



Integration Report

Integration Policy

Sustainable Governance
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Indicator

Integration Policy

Question

How effectively do policies support the integration of migrants into society?

41 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Cultural, education and social policies effectively support the integration of migrants into society.
- 8-6 = Cultural, education and social policies seek to integrate migrants into society, but have failed to do so effectively.
- 5-3 = Cultural, education and social policies do not focus on integrating migrants into society.
- 2-1 = Cultural, education and social policies segregate migrant communities from the majority society.

Canada

Score 9

Pre-pandemic, Canada was receiving over 300,000 immigrants per year and had one of the highest annual immigration-to-population ratios in the world. However, the pandemic has had major impacts and, by December 2020, the Conference Board of Canada was reporting that permanent resident admissions had declined by 56%.

In large part, cultural, education and social policies, including language training and orientation courses, do support the integration of immigrants. Canada also allows immigrants to become citizens after three years of residency, one of the shortest residency requirements in the world. The high educational attainment of immigrants, the highest in the world with around half of immigrants having university educations, also facilitates integration.

Nevertheless, these policies do have weaknesses, as seen by the relatively poor labor market performance of recent immigrants and immigrants' high rate of return to their countries of origin. A CSLS study (Wong, 2020) found that, in 2019, the hourly wage of immigrants to Canada with less than five years of residence averaged just 82% of the hourly wage of people born in Canada. However, this was up from 78% in 2010, so progress is being made. The relative wage for university educated recent immigrants was even worse, 70% in 2018, but up from 65% in 2010. Immigrants' labor market integration is impeded by a number of factors, including difficulties in having their professional credentials recognized by Canadian authorities, the concentration of immigrants in a small number of major cities (e.g., Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal) and language barriers. Moreover, the new decline in immigration has exacerbated geographic settlement patterns and there is a need for greater supports to new immigrants in areas of the country where settlement has fallen behind.

In spite of these challenges, a study by the CSLS over the 2006-2019 period did find that employment rates for new and recent immigrants had improved.

Citation:

Kimberly Wong, The Improved Labour Market Performance of New Immigrants to Canada, 2006-2019, CSLS Research Report 2020-03, June 2020, <http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2020-02.pdf>.

The Conference Board of Canada, Counting on Immigration: Measuring the Pandemic's Effect and Building Back Stronger, May 2021, <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=11163>.

New Zealand

Score 9

New Zealand has long been a prime destination for immigrants. The latest census (2018) shows that 27.4% of people counted were not born in New Zealand, up from 25.2% in 2013 (Stats NZ 2019).

Integration of immigrants is promoted through settlement support. There is more intensive support for refugees, but other migrants also have access to high-quality information services (online and through the Citizens Advice Bureau network) as well as ongoing language and employment programs. New legislation was enacted in 2015 to ensure that migrant workers had the same employment rights as all other workers in New Zealand (New Zealand Immigration n.d.).

Empirical data suggests that these policies are effective: immigrants are less likely to claim benefits, more likely to be employed, and their children have better education outcomes than do native-born New Zealanders. Moreover, there is relatively little ethnic or migrant clustering, and where concentrations do occur there is no indication of high unemployment (Krupp and Hodder 2017). Surveys show that New Zealanders generally have a positive view of migrants, and value the contribution they make to the economy and the cultural diversity they bring. For example, a global survey conducted by Ipsos showed that 47% of New Zealanders think immigration has a positive effect, the second-highest such result among the 23 countries surveyed (RNZ 2017).

Citation:

Krupp and Hodder (2017) "The new New Zealanders: why migrants make good kiwis." The New Zealand Initiative. <https://www.nzinitiative.org.nz/reports-and-media/reports/the-new-new-zealanders/>

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2013) Labour Market Outcomes of Recent Migrants to New Zealand. <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/2677-labour-market-outcomes-recent-migrants-nz-pdf>

New Zealand Immigration (n.d.) Immigration law. <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/policy-and-law/legal-framework-for-immigration>

RNZ (2017) "NZ's mixed attitudes to immigration revealed." <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/321686/nz-s-mixed-attitudes-to-immigration-revealed>

Stats NZ (2019) New Zealand's population reflects growing diversity. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/new-zealands-population-reflects-growing-diversity>

Portugal

Score 9

The bailout was accompanied by a decline in immigration. However, since 2016 the resident foreign population has increased at an accelerating rate. After a 2% increase in the immigrant population in 2016, it increased 6% in 2017 and 15% in 2018. In the review period, this increased even further: an increase of 23.3% in 2019 and, despite pandemic travel restrictions, 12.3% in 2020. This brings the total number of foreigners residing in Portugal to over 660,000, almost 300,000 more than in 2015.

In previous SGI reports, we noted that Portugal has a welcoming policy framework for migrants. The country ranked third in the 2020 Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) in terms of most favorable migrant-integration policies, with an improvement in its rating, with MIPEX noting that “Portugal has consistently improved since the first MIPEX edition.” Consistent with this, and as detailed in the previous SGI report, the most recent OSCE Good Practices in Migrant Integration: Trainee’s Manual of 2018 highlights a number of good practices in Portugal.

Legal immigrants have the right to work. Children of immigrants have access to the education system, regardless of their legal status. Immigrants, regardless of their legal status, can make complaints to the Commission for Equality against Racial Discrimination (Comissão para a Igualdade contra a Discriminação Racial) if they believe they have been discriminated. Complaints can also be brought by witnesses to the discrimination. This Commission is in charge of applying Portugal’s anti-discrimination legislation.

Portugal’s citizenship policies are praised by MIPEX as “world-leading.” In 2020, parliament approved new amendments to the laws that make naturalization easier, making spouses and legal partners of Portuguese citizens eligible to apply for citizenship after three years; and granting citizenship to children of illegal immigrants residing in Portugal for over a year.

These changes, combined with an earlier amendment in 2018 as well as Portugal’s improving economy, have contributed to a rise in the number of naturalizations. In the three years of 2015-2017, there were 284,558 requests for naturalization. In the three subsequent years, 2018-2020, this number increased to 398,194.

Portugal has sought to be a leader at the EU level with regard to refugees and migrants, advocating a liberal position. It has consistently shown a willingness to take in refugees and a government statement in June 2021 indicated that Portugal had received the sixth-highest number of refugees as part of the EU resettlement program.

