in Islam, multiculturalism, moral relativism, and a spineless liberal political elite that has allowed all three to flourish. The second camp² makes exactly the opposite claim: the problem is intolerance, hostility to diversity, and a return on the part of that same elite to a conception of enforced assimilation — reflected in the new civic integration requirements found across Europe since 2000 — that borders on racism.³ Behind this marked interpretive difference lies a hidden agreement: both sides think the problem is culture. I will suggest in this piece that both sides are mistaken. The problem isn't culture; it's cash.

II. The Role of Islam

Before developing this argument, it is worth saying something about the topic that dominates so many discussions of immigration and integration in Europe: Islam. As in most debates, extreme views on both sides obscure a complex reality. Like almost all ethnic minorities, the vast majority of European Muslims live peaceful, if not conspicuously prosperous, lives. There are nonetheless real problems, which can be grouped under four categories.

First, there is a values gap between Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslims in Europe show higher degrees of religiosity than non-Muslims. In the Netherlands, for example, 29 percent of Muslims regularly attend a mosque, whereas 14 percent of Christians regularly attend church.⁴ In Germany, the figures are 27 percent for Muslims (who worship at a mosque at least “several times per year”) compared to 15 percent for Christians.⁵ Bangladeshis and Pakistanis in the United Kingdom are many times more likely than white Britons (though not Afro-Caribbeans) to express a religious affiliation, attend religious services weekly, and to highlight the importance of faith in the lives.⁶ As a result, Muslims have more conservative attitudes toward women and (especially) gays and lesbians.⁷ They are also more prone to anti-Semitism.⁸

1 For work by prominent members of this camp, see Bruce Bawer, *While Europe Slept: How Radical Islam Is Destroying the West from Within* (New York: Doubleday, 2007); Christopher Caldwell, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam and the West* (New York: Anchor Books, 2010); Mark Steyn, *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2006). For less scholarly treatments, see Melanie Phillips, *Londonistan* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006) and Bat Ye'or, *The Euro-Arab Axis* (Cranbury: Associated University Press, 2005). For an extreme one, see Oriana Fallaci, *The Rage and the Pride* (New York: Rizzoli New York, 2002).

2 The second camp is made up of columnists in left-leaning newspapers such as *The Guardian* in the United Kingdom, and a large number of academics. For the latter, see the special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *Special Issue: The Limits of the Liberal State: Migration, Identity and Belonging in Europe* (London: Routledge, May 2011).

3 See the contributions to Rainer Bauböck and Christian Joppke, eds., “How Liberal are Citizenship Tests?” (working paper RSCAS 2010/41, EUI Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, Florence: EUDO Citizenship Observatory, 2010), http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/RSCAS_2010_41.pdf and Liz Fekete, “Enlightened Feminism? Immigration, feminism, and the Right,” *Race and Class* 48/2 (2006): 1-22. For a review of both extremes in the debate, see Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos, “Illiberal means to Liberal Ends? Understanding Recent Immigrant Integration Policies in Europe,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37/6 (2011), 861-80.

4 Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, *Religie aan het begin van de 21ste eeuw* (The Hague: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2009), www.cbs.nl/NR/rdonlyres/953535E3-9D25-4C28-A70D-7A4AEEA76E27/0/2008e16pub.pdf

5 Kea Eilers, Clara Seitz, and Konrad Hirschler, “Religiousness among young Muslims in Germany,” *Muslim Minorities* (7) 2008: 83-115, 104.

6 See Eric Kaufmann, “The End of Secularization: a Socio-Demographic Perspective,” *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review* 72/4 (2011).

7 For the most extensive survey of Muslim attitudes in Europe, see Pew Research Center, *The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other* (Washington, DC: The Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2006), www.pewglobal.org/2006/06/22/the-great-divide-how-westerners-and-muslims-view-each-other/.

