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

Vahan Sargsyan

Junior Researcher, CERGE-EI², Czech Republic

Vahan.Sargsyan@cerge-ei.cz

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

¹ Work for this paper was supported by the Czech Science Foundation, grant number 14-36154G.
²CERGE-EI, a joint workplace of Charles University and the Economics Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Politických veznu 7, 111 21 Prague, Czech Republic