Citation:

Governo de Portugal (2021), “Dia Mundial do Refugiado – nota à comunicação social,” available online at: <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/download-ficheiros/ficheiro.aspx?v=%3D%3DBQAAAB%2BLCAAAAAABAAzNLQ0NAYAVEHDQAUAAAA%3D>

Lei Orgânica nº 2/2018 [Law no. 2/2018], available online at: <https://dre.pt/home/-/dre/115643970/details/maximized>

Lei Orgânica nº 2/2020 [Law no. 2/2020], available online at: <https://dre.pt/dre/detalhe/lei-organica/2-2020-148086464>

Migrant Integration Policy Index, “Key Findings – Portugal 2019,” available online at: <http://www.mipex.eu/portugal>

Neves, C. (2020), “Portugal concede nacionalidade a 121 mil estrangeiros. Brasileiros lideram pedidos,” DN, available online at: <https://www.dn.pt/edicao-do-dia/12-nov-2020/portugal-concede-nacionalidade-a-121-mil-estrangeiros-brasileiros-lideram-pedidos-13025619.html>

Observador (2020), “Quase 150 mil pessoas obtiveram nacionalidade portuguesa em 2020,” available online at: <https://observador.pt/2021/07/28/quase-150-mil-pessoas-obtiveram-nacionalidade-portuguesa-em-2020/>

OSCE (2018), Good Practices in Migrant Integration: Trainee’s Manual, available online at: <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/?action=media.download&uuid=17D9FD33-0B7B-A37B-0CD6F2869D688741>

Pordata, “População estrangeira com estatuto legal de residente: total e por algumas nacionalidades,” available online at: <https://www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Popula%C3%A7%C3%A3o+estrangeira+com+estatuto+legal+de+residente+total+e+por+algumas+nacionalidades-24>

Australia

Score 8

Prior to 2020, Australia maintained one of the largest immigration programs relative to population size of any established democracy in the post-World War II era. Nearly 30% of the population is foreign-born. Successful integration of immigrants has therefore been a policy priority for much of Australia’s history. In general, Australia has and continues to be highly successful in integrating immigrants. The most important contributor to this success has been a highly selective immigration policy. Most migrants are selected on the basis of their skills and English language ability. Australia is more successful than most OECD countries regarding the integration of migrants into the labor market. The effect has been a swift integration into Australian society. The selection of migrants and limited access to welfare payments, combined with a cosmopolitan society, have demonstrated above average success. Integration via the labor market has been a key factor in the integration of migrants.

Concerns arose in the years leading up to the pandemic about the large number of temporary skilled immigrants. Historically, immigration in Australia has been conceived as permanent resettlement, and the phenomenon of large numbers of temporary immigrants is relatively new, only taking on significant proportions this century. Granting of temporary migrant visas peaked around 2014, when more than 100,000 visas were issued. By its nature, the temporary-immigration program is not geared toward long-term integration of immigrants, creating some potential for breakdown in social cohesion. However, in the last several years leading up to 2020, the government introduced regulations and fees which have reduced the number of temporary visas issued. A rising level of skepticism toward migration is evident in

the country, which may have helped Prime Minister Morrison, who promised a cap on migration, to win the last election.

Despite Australia's highly selective immigration policy, an ongoing concern relates to asylum-seekers who have usually arrived on boats from Southeast Asia. Mandatory detention was introduced for asylum-seekers in the 1990s, and offshore processing of asylum-seekers was reinstated in 2012. Following the 2013 election, the Coalition introduced Operation Sovereign Borders, under which the Australian navy prevents all vessels containing asylum-seekers from reaching Australia. While politically very controversial, the policy appears to have been effective in dramatically reducing the number of asylum-seekers attempting to arrive by boat. Tight control of Australia's borders arguably strengthens the political support for continued high levels of skilled and business immigration.

Since the onset of the pandemic, net overseas migration has been negative and it remains to be seen if pre-pandemic immigration levels return.

Citation:

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/asylum-seeker-boat-tumbacks-supported-by-71-per-cent-in-poll-20140603-39h2a.html>

<https://www.justlanded.com/english/Australia/Australia-Guide/Jobs/Unemployment-Benefit>

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/immigration/dramatic-decrease-in-asylumseeker-deaths/news-story/0967f643c9a38e09d36d0ad1c28c8a54>

Immigration statistics and forecasts: <https://population.gov.au/data-and-forecasts/key-data-releases/overseas-migration-2020-21>

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/mar/20/morrison-says-capping-migration-at-160000-is-to-save-budget-bottom-line>

Germany

Score 8

In 2020, a total of 26.7% of the population living in Germany, or 21.9 million people, have a migrant background. This number has increased from 16.6 million persons in 2013 (Destatis 2021).

According to the OECD (2013), reforms passed in the early 2010s “put Germany among the OECD countries with the fewest restrictions on labor migration for highly skilled occupations.”

The number of asylum applications peaked during the so-called refugee crisis at 745,545 applications in 2016 and has since decreased sharply. In 2020, in part due to pandemic travel restrictions and border closures, this number fell to 122,170 (BAMF 2021). Despite the crowding out of this topic by the pandemic, migration remains one of the country's top challenges, which has a lasting impact on German politics. Since the refugee crisis of 2015 – 2016, the xenophobic AfD party has gained seats in all state parliaments.

Germany handled the short-run challenges of the large number of refugees that arrived in 2015/16 remarkably well, though the long-term challenge of successfully integrating refugees and asylum-seekers into the education system and labor market remains a crucial concern. Whereas labor market integration is proceeding faster than expected, labor market participation remains lower relative to other groups of the population with a migrant background. In March 2021, 31.8% of refugees in employment age from the main countries of origin were in regular employment. This compares to 46.6% of all migrants and to 63.1% of Germans (Geis-Thöne 2021). The pandemic brought a setback for many refugees employed in the service sector but this is believed to be a temporary phenomenon.

Much will ultimately depend on whether the process of broader cultural integration succeeds. So far, German civil society remains generally in favor of a society open to migrants. However, xenophobia is a manifest problem that is mirrored in a rising number of crime directed at those perceived to be foreigners. Hate crimes, including xenophobic attacks, increased from 8,600 cases in 2019 and to 10,200 cases in 2020 (BMI and BKA 2021).

The new government plans to reform the German nationality law. It wants to simplify and shorten the path to naturalization. Children born in Germany to foreign-born parents are to receive German nationality from birth if one of the parents has had a right of residence for at least five years. Dual or multiple citizenship, which is currently allowed for among EU citizens and under special circumstances, will be allowed as a rule (Koalitionsvertrag 2021, p. 118).

Citation:

BAMF (2021): Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2020, Asyl, Migration und Integration, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

BMI and BKA (2021): Politisch motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2020, Bundesweite Fallzahlen, Bundesministerium des Inneren, für Bau und Heimat und Bundeskriminalamt.

Destatis (2021): Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit, Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund, Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2020, Fachserie 1, Reihe 2.2.

Geis-Thöne (2021): Deutliche Fortschritte bei der Arbeitsmarktintegration trotz Pandemie, IW-Report 28/2021.

OECD (2013): Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Germany 2013.

Koalitionsvertrag (2021): Mehr Fortschritt wagen, Bündnis für Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit, Koalitionsvertrag zwischen SPD, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen und FDP.

Ireland

Score 8

In 2021, Ireland's population reached its highest level since 1851 – more than five million. From being largely homogenous in the 1990s, Ireland's population now includes approximately 15% who were born abroad after net inward migration flows were recorded in 15 of the last 20 years (Social Justice Ireland, 2021).

The large inflow of immigrants during the boom years after the mid-2000s led to a rapid increase in the foreign-born population resident in Ireland. More than 70% of immigrants to Ireland have the right to reside, work and own property in the country by virtue of their EU citizenship. Despite the resumption of a high rate of emigration among Irish nationals after 2008, inward migration from abroad has continued at a significant rate.