8 According to a 2006 study, whereas large majorities of French (86 percent), British (74 percent), and German (69 percent)



This values gap is cause for concern, not panic. Socialization, education, and debate may well change these attitudes; a similar gap once existed, and in some cases still does, between Roman Catholics and Protestants. A Gallup poll on the state of faith relations found that almost identical numbers of Muslims and non-Muslims agreed on the importance of factors that generally encourage integration: mastering the national language, work, and education.⁹ On the particular issue of religiosity, the data are inconclusive: overall, mosque attendance is declining among European Muslims, suggesting that like Europeans generally they are going through a secularization process. There is, however, some evidence of intensified religiosity among the young: those under 40 are more likely to attend mosque than those over 65.¹⁰ Whether young Muslims' higher mosque attendance reflects a broader increase in religiosity or a passing youthful phase will only be known with time. In any case, even if Muslim attitudes do not fully converge with the broader public, illiberal attitudes are likely to be constrained by public opinion (as seen, for instance, in strong reactions in the United Kingdom against suggestions that Sharia law be integrated into domestic law, or equally strong reactions against a Berlin opera's decision, later reversed, to cancel a production in which the prophet Muhammad, Jesus, and Buddha were beheaded).

Second, Islamic extremism, or the belief that violence and murder are legitimate means for pursuing religious ends, provides a temptation for a minority of impressionable young Muslims in Europe. As the last decade has made clear, the radicalization of second-generation Muslims is real. Real, but not rampant. Radicalization only affects a minority of youth, and the security services in Europe are generally successful in monitoring and apprehending Islamic extremists before they commit violent acts. Efforts to combat radicalization among Muslim youth and to apprehend those already radicalized need to continue, but everyone should maintain perspective: we are facing neither the neoconservatives' World War III nor the left's racialized state.

Third, there are politicians and commentators who demonize all Muslims because of the actions of a few. Such views need to be challenged, but that challenge should be launched in the marketplace of ideas and not through any effort to limit speech that happens to offend some Muslims.

Fourth, and most importantly, the real crisis in Europe is not one of immigration, multiculturalism, or extremism — whether of the Islamic or anti-Islamic varieties. It is, as I will argue, a crisis of employment.

III. It's the Economy

The great failure of all Western European immigration policies has been their inability to ensure that migrants acquire and retain work. Across Europe, the ratio of employment rates of immigrants to those of nonimmigrants (that is, the immigrant unemployment rate divided by the native-born unemployment rate) ranges from 1.3 to 2.6 (see Table 1).

nationals had a favorable opinion of Jews, only 38 percent of German Muslims and 32 percent of British Muslims did; see Pew Research Center, "The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims View Each Other." The exception is highly secular and assimilationist France, where 71 percent of French Muslims had a favorable opinion of Jews. The study also showed, again with France posting the most positive results, disproportionate numbers of Muslims claiming that there was a conflict between being a good Muslim and a living in a modern society; agreeing that suicide bombings are under some circumstances acceptable; and expressing confidence in Osama bin Laden; see "The two faces of liberalism: Islam in Contemporary Europe," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration studies*, vol. 37, no. 6 (2011). Finally, Gallup polling of France, Germany, and Britain found that notably fewer Muslims found homosexuality "morally acceptable" than the general public: 35 percent versus 78 percent in France, 19 percent versus 68 percent in Germany, and 0 percent versus 58 percent in Britain; see Gallup World, *The Gallup Coexist Index 2009: A Global Study of Interfaith Relations* (Abu Dhabi: The Coexist Foundation, 2009): 31, www.gallup.com/poll/118273/canada-show-interfaith-cohesion-europe.aspx.

9 Gallup World, *The Gallup Coexist Index 2009: A Global Study of Interfaith Relations*.

10 European Social Survey (ESS) data cited in Daniel Pipes, "EU: Muslims Going Less to Mosques in Europe," danielpipes.org, May 31, 2010, www.danielpipes.org/blog/2010/05/muslims-going-less-to-mosques-in-europe.