The unemployment rate among non-nationals (especially those from the post-2004 EU member states) is higher than among the native-born population, while many employed immigrants are not in occupations commensurate with their skills and education.

The inflow of families from non-English-speaking countries in the last 15 years has placed a strain on the education system. Additional resources have been provided to help cope with this challenge, but these are widely regarded as inadequate. There are signs of increasing gaps between schools in relatively deprived areas of the main cities, which often have higher concentrations of children holding non-Irish citizenship, and schools in the more affluent areas with lower concentrations.

Forced integration is not an issue. However, some ethnic and religious minorities face difficulties in a country that is still overwhelmingly Irish, while their children face problems in a school system that is still largely under Roman Catholic management.

The treatment of asylum-seekers by the Irish authorities came under scrutiny in 2014, with adverse attention drawn to the system of “direct provision,” which is intended to provide for the welfare of asylum-seekers and their families as they await decisions on their asylum application. The system provides essential services, medical care, accommodation and board, with three meals per day provided at set times. Attention has focused on the poor standards of accommodation and living conditions in the facilities serving this population, as well as the enforced isolation of families waiting for as long as seven years to learn of a decision on their asylum applications. The 2020 Programme for Government included a commitment to end the direct provision system by the end of 2024. A whitepaper published in early 2021 outlines a new system of accommodation and supports that for applicants arriving in Ireland in search of international protection (Gov, 2021).

Ireland has been largely unaffected by the growing immigration/refugee crisis in much of Europe since 2015. Ireland agreed to accept some immigrants/asylum-seekers from Syria and other war-torn countries before the end of 2015. There is no explicitly anti-immigrant political party in Ireland and immigration was not a prominent issue in the most recent 2020 general election.

Citation:

Gov (2021) Minister O’Gorman publishes the White Paper on Ending Direct Provision, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 26 February, available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/affd6-minister-ogorman-publishes-the-white-paper-on-ending-direct-provision/>

Social Justice Ireland (2021), 'Demographic Change: a key policy issue', 8 September 2021, <https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/policy-issues/demographic-change-key-policy-issue>

Luxembourg

Score 8

Luxembourg's migrant population has grown continuously since the Second World War. Nowadays, around 85% of migrants are citizens of the European Union, with 90% of resident migrants being of European descent. Most other highly qualified migrants have come either from Russia, Canada or the United States. On 1 January 2021, 47.2% of the total population were foreigners, and 81.6% of this group were EU citizens. The top five most represented nationalities are the Portuguese (38.6%), the French (19.8%), the Belgians (8.2%), the Germans (5.2%) and the Spanish (3.2%). Among third-country nationals, the most common countries of origin are the United Kingdom, China and Montenegro. It is estimated that more than half of Luxembourg's citizens currently have a migrant background, and that 10% of them have roots in a non-EU nation.

In 2020, of the 11,904 new residence permits issued, approximately 30% were for family reasons, about 25% for work purposes and 16% were for international protection. Among the population receiving protection, 29.9% came from Syria, 21.6% from Eritrea, and 7.9% from Afghanistan.

In Luxembourg, the state, municipalities and civil society work together to help foreigners integrate, under the coordination of the Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region. The National Council for Foreigners, an institutional consultative body, represents foreigners in Luxembourg. The two main civil society organizations representing migrants' interests are the Association de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés (ASTI), and the Liaison and Action Committee for Foreigners (CLAE). In early 2021, the government launched a study on racism, and two other studies have also been launched by the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) national program.

Foreign children are fully integrated in local elementary schools or high schools. Mediators assist foreign parents and students in their dealings with the education system. Pupils who have not mastered Luxembourgish or German when entering elementary school can take advantage of a certain number of linguistic tutoring hours. Several structures have been set up to welcome and guide new arrivals aged 12 to 24 in Luxembourg. Children between 12 and 15 are given the opportunity to attend special classes called "classes d'insertion" in the capital's Lycée Technique du Centre, with special programs in French or German, designed to facilitate integration into regular classes. English-speaking and "international" classes also exist within the public school system, as well as technical and professional education classes. Despite this, the average school dropout rate for children of foreign parents is high. To enable migrant employees to learn Luxembourgish, a 200-hour training leave is allowed.

All foreigners, whether they are citizens of the EU or third countries, can vote and run for office in local elections, provided they fulfill certain residency requirements and are registered on the electoral list. Conditions for registration have been eased over recent years. However, meetings of local councils are usually held in Luxembourgish (with reports written in German, French or English), which poses an obstacle for many resident foreign citizens.

The Migrant Integration Policy Index 2020 points out that the Grand Duchy's integration policies shifted from halfway favorable (54/100) to slightly favorable (64/100) for societal integration (above-average for the EU and for Western Europe).

The many cross-border workers in Luxembourg are not taken into account within the CNE (Conseil national pour étrangers, or National Council for Foreigners). However, the creation of a commission specifically dedicated to cross-border workers has very recently been discussed.

Citation:

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg Statistics Portal. <https://statistiques.public.lu/en/>. Accessed 3 January 2022.

“Main d'œuvre étrangère qualifiée au Luxembourg : le rôle de la politique d'immigration.” Fondatio Idea (2 December 2021). <https://www.fondation-idea.lu/2021/12/02/main-doeuvre-etrangere-qualifiee-au-luxembourg-le-role-de-la-politique-dimmigration/>. Accessed 3 January 2022.

“Données en matière d'asile et protection internationale.” Le Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg. Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes. <https://maee.gouvernement.lu/fr/directions-du-ministere/immigration/stats-et-publications.html>. Accessed 3 January 2022.

“Luxembourg in figures 2021” (16.09.2021). <https://statistiques.public.lu/en/publications/series/lux-figures/2021/lux-figures/index.html>. Accessed 3 January 2022.

“Governance of migrant integration in Luxembourg, 2020.” European Commission (2021). https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/country-governance/governance/luxembourg_en. Accessed 3 January 2022.

“Measuring policies to integrate migrants across six continents.” The Migrant Integration Policy Index 2020. <https://www.mipex.eu/key-findings>. Accessed 3 January 2022.

Norway

Score 8

Integration policy is fairly well organized and well funded in Norway. The key policy objective is to ensure access to education and employment for immigrants, and by so doing, prevent dependencies on economic benefits. While people with an immigrant background have become hugely popular within sports and culture, non-Western immigrants continue to suffer higher unemployment rates and less paid, more insecure jobs than native Norwegians. There are complaints of discrimination both in the labor and in housing markets, as well as in day-to-day life. Nonetheless, Norway has proved more successful than many other OECD countries in terms of integrating immigrants into the labor market.

There is a tension between the pursuit of a policy of multiculturalism and respect for ethnic differences, and the belief in strict principles of equal treatment which, according to its critics, easily becomes a kind of hidden pressure for assimilation. Opinions also differ when it comes to the question of whether immigrants with a (non-Western) refugee background should be treated differently than European immigrants who legally seek employment within the common European labor market.

Integration policies include providing free language training to immigrants and allocating additional resources to schools with a high share of immigrant children. Some of these resources are devoted to preserving cultural identity. For instance, children are offered additional classes in their mother tongue. As a rule, applicants for citizenship must have lived in the country for at least eight out of the last 10 years (six years if their income is above a certain threshold), and either be fluent in Norwegian or have attended courses in Norwegian for 300 hours. Immigrants with permanent residence status are entitled to vote in local, but not at national elections. In order to prevent immigrants from concentrating in the largest cities only, local authorities are compensated economically by the central state if they can attract immigrants to settle in their community.

Although many voters express concerns regarding immigration, Norway does not have a significant political party that pursues an openly xenophobic or particularly strong anti-immigration policy. Surveys also report that the immigration issue has become less salient for voters in the last few years. At the same time, the political consensus has been to pursue a “fair but strict” immigration policy.

Denmark

Score 7

On 1 July 2020, there were about 814,000 immigrants and descendants of immigrants living in Denmark, or 13.8% of the population (9% immigrants, 5% descendants). Roughly two-thirds of immigrants are from non-western countries.

Immigration rules have been tightened since the 2002, including the family reunification rule introduced in 2004. Since peaking in 2015, immigration from countries outside the European Union has fallen, while immigration from within the European Union for work remains very important.

The employment rate of immigrants and their descendants aged 16 to 64 is low compared to other groups, though it has been increasing. As a consequence, there is a substantial employment gap, taking into account the age distribution. Immigrants from non-Western countries have an employment rate 22% lower than that of ethnic Danes in 2020 (for descendants the gap is 16%). The gap is higher for women (24%) than for men (19%). For immigrants from Western countries, the gap is about 11% (for descendants about 6%). Though the gaps in employment rates should be viewed

in light of high employment rates in Denmark for both men and women, the high qualification requirements for securing a job, and the high minimum wage.

An increasing share of immigrants report being more integrated and having more Danish friends, with fewer saying they have experienced discrimination. In addition, many more immigrants than ever before now speak Danish. Half of all male refugees are in work within three years after arrival, and the children of refugees are integrating into Danish schools faster than in the past.

Concerning educational achievements, immigrants and their descendants – especially girls – are making progress. For the age group 25 to 34 years old, 80% of women with Danish ethnicity and 67% of women with a foreign background, and 73% of men with Danish ethnicity and 49% of men with a foreign background have completed secondary education.

There is broad political support for tight immigration policies and various measures have been introduced to reduce immigration (also for family unification) in recent years. The conditions of temporary residency permits are being reassessed and the scope for temporary residents to return is being discussed. These measures should be viewed together with changes to the social safety net and reduced transfers to immigrants.

Denmark has stopped receiving so-called quota refugees through the United Nations, even though some municipalities had declared that they were ready to receive more. The Social Democratic party has committed itself to a strict immigration policy, which allowed it to capture votes from the Danish People's Party. However, the other parties in the "red" block, especially the Social Liberals, are in favor of a more liberal immigration policy.

Though immigration policy was broadly expected to be the main topic in both the European Parliament election in May 2019 and the June 2019 general election, climate change turned out to be the focus. This perhaps reflects the fact that there is greater agreement on climate change issues.

Another controversial issue has been the question of attracting qualified workers from abroad, which is arguably more a labor market policy issue. The rules for this type of immigration are debated in the context of the currently low unemployment rate.

Finally, the government has proposed that asylum-seekers should be housed in facilities outside the EU throughout their application process. This proposal has been met with criticism from the African Union and the EU.

Citation:

African union. Press Statement on Denmark's Alien Act provision to Externalize Asylum procedures to third countries (<https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20210802/press-statement-denmarks-alien-act-provision-externalize->

asylum-procedures)

“Hvor mange kommer, og Hvorfra?” <http://refugees.dk/fakta/tal-og-statistik/hvor-mange-kommer-oghvorfra/>
(Accessed 21 October 2017).

Statistics Denmark, Statistikbanken (<http://uim.dk/tal-og-statistik/tal-og-statistik-om-integration>)

Estonia

Score 7

Since the Soviet period, Estonia has had a large non-native population. Russian speakers – ethnic Russians and other Slavs – compose almost a third of the population, 16% of whom are foreign born. The national immigration policy has been regularly updated and monitored, with the government allocating substantial national and EU funds to various integration programs. All government activities are framed by the national development plan Integrating Estonia 2020.

In national elections, only Estonian citizens can vote and register as candidates. Permanent residents without Estonian (or other EU) citizenship can vote in municipal elections but cannot stand as candidates. An increasing number of Russian-speakers who hold Estonian citizenship are employed in the civil service, belong to the political elite and stand as candidates in elections. However, the electoral turnout of Russian-speakers remains lower than the national average. Several public and private initiatives have sought to facilitate civil society activism among ethnic minorities, yielding some visible progress. The differences in the economic and social situation are decreasing, but people of other nationalities are more vulnerable in the labor market during recessions. Until now, Estonia has had an education system separated on the basis of language, but this has started to change. Increasingly, more ethnic minority children study in language immersion groups/classes in preschools and Estonian-language elementary schools. Plans to introduce a unitary, primarily Estonian-language-based school system have been mooted since the 1990s, but have faced resistance from the Russian-speaking community and practical obstacles (e.g., the poor language proficiency of teachers).

Beyond policies on integrating immigrants from the Soviet period, programs to integrate refugees and new immigrants. To help newly arrived immigrants settle in and acquire knowledge, skills and proficiency in the Estonian language, they can choose to participate in an introductory welcoming program. Additionally, the Ministry of the Interior supports and empowers public, private and third-sector organizations working on a day-to-day basis with newly arrived immigrants by building support networks and developing public services. According to survey data, 70% of new immigrants rate their adaptation in Estonia as very good or close to excellent, 32% of new immigrants interact with Estonians almost every day and 24% do so at least once a week (Praxis et al. 2021). The overall number of new immigrants has been modest and most of immigrants settle in English-speaking work environments in Tallinn, or arrive from Ukraine or Russia, which eases integration into the Russian-speaking sphere of society.

Citation:

Praxis et al. (2021). Estonian integration Monitoring 2020. Tallinn: Ministry of Culture. <https://www.kul.ee/en/estonian-integration-monitoring-2020> (accessed 02.01.2021)

Finland

Score 7

Since the beginning of the 1980s, Finland has witnessed more immigration than emigration. From 1990 to 2018, the share of the population with a foreign background grew from 0.8% to 7.3%. Several factors have challenged the management of this inflow of immigrants. Second-generation immigrants have had difficulties entering education or finding work. There are also differences in labor-market attachment relative to migrants' countries of origin; Estonians, for example, finding their way into employment much more easily than migrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Boosting the labor-market participation rate was a key target of the government's Future of Migration 2020 Strategy and 2016 Action Plan. While Finland has received a fair share of asylum-seekers on a per capita basis, the country is not considered to be among the top destinations for immigrants. This is the result of various factors. Applying for a Finnish residence permit is still a complicated process, as is applying for Finnish citizenship. Finnish is a difficult language, and proficient language skills are required. While sympathetic to work-related immigration, authorities' general attitude toward immigration is rather restrictive. Moreover, until the summer of 2017, the Finns Party (then called the True Finns) used its cabinet position as a platform to fan anti-immigrant sentiments. Several demonstrations by anti-immigrant protesters against refugee accommodations turned violent. According to a recent poll, 47% of the population is in favor of immigration, whereas 41% is negatively disposed toward it. At the same time, however, attitudes are highly dependent on the country of origin of the immigrants in question. In general, respondents were much more positive toward immigration from the EU, North America and Asia than immigration from Africa and the Middle East.