The data provide only a rough measure of relative unemployment among ethnic minorities in Europe, since they include only immigrants and not their children or grandchildren (the second and third generation, who are classified among the native born). The results are nonetheless striking. In continental Europe, overall immigrant unemployment rates are more than 60 percent higher than among natives, with the exception of Italy, which has experienced quite different immigration patterns from its neighbors. Generally, immigrants' unemployment rates are close to — or in some countries more than — double those of native-born workers. In North America the total unemployment rates for the foreign born are at most one-third greater than natives, and were even lower in 2008, prior to the worst of the recession. The situation of immigrants in Europe deserves the attention it is receiving. For example, the conditions of Turks in Germany have been cause for much moral condemnation from outside Germany, and much hand-wringing within.¹¹ But Germany is by no means the worst case when one considers immigrant unemployment rates in Western Europe. In Germany, immigrants are unemployed at about 1.8 times the national average — which is significantly better than Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the Nordic countries (see Table 1).

The great failure of all Western European immigration policies has been their inability to ensure that migrants acquire and retain work.

The reasons for immigrant unemployment are, to be sure, complex. The high unemployment levels of immigrants in Europe in part reflect the overconcentration of migrants in heavy industries that found themselves uncompetitive after 1973, such as in the Ruhr area of Germany or in the Midlands and North of the United Kingdom.¹² But that's not the whole story. Research has highlighted that immigrants in Europe suffer from consistently lower language and educational attainment, which inevitably feed into higher unemployment. What's more, these differences continue across generations: what distinguishes Europe from the "classic" receiving countries of Canada and the United States is not poor language skills or poor earnings among the first generation, but rather their ongoing presence in the second and even third generations. A 2000 study of school children in the Berlin district of Wedding, which has a high ethnic minority population, found that 40 percent of children required intensive German-language instruction before they could succeed in the first grade.¹³ (As the study included both ethnic minorities and native Germans, the figure likely underestimated the problem among migrant children.) More recent research concluded that Germany had (with the United States) the worst results for language acquisition among the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD);¹⁴ nor is Germany alone in Europe. An OECD study showed that in countries with largely low-skilled migrant intake streams, the average educational achievement level of second-generation immigrants is well below that of their native counterparts.¹⁵ Immigration to almost every western European country has been mostly of low-skilled workers, and the three countries with the largest gaps between the second-generation immigrants and the children of natives are all European: Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland.¹⁶ Countries that have emphasized skill-based selection of migrants, such as Australia and Canada, have smaller or no gaps between the second generation and the children of natives.¹⁷

11 Of which the dramatic reaction to Thilo Sarrazin's *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2010) is only the most recent example.

12 On segregation, see Ruud Koopmans, "Good Intentions Sometimes Make Bad Policy: A Comparison of Dutch and German Integration Policies," in *The Challenge of Diversity. European Social Democracy Facing Migration, Integration, and Multiculturalism*, eds. Ruud Koopmans, René Cuperus, Karl A. Duffek, and Johannes Kandel (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2003), 163-68.

13 Rita Süßmuth, ed., *Zuwanderung gestalten, Integration Fördern* (Berlin: Bundesministerium des Innern, 2001): 213.

14 Thomas Liebig, "The Labour Market Integration of Immigrants in Germany" (working paper no. 47, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, 2007): 43, www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/5/38163889.pdf.

15 *Ibid.*, 41.

16 *Ibid.*, 41.

17 *Ibid.*, 41.



Table 1. Relative Unemployment Rates for Native and Foreign-Born Workers, 2008 and 2010