Citation:

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Iceland

Score 7

Civil rights legislation for immigrants follows the Danish and Norwegian models, which also reflects Iceland's obligations under the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. Separate legislation for immigrants from EEA/EU countries and non-EEA/EU countries makes it difficult for citizens outside the EEA to move to Iceland. Legislation for non-EEA/EU countries focuses on the need for foreign labor and restricts non-EEA/EU migrants to temporary work permits. Authorities provide instruction in the Icelandic language for foreign nationals. Nationals from other Nordic countries with three years' consecutive residency in Iceland are eligible to vote in local elections, while for other foreign national's eligibility follows five years of consecutive residency. The right to vote in parliamentary elections presupposes Icelandic citizenship.

The center Alþjóðasetur in Reykjavík provides interpretation and translation services to immigrants. The Directorate of Immigration (Útlendingastofnun) – a division within the Ministry of Interior whose mandate includes processing residence permits, visas and citizenship applications – has repeatedly been criticized for expelling foreign nationals on weak grounds. The Directorate of Labor (Vinnumálastofnun) reaches out to foreigners by, for example, providing important information in English on its website. The Directorate of Labor is also responsible for running the European Employment Services office in Iceland.

The number of immigrants in Iceland reached 15% of the total population in 2020, up from 8% in 2012. By November 2021, the Directorate of Immigration had accepted fewer than 600 applications for asylum for 2021, about a quarter of the applications received.

In 2020, the University of Akureyri published the results of a big research project on the inclusion of immigrants in Iceland. The project presented evidence that the integration of immigrants into Icelandic society had improved. While the situation remains imperfect, the results were better than expected overall (see Gunnþórsdóttir et al. 2020; and Guðmundsson and Eythórsson 2020).

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Lithuania

Score 7

Lithuania remains a rather homogeneous society. According to the Department of Migration, there were 87,269 foreign-born residents living in the country on 1 January 2021. In total, foreign nationals represented around 3.12% of the country's population. The number increased by 18% during 2020. In the second half of 2020, after the repression of opposition and civil society figures in Belarus that followed presidential elections widely considered by the West not to be fair or free, Lithuania became one of the main destinations for citizens of Belarus fleeing their country, including key opposition figures. Political debates regarding the simplification of employment procedures and education opportunities for migrants from Belarus took place.

The year 2021 brought new substantial changes to the migration situation. In particular, following the political tensions, Belarus President Lukashenko's regime started encouraging and arguably actively organizing migration flows into Lithuania (as well as Poland and Latvia) from places like the Middle East, Africa and Afghanistan. The number of illegal migrants started increasing very fast in the summer of 2021. In total, more than 4,000 illegal migrants arrived in Lithuania during 2021. Importantly, Lithuania shares a long and poorly guarded border with Belarus.

Initially, Lithuanian authorities followed the established procedures, which meant that all migrants seeking asylum had to be let in, and their applications processed. Nevertheless, in response to rapidly increasing flows, public fears and anticipation that even higher migration flows were forthcoming, the authorities changed their strategy. They declared a state of emergency (supported by most of the members of parliament belonging to the parties in government and the opposition), expanded the powers of the armed forces in support of the Border Security Service and the Public Security Service, started building a physical barrier with Belarus, and began physically deterring migrants from entering the country's territory. There was a heated debate about the appropriate strategy, with some local and international observers, NGOs, and politicians criticizing the authorities for breaking international law and EU agreements and violating human rights, and others arguing that the nature of the challenge – perceived as “weaponization” of migration and hybrid war waged by Lukashenko – made this strategy indispensable. The latter position prevailed on the political level.

As part of the EU program to distribute asylum-seekers among member states, Lithuania had earlier committed to taking in 1,105 people over the course of two years, but this quota was later reduced to 1,077 people and extended to 1 October 2019. By late September 2018, 486 refugees had been relocated to Lithuania from Italy, Greece and Turkey. However, the majority of refugees ultimately left

Lithuania for Sweden, Germany or other EU destinations. In November 2019, five people who received asylum and 137 who had applied for asylum were living in refugee reception centers. A total of 192 people who had been granted asylum and 154 who had been reallocated from other EU countries were participating in municipality integration programs.

Most of the country's legal migrants, usually searching for jobs, come to Lithuania from either Ukraine or Belarus, both former republics of the Soviet Union. For this reason, their integration into Lithuanian society has not been very difficult, with most taking up jobs in sectors suffering a labor shortage, such as truck driving or construction. However, the majority of new asylum-seekers are from countries such as Iraq, the Republic of Congo, Syria, Cameroon or Afghanistan. This presents Lithuanian authorities with more complex integration challenges (unless the migrants decide to leave Lithuania). Furthermore, a number of developments call for the implementation of new integration measures, including the country's rising flows of legal and illegal immigration; the economic recovery, which helped contribute to the recent increase in the number of work permits granted to third-country nationals; and the language and cultural problems faced by foreign residents in Lithuania.

Migrants from other EU member states tend to integrate into Lithuanian society more successfully than do third-country nationals. Various cultural, educational and social programs, including the provision of information, advisory, training services and Lithuanian language courses are aimed at integrating migrants into Lithuanian society. However, labor market services are not sufficiently developed in this regard, and foreign residents' access to relevant education and training programs remains limited in practice. Moreover, new integration facilities and services are necessary in order to support the expected new surge of refugees.

Lithuania also arranged the arrival and integration of 14 Afghan families of translators who had helped Lithuanian military in the country. They were settled in the small town of Raseiniai, but most of them later left the town for bigger cities due to the lack of opportunities for work and study. After the military invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces in February 2022, it is likely that a wave of migrants from Ukraine might arrive in Lithuania, though the majority are likely to stay in Poland, where there is an estimated 1 million migrants from Ukraine.

Citation:

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Netherlands

Score 7

The Netherlands is a sizable immigration-destination country, with a considerable integration task. In 2020, almost a quarter of Dutch population was of migrant origin, roughly half of them being second-generation migrants. The major cause of growth is asylum seeking. Three large groups of migrants can be distinguished in terms of policy issues and risk. The first group are people with a migration background, mostly of the second and third generations. The second group consists of new migrants, mostly refugees from various regions in the world. The third group includes migrants from Eastern Europe, predominantly seasonal workers. Each of these groups has their own issues and risks. The economic position of second- and third-generation migrants is gradually improving, although they still experience disproportionate discrimination within the labor market.

The proportion of school pupils in these groups assessed as being capable of entering the higher tiers of Dutch secondary education (HAVO or VWO) and the proportion actually receiving this level of education in year three of secondary school has risen more sharply than among schoolchildren with a native Dutch background. The in-depth analyses show that this improved educational position also leads to a better employment position, although a difference remains. On average, their employment rate after graduation is lower than among graduates with a native Dutch background. However, the higher the level of education achieved, the smaller the difference. As a result, the relative representation of migrants within crime statistics is still high, but has shown a decreasing trend over the last decade. The decrease is particularly strong for second-generation migrants. Women with a migrant background are doing significantly better than their male peers, both at school and at work.

Elections in March 2021 have triggered debate on the representation of minorities in political bodies. This explains the relative success of DENK, a Turkish minority party (2.0% of the vote), and the anti-discrimination party BIJ1 (previously Artikel 1, 0.8% of the vote).

In 2020, the Migrant Integration Policy Index ranked the country in a third tier, “Temporary integration – halfway favorable,” together with Germany, Italy, France and the United Kingdom. Asylum policy has been a point of concern. Efficiency and speed have been clearly given a high priority in asylum decisions, and the use of algorithms has led to a significant number of arbitrary decisions. The system of refugee camps was not reformed after the crisis in 2015, which led to problems at the end of 2021 due to the influx of refugees from Afghanistan. People were placed in almost unacceptable accommodations. Eventually, the minister forced municipalities to accept large numbers of refugees without local consensus. A U.N. commission investigated Dutch policies and noted, inter alia, that detention is used much too often. Undocumented people also end up in such camps. Children, particularly girls, do not feel safe in family centers, and children still disappear under the radar.

In a 2018 representative public opinion poll on immigration and integration issues, 38% of respondents stated that immigration, integration and racism were the second-most important public concern, after healthcare. In view of occasional riots and disturbances at municipal council meetings on the location of refugee settlements, integration issues flared up again. National and local parties with anti-immigration agendas gained seats in municipal councils across the country, but never managed to repeat their success from 2017. Apart from the occasional provocation, they have not managed to initiate a substantial debate on the issue of integration. Although the dominant concern during the review period seemed to be over growing levels of income inequality, there are still widely shared concerns over growing polarization and radicalization on both sides of the political spectrum.

Since 2009, all non-EU nationals who migrate to the Netherlands have been required to learn Dutch and essential facts about Dutch history and society. The Civic Integration Abroad policy involves obligatory integration tests in the country of origin for family-reunion applicants. Refugees are expected to “deserve” their status in the Netherlands by taking language tests, and many refugees accumulate debt paying for obligatory language courses, which are also difficult to find and are often of unreliable quality. Migrants without refugee status are allowed to take a loan of up to €10,000 to pay for their integration, to be repaid within three years. The new law addresses many of these issues, but not all. Two improvements stand out. First, municipalities have recovered their coordination role, thereby putting an end to the lucrative language courses offered by all kinds of unmonitored organizations. Second, a great amount of flexibility has been added to the system, allowing for refugees to proceed more quickly to school or to higher level paid jobs, since they will be offered language lessons at a higher level. A downside is the punitive character of the system that has been preserved. Refugees are to pay a fine if they do not complete their program on time, which means that many of them may opt out for lower, “easier” language levels, which would be detrimental to their integration in the long run.

Compared to other countries, immigrants benefit from several measures targeting employment and labor market integration. Nevertheless, unemployment rates among non-Western migrants are three times as high (16%) as among Dutch-born citizens (under 4% at the end of 2018). The employment rate of refugees stagnated during the coronavirus crisis. In 2020, 44% of those who received refugee status in 2014 had a job. They usually work fewer hours than native Dutch persons, have flexible contracts and are overrepresented in low-end service jobs. More recent refugees seem to find work faster. Recent research shows that ethnic discrimination in the labor market is widespread and difficult to address. Muslim citizens self-report experiences with and perceptions of discrimination, as well as incidents of harassment and violence, at levels quite high by comparison with other European countries. Rampant discrimination, racism and Islamophobia in the police force were recently revealed by a series of whistleblowers in response to inadequate responses

by top police officials. In 2021, a case against the police on ethnic profiling was lost. The national Monitor Discrimination reported a record number of complaints in 2020.

Another precarious group – East European migrants – was hit particularly hard by the pandemic. First off, virtually no integration programs exist for people coming from within the EU. In addition, many are seasonal workers with temporary “all-in” contracts by agencies that provide employment, housing and transportation, under conditions resembling human trafficking in many cases. A report by a special committee came up with a number of recommendations. Implementation of these has been slow and piecemeal, so far.

Citation:

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Spain

Score 7

Spain ranks 11th out of 38 Western democracies in the latest available edition of the Migrant Integration Policy Index, and is particularly progressive regarding the issues of family reunions and permanent residence. Most immigrants are first-generation, as in the case of Latin Americans, share a common language and cultural links with the native population. In 2020, the smallest interannual increase (137,120 people, or 2%) in immigration was observed since 2016. Only 8% of all immigrants that arrived in Spain in 2020 did so illegally.

Even though the government has taken little action in this area, the population’s degree of tolerance toward immigrants is striking. In a survey conducted in

September 2021 by CIS, the country's official statistics agency, only 4.8% of Spaniards listed immigration as one of their main concerns (as compared to 15.6% in September 2018). Violent attacks on immigrant groups are very rare, even in comparison to other EU member states. However, the nativist radical right-wing Vox has obtained seats in the national parliament and in regional parliaments since 2018/2019. Vox voters are less inclined to believe that immigration is good for the country.

Nevertheless, there is no active policy that has the objective of integrating economic migrants and asylum-seekers into Spanish society. Living conditions in the Foreigner Internment Centers (Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros) at the Ceuta and Melilla enclaves and on the Canary Islands are a persistent matter of concern. The delays in accessing the asylum procedure and the lack of transfers to the mainland have resulted in numerous cases of destitution and homelessness. In October 2020, the minister of inclusion, social security and migration reported that there were around 8,000 asylum-seekers waiting to be assigned a reception place. In two decisions issued in July 2020, the Supreme Court confirmed the right of asylum-seekers to move freely across Spanish territory.

Although the Spanish government supported the EU system for the reallocation of refugees, the number of refugees accepted by Spain during 2021 remained very low.

In September 2021, the interior and migration ministers of Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Malta held a summit in Malaga in which they agreed to call on the European Union to ensure that the common migration policy revolves around the equitable distribution of responsibility among member states, with prevention at the source as a priority, and with adequate financial instruments used.

In October 2021, the Council of Ministers (which since 2019 has included a Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration) approved a change in the regulation of the Law on Foreigners (Ley de Extranjería) that removed many of the barriers that had prevented minors and young migrants migrating to Spain alone from living and working legally. Between the time the measure came into force in November and the end of December 2021, at least 4,500 petitions were processed. In December, the government signed an agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) providing €4 million for resettlement, return and inclusion projects.

Citation:

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Sweden

Score 7

By most international comparisons, Sweden has a generous immigration policy. The country has received a large number of refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria and, in 1992, from the former Yugoslavia. In the European setting, Sweden stands out as one of the most immigration-friendly countries (together with Germany).