		Unemployment Rate (%)				Relative Unemployment	
		2008		2010		2008	2010
		Native-Born	Foreign-Born	Native-Born	Foreign-Born	Foreign-Born/ Native-Born	Foreign-Born/ Native-Born
Belgium	Men	5.3	14.3	6.7	17.5	2.70	2.61
	Women	6.6	14.9	7.3	17.7	2.26	2.42
	Total	5.9	14.6	7.0	17.6	2.47	2.51
Canada	Men	6.6	6.9	6.9	10.0	1.05	1.45
	Women	5.3	7.6	6.6	9.9	1.43	1.50
	Total	6.0	7.2	7.6	10.0	1.20	1.32
Denmark	Men	2.7	6.4	7.7	15.1	2.37	1.96
	Women	3.4	7.8	6.0	12.1	2.29	2.02
	Total	3.0	7.1	6.9	13.6	2.37	1.97
France	Men	6.3	11.4	8.4	13.6	1.81	1.62
	Women	7.4	12.4	8.7	15.8	1.68	1.82
	Total	6.8	11.8	8.6	14.6	1.74	1.70
Germany	Men	6.6	12.3	7.0	12.6	1.86	1.80
	Women	6.8	12.4	6.0	10.7	1.82	1.78
	Total	6.7	12.3	6.5	11.8	1.84	1.82
Italy	Men	5.6	5.9	7.3	9.7	1.05	1.33
	Women	8.2	11.8	9.1	13.2	1.44	1.45
	Total	6.6	8.5	8.1	11.2	1.29	1.38
Netherlands	Men	2.1	5.3	3.8	8.5	2.52	2.24
	Women	2.5	6.4	3.8	7.7	2.56	2.03
	Total	2.3	5.8	3.8	8.1	2.52	2.13
Spain	Men	8.8	16.4	17.3	31.1	1.86	1.80
	Women	12.1	17.2	19.1	26.7	1.42	1.40
	Total	10.2	16.7	18.1	29.1	1.64	1.61
Sweden	Men	5.1	11.8	7.4	15.9	2.31	2.15
	Women	5.5	12.9	6.8	16.7	2.35	2.46
	Total	5.3	12.2	7.1	16.3	2.30	2.30
UK	Men	6.1	6.8	8.8	9.2	1.11	1.05
	Women	4.8	7.5	6.6	9.0	1.56	1.36
	Total	5.5	7.1	7.8	9.1	1.29	1.17
USA	Men	6.4	5.7	10.9	10.0	0.89	0.92
	Women	5.5	6.0	8.7	9.5	1.09	1.09
	Total	6.0	5.9	9.9	9.8	0.98	0.99

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Key statistics on migration in OECD countries: Quarterly unemployment rates by gender and place of birth* (Paris: OECD, 2011), www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/47/48335145.xls.



IV. Where to Go from Here?

Recognizing the centrality of economics rather than culture points to the importance of three policy areas in ensuring that immigrants in Europe enter the labor market: education, welfare, and economic growth.

A. Education

Attention needs to be given to the training and education of migrants and their children, using a mix of carrots (appropriate courses and equal access to them, funds for studies, provision of daycare facilities for working mothers) and sticks (punishment for nonattendance of language classes and the linking of social assistance to language courses and training). Here some difficult and unpopular choices may be necessary: bussing students out of poor neighborhoods and into wealthier ones, limiting the number of nonnative language speakers at every school and enforcing national language requirements on the playground, and creating boys-only schools with clear role models and firm discipline for young migrant men and their children, as the failures of integration — the temptation of radicalism for young Muslims, and the educational failure of others — seem more pronounced among males. This, it should be noted, is not exclusive to migrant communities: boys' failure in schools and their lower scores on standard math and national language tests are evident in native populations in Britain and North America as well.¹⁸ The precise nature of educational reforms will vary by country: in neoliberal Britain, the focus should be on university degrees with a strong emphasis on literacy, allowing migrants and their children to compete in the largely service-based economy. In Germany, internships and skills upgrading are essential to success in a heavily training-based labor market. And in France, a country that offers few second chances for those who fail academically, access to good schools through which one can secure a strong baccalaureate is key. If there is one example of best practice that *might* be exportable, it is Germany's internship system, which does a particularly good job at keeping youth employment (generally, and among ethnic minorities) relatively low. As everywhere, it is important to ensure that a family's postal code does not become its poverty trap.

B. Welfare

There needs to be a serious conversation on whether income support in Europe is causing more harm than good in creating an incentive structure, in the form of direct and in-kind benefits that are higher than the market wage, which encourages migrants and residents to opt for welfare rather than work. Simply put, in the context of largely unskilled migrant flows, income support above the market wage prompts those at the lowest end of the wage spectrum to choose welfare rather than work.¹⁹ This is true of citizens as much as it is of migrants: when Germany reduced welfare payments in its Agenda 2010 reforms, there was an almost immediate impact in the form of falling unemployment.²⁰ There is, however, some evidence that the welfare take-up rate might be higher among new immigrants than the overall population. One study found that controlling for personal characteristics and ethnicity (that is, comparing the same ethnic groups), the probability of employment among immigrants varied inversely with the generosity of the

18 See, for example, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Pisa 2009 Results* (Paris: OECD, 2010), www.oecd.org/edu/pisa/2009, for data on gender gaps across countries.

19 For the econometric evidence supporting this point, see Suzanne Model, EP Martnes, Justus Veenman, and Roxane Silberman, "Immigrant Incorporation in France, England and the Netherlands" (paper presented at the 50th annual meeting of RC 28, Libourne, France, May 13, 2000); and Heather Antecol, Peter Kuhn, and Stephen Trejo, "Assimilation via Prices or Quantities? Labor Market Institutions and Immigrant Earnings Growth in Australia, Canada and the United States" (working paper WP-2004-07, Claremont McKenna College, March 2004), <http://econ.claremontmckenna.edu/papers/2004-07.pdf>.

20 Andrey Launov and Klaus Wälde, "Estimating Incentive and Welfare Effects of Non-Stationary Unemployment Benefits" (discussion paper 1007, Mainz School of Management and Economics, Mainz, Germany, May 2010), http://ideas.repec.org/p/ces/ceswps/_3069.html.



social safety net.²¹ Similarly, a recent study of Canada and Australia showed that recent immigrants to Australia had higher unemployment than new immigrants to Canada or the United States because of Australia's higher unemployment benefits.²² Higher levels of social support depress employment, and they seem to do so to a greater degree among immigrants than native citizens. Referring back to Table 1, it cannot be a coincidence that the country with the best relative unemployment rate among immigrants, the United Kingdom, is the one with the least developed system of income support. Other forms of welfare spending, such as on education or health, are entirely consistent with large-scale immigration, whether high- or low-skilled.

C. Economic Growth

Without growth there are no jobs for immigrants or anyone else. The point is obvious but worth making in that the scholarly conversation about immigration is often divorced from the study of economics and political economy. It is easier said than done, but those concerned with integrating immigrants should be first concerned with achieving growing economies with dynamic labor markets. Two points are relevant here. First, a resolution of the 2008-present banking and sovereign debt crisis in the eurozone is widely viewed by economists and governments as a precondition to restoring stable economic growth in Europe, above all in the southern countries. Doing so would involve reducing debt levels to a point that reassures the bond markets and attending to low competitiveness (which is a function of labor costs and productivity) in southern Europe relative to Germany and the Nordic countries. Assuming no exit from the eurozone, increasing competitiveness involves wage and price deflation or increased productivity. The latter imposes far less economic pain, and it relates to the second point: increasing attention to education may benefit both immigrants *and* the overall society. Econometric research has long shown that, subject to some variation by region, profession, and gender, education correlates positively with both personal income growth *and* national wealth.²³ On one estimate, a 1 percent increase in school enrollment rates results in a 1-3 percent increase in GDP growth, while an extra year of secondary education is associated with a 1 percent increase in GDP growth.²⁴ Both increases are subject to a substantial time lag (spending new produces growth later). Vocational training, including training of the least skilled workers (Germany's approach), also leads to increases in productivity, with some studies suggesting that the United Kingdom's low productivity relative to France and Germany is partially the result of a much smaller percentage of the workforce with vocational training (25 percent in the United Kingdom compared to 50 percent and 63 percent for France and Germany, respectively).²⁵ Investing in migrant education, as well as education generally, could be a growth strategy.

*Increasing attention to education may benefit both
immigrants and the overall society.*

As it stands, efforts to reduce debt stand in contrast with the push to increase spending on education. Either taxes will have to increase or savings will have to be found elsewhere. Given high levels of spending on income support in Europe relative to North America, reductions in this area are both desirable in themselves (to avoid a work/welfare tradeoff) and to allow transfers from the welfare to the education budget. What's more, increased spending on the education of the least skilled will raise their wages, thus counteracting the increase in inequality that may flow from cuts to welfare.

21 Model et al., "Immigrant Incorporation in France, England and the Netherlands."

22 Antecol, Kuhn, and Trejo, "Assimilation via Prices or Quantities?"

23 Rob A. Wilson and Geoff Briscoe, "The impact of human capital on economic growth: a review," in Pascaline Descy and Manfred Tessler, eds., *The Impact of education and training: Third report on vocational training in Europe: background report* (Brussels: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004); 31.