As is the case across Europe, geopolitical disturbances elsewhere in the world have triggered waves of immigration to Sweden. In 2015 and 2016, Sweden respectively received some 163,000 and 29,000 asylum-seekers; in 2017 the number was about 25,700, and in 2018, about 21,500. The number of asylum-seekers increased further to almost 22,000 in 2019.

For 2020, even though the prognosis was that 20,000 to 30,000 asylum-seekers would arrive in Sweden, many of whom were slated to arrive as part of the family reunification program, the number dropped to just under 13,000 applications, mainly as an effect of COVID-19. The decrease continued in 2021 with a total of about 11,400 asylum-seekers. Permanent residency was granted to about 140,000 refugees between 2015 and 2020. (Migrationsverket, 2021)

The increasing immigration flows before the pandemic hit represented a major challenge, unprecedented in size and scope, to Swedish integration policy. The related policies cover a wide range of measures, from language training to supportive labor market and housing policies. Most of the policies are implemented locally. Given the extensive autonomy of Swedish local governments, the instruments vary regionally. There are now political signals that local autonomy should no longer prevent individual local authorities from being requested by the central government to receive asylum-seekers.

As a result of the “January Accord” (see Regeringskansliet, 2021a), a parliamentary committee was convened to examine the country’s migration policy (Regeringskansliet, 2021b). The report of this committee (“A sustainable immigration policy in the long-term”) proposed a number of measures indirectly aimed at restricting eligibility for permanent residency and naturalization. These include a shift toward offering provisional residency, the imposition of employment requirements for renewals and the migration of family members, and a language requirement for Swedish citizenship applicants. Measures went into effect in July 2021.

Persons born outside Sweden typically have a harder time finding employment than do native-born residents. A recent report by Statistics Sweden reveals that, indeed, foreign-born people and people born in Sweden with a non-Swedish background generally perform more poorly at the high school level than students who were born in Sweden with a Swedish background. The percentage of people not in

employment, education, or training (NEET) is higher among foreign-born people and people born in Sweden with a non-Swedish background than among people born in Sweden, and when these groups were compared based on the grades they received in high school (i.e., same performance level), the former group earned somewhat higher marks than the latter (SCB, 2021).

It is difficult to argue that integration policy in Sweden considered as a whole has been successful. In terms of both educational attainment and employment, immigrants in Sweden find it difficult to integrate. The government has signaled the difficulty it is having with its integration policies by tying the issue of radicalization to criminality in the new law that will come into effect in 2023. This law is aimed at organized gangs, which have been a serious problem in the country in the past few years. Indeed, there is not a lack of political or economic commitment to integration policy. To the contrary, integration policy remains a very important policy sector and related political activities are far-reaching. Swedish integration policy ranks highly from a comparative perspective. The activities of the ombudsman and the minister for immigration and equality ensure that immigration issues have a high public salience.

Citation:
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Switzerland

Score 7

For many years, Swiss integration policy was predicated on the perception that foreigners were "guest workers," whose limited stay meant that broad efforts to encourage integration were unnecessary. As many foreign workers gained access to unlimited work permits between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s, the policy approach grew inappropriate over time. Accordingly, a number of efforts to improve integration have been made, starting as early as kindergarten. Nonetheless, integration policy cannot broadly be called a success in Switzerland, particularly given that about 25% of the population are migrants (accounting for about one-quarter of the country's residents) and 40% of the population has a migration background. People with a migration background include foreign nationals, naturalized Swiss citizens (except for those born in Switzerland and whose parents were both born in Switzerland) as well as Swiss citizens at birth whose parents were both born abroad (2020; BFS 2022b).

For example, the Migrant Integration Policy Index for Switzerland (MIPEX, 2022, most recent data for 2019) is “halfway favorable” (45), clearly below all neighboring countries except Austria. There is a substantial variation in integration by groups of migrants. In 2017, 39% of migrants from northern and western Europe were members of voluntary associations and groups compared to about 50% of Swiss citizens without a migration background. In contrast, such membership applies to less than 20% of those from southern and eastern European countries.

Yet if the lack of a coherent federal integration policy is undisputable, this does not mean that integration policy as a whole is failing. Many local and cantonal authorities are doing a good and sometimes innovative job of integration, especially for second-generation migrants. In this respect, most policy development and implementation are decentralized to the local and regional levels.

According to OECD statistics, second-generation migrants in Switzerland perform better in school and are better integrated into the labor market than in other European countries. This is not to say that immigrants have equal opportunities in all respects. If immigrant unemployment rates and dependence on social aid are above the national average, this is due to the fact that the share of low-skilled workers with a correspondingly higher risk of unemployment is also above average among immigrants. But the lack of a coherent integration policy may add to the problems, and social discrimination is not limited to the labor market. Within the housing market, for instance, some groups of immigrants may find it comparatively difficult to rent apartments.

With regard to naturalization, about 34,100 foreigners were granted Swiss citizenship in 2020, with Germans and Italians comprising the largest groups (BfS 2022a). Calculating the number of naturalizations as a share of all migrants actually living in the country, the Swiss rate of naturalization is very low in comparison with other consolidated democracies. In 2020, about 2.0% of resident foreigners acquired Swiss citizenship (BfS 2020). Only some of the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and a few Western democracies (e.g., Austria and Germany) have similar or lower naturalization rates. The naturalization procedure is burdensome. As naturalization in Switzerland is a bottom-up process that starts at the level of the commune, considerable regional differences are evident, with some communes and cantons pursuing a liberal naturalization policy, and others acting more restrictively. The potentially arbitrary nature of naturalization procedures in municipalities is also regularly discussed. These regional differences show up also in the issue of political rights. A few cantons and communes grant political-participation rights to foreigners, even though the federal government does not. Thus, with regard to integration, naturalization and legislation on political rights, we find a bottom-up approach rather than federal standards, which also asks the question of equal treatment and equal opportunities for foreigners.

In Switzerland, as in all modern societies, some segments of society suffer from globalization and, in particular, from the free movement of labor. These

“globalization losers” are particularly likely to hold xenophobic attitudes – to insist on “my country first” positions – and, consequently, to vote for right-wing populist parties. The Swiss Peoples Party is the political party with the strongest electoral support. It has been particularly successful in mobilizing these segments of society. However, this is a far from perfect explanation. In a 2017 survey (MOSAiCH), 59% of all respondents with below median years of education supported a xenophobic statement, compared to 43% of those with above median years of education.

Therefore, on the one hand there, is limited prospect for a more generous and liberal integration policy in the near term given the strength of integration-averse political actors and citizens. On the other hand, as a comparative analysis of European Social Survey data shows, Switzerland belongs to the least xenophobic societies in Western Europe, together with the Nordic countries; for example, the country is much less xenophobic than Austria, the United Kingdom and France (Armingeon/Engler 2015).

Citation:

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United Kingdom

Score 7

Due to the country’s colonial history, the United Kingdom has a large share of ethnic minorities (approximately 14% of the population), and integration has long been an important area of government policy. However, while the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 imposed the general duty to promote race equality on all public authorities, the United Kingdom has not developed a formal integration program. Policy has focused more on preventing discrimination

against minorities than on their integration, reflecting a preference for multiculturalism. Nevertheless, even though there are still incidents of overt discrimination, both public policy and societal norms are very much oriented toward the inclusion of minorities. There are, however, both regional and ethnic differences in integration, with some cities and smaller towns having concentrations of populations of distinct ethnic groups, and tensions over access to public housing and public services in localities where recent immigrants have concentrated.