24 Wilson and Briscoe, "The impact of human capital on economic growth," 37.

25 Ibid., 36.



V. Conclusion

The last 50 years of immigration to Europe have not been an unmitigated disaster, but they have certainly not been a success. High unemployment, mediocre educational and linguistic achievement, and public opposition to new immigration are common across Europe. Yet, in the absence of a sudden surge in European birth rates, large-scale immigration will be necessary to stave off the worst effects of population aging and decline. If immigration is going to work, these new migrants will have to be fully incorporated into society, and most importantly into the economy. Work, not culture, needs to be the basis of immigration policy in Europe. In other words, policy should be designed to get new (and old) immigrants into jobs as soon as possible. Doing so will not be easy, and it will require — to adapt the old adage on assimilation — a two-way street. States will have to ensure fair access to the labor market and educational and training systems that provide real opportunities for migrants. But migrants themselves will have to want these opportunities, and will have to believe that educational success is the basis of their future.

*Work, not culture, needs to be the basis of
immigration policy in Europe.*

The good news in the current debate is that many policymakers are well aware, possibly more than the academics writing about them, of the challenges facing Europe's immigrant communities. European states, including Britain, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Denmark, introduced language tests as a condition of citizenship (and, in the Netherlands, of residence). The United Kingdom has gone one step further, requiring civics tests as a condition of residence and citizenship. All these countries, excepting France, have adopted civics tests. Finally, all new immigrants to these countries also have to undertake mandatory language and civics classes.

Although the new integration requirements have provoked much academic criticism, language is at their core in the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and elsewhere. Of the 945 hours in Germany devoted to language and civics classes, 900 are on language, the remainder on German culture and society. During the 45 hours on culture, German officials take pains to emphasize the international and (some might conclude) un-German quality of Germany: American music, Turkish kebabs, and a liberal use of the English language. The emphasis in Germany's test, as well as in others across Europe, on the importance of language is easy to understand: mastering the national language is basic to success within a modern economy, above all within its growing service sector.

*Immigration to Europe will not work until
immigrants in Europe work.*

There are other indicators of policymakers' attention to socio-economic integration. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) ranking of educational systems across the world provoked panic in Germany, whose low ranking hit a nerve in a country that defines itself as the "land of poets and thinkers." The score also stirred anxiety because it seemed to suggest that Germany's educational system was serving immigrants particularly poorly. Similarly, governments in Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden have devoted considerable attention to integrating migrants into the labor market, and the job prospects of migrant youth was raised as a national issue by French President Nicolas Sarkozy in the run-up to the last presidential election. Policymakers have also shown considerable interest in countries that seem to get the educational system right for immigrants: Canada and Sweden



(though, it should be noted, Sweden does not do especially well on immigrant employment). Finally, the European Commission understands the challenge of migrant and minority integration in Europe as socio-economic rather than cultural. For instance, the Commission's "Europe 2020" strategy, based on achieving targets in employment, education, social inclusion, and climate/energy by the year 2020, pays great attention to immigration and the integration of third-country nationals. Specifically, the Commission identifies the above-discussed problems of poor language training, poor educational outcomes, and low employment (especially among women).²⁶ Through its European Social Fund, the European Union is spending \$75 billion from 2007-13 on projects designed to improve employment prospects across its 27 Member States. Some 14 percent of the funds are devoted to the inclusion of "less favored persons," and general measures against poverty and unemployment will, giving their higher unemployment levels, disproportionately benefit ethnic minorities and recent immigrants. There are certainly limits to what the Commission can do: it lacks the policy levers to secure substantial change in this area. Nonetheless, both the funding and the rhetoric surrounding it can shape the cross-European debate on integration while supporting specific measures at the local level. Policymakers, both in the Member States and Brussels, who see integration as a matter of labor market incorporation may not yet have the right answers, but they have at least posed the right questions. Immigration to Europe will not work until immigrants in Europe work.

²⁶ See European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions on the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals* (Brussels: COM 2011 455 final, July 20, 2011), http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/110720/1_EN_ACT_part1_v10.pdf.



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