The Equality Act 2006 merged three existing bodies (including the Commission for Racial Equality) into the new Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The EHRC is an umbrella organization, which attempts to enforce integration and equality across several dimensions, such as ethnicity. In recent years, attempts to create a national narrative around “Britishness” aimed to change the United Kingdom’s ethnocentric concept of citizenship to a more civic one.

Attempts to increase diversity in parliament and in government have been successfully promoted by both major parties. As a consequence, those holding public office are more reflective of British society now than they were two decades ago. This is true also at the cabinet level, with the office of the chancellor and the home secretary positions held by politicians of South Asian descent. Nadhim Zahawi, a who was politician recently promoted to the cabinet, arrived in the United Kingdom at the age of nine as a Kurdish refugee. However, in some public bodies, such as the police, concerns remain that minority ethnic groups are under-represented.

During and shortly after the Brexit referendum in 2016, there was an increase in anti-immigrant rhetoric and racially motivated crimes. Although it subsequently declined, it then rose again after the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester in 2017. Bodies such as the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), and Human Rights Watch have expressed concern. Equally, it is striking how rapidly public figures deemed to have made discriminatory statements – even carelessly – can be ostracized.

A distinction has to be made between the openness to diversity in British society, culture and institutions, which undoubtedly surpasses that of many other European countries, and the stance of UK governments over the last decade toward immigration. As home secretary, Theresa May introduced a target of keeping net migration to “tens of thousands,” although this target was consistently missed by a wide margin. In pursuit of this target, the Home Office adopted a “hostile environment policy” to deter immigration to the United Kingdom. A direct result of the hostile environment policy was the so-called Windrush scandal in 2018. Home Office employees had destroyed the legal documents of citizens who originally came to the United Kingdom as Commonwealth citizens before the 1970s, resulting in a number of unjustified deportations or withdrawals of rights to re-enter the United Kingdom. The public and political outcry, itself a manifestation of societal attitudes, led to rapid action to overturn evident injustices, but introduced no major legislative changes.

Home Secretary Priti Patel promised to curb immigration after Brexit, and signaled that there would be no distinction between EU and non-EU citizens, raising concerns about a hardline immigration policy and the status of immigrants in the United Kingdom. The Nationality and Borders Bill aims to implement a tougher stance by making it a criminal offense to arrive in the United Kingdom without permission (with a sentence of up to four years) and allowing the government to strip people of their British citizenship. The latter is highly controversial, because it would give enormous powers to the home secretary and deprive citizens of citizenship without notice. Even so, it is important to separate the policy toward illegal immigration (a high-profile political issue in light of the growth in crossings of the English Channel and the apparent inability of the authorities to curb it) from the approach to minorities already in the country. It is worth noting that a UK government response to the troubles in Hong Kong was to offer to allow Hong Kong citizens entry to the United Kingdom.

Citation:

National Police Chiefs' Council Report 08. Jul 2016.

United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23.

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance: ECRI Report on the United Kingdom, 4 October 2016.

Priti Patel's Conservative Party Conference speech: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1mJFJDPdOQ>

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

<https://theconversation.com/stripping-british-citizenship-the-governments-new-bill-explained-173547>

Belgium

Score 6

Belgium has a contradictory attitude toward immigration. On the one hand, it has traditionally been quite welcoming to political refugees. Its initial reaction to the Syrian refugee inflow was no exception. The government responded with the rapid creation of emergency accommodation centers, followed by the distribution of families among different cities and villages to promote integration and avoid the creation of ghettos. But the situation deteriorated since then, particularly in the wake of the terrorist attacks on Brussels and in the rest of Europe. As in many – if not most – EU member states, popular support for a complete halt to immigration has risen strongly. Like the previous governments, the current De Croo I cabinet further tightened its policy, creating strong tensions in the coalition between the left-of-center Socialists and the right-of-center Liberals. Some immigrants who were refused asylum launched a hunger strike, and the Socialists threatened to scupper the government coalition if the strike resulted in any deaths. The immigration minister eventually agreed to some compromises with the strikers, but these proved to be very limited a few months later.

Though legally recognized as Belgian citizens, second and third generation immigrants have also become victims of these tensions. The OECD and the European Semester have repeatedly underlined the dismal performance of Belgian schools, based on PISA scores, with regards to the educational performance of pupils

and students with a migrant background. In its June 2019 recommendations, the Council of the European Union reported: “People with a migrant background, in particular women, continue to experience higher unemployment, lower activity rates, higher in-work poverty and over-qualification.” According to EU-SILC data, the risk of poverty among foreign-born residents is three times higher than for native-born citizens, which increases to four times higher for non-EU-born residents. The employment gap was 20 percentage points in 2016. The Itinera Institute has argued in favor of enhanced data collection within these communities to produce fresh, evidence-based policies to improve the job placement rate of migrant workers.

Thus, Belgium has been a country of immigration, and is generally opposed to overt racism and discrimination. Yet its performance in terms of eventual social inclusion and labor market participation ought to be improved.

Citation:

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

<https://www.cire.be/analyses/1318-asile-et-migration-une-politique-restrictive-et-stigmatisante-envers-les-migrants>
<https://plus.lesoir.be/243237/article/2019-08-22/les-signalements-de-haine-en-ligne-ont-double-en-periode-electorale>

<https://www.courrierinternational.com/article/en-belgique-une-campagne-coup-de-poing-pour-denoncer-la-politique-migratoire>

http://www.luttepauvrete.be/chiffres_nombre_pauvres.html

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1560258016104&uri=CELEX:52019DC0501>

Chile

Score 6

The number of immigrants in Chile has increased significantly during the recent past. As indicated by the Chilean Immigration Office, nearly 1.5 million immigrants were living in Chile at the end of 2020 (about 7.8% of the population). This is a significant increase from 2014, when about 420,000 immigrants were living in Chile (about 2.3% of the population at that time)

Historically, the integration of immigrants from other Latin American countries, who represent about 80% of all immigrants (by far the largest group of foreigners in Chile), has not entailed significant difficulties since these immigrants share a common language, and to a certain degree, a similar cultural background. However, the significant increase in inflows over the last five years has begun to lead to social tensions and conflicts, especially in the northern regions of the country, where a large proportion of immigrants tend to enter the country.

Historically, Peruvians used to be the biggest immigrant group in Chile. However, in 2019 Chile became the third-most-popular Latin American destination for Venezuelan migrants, partly because of the introduction of the so-called Visa of Democratic Responsibility in 2018, which allows Venezuelans seeking refuge from the crisis in their country to reside in Chile for 12 months. Today this national group represents nearly one-third of all foreign residents in Chile.

Reforms introduced in 2016 and 2017 allowed refugee children to receive expedited access to Chilean citizenship regardless of their age and residence time when at least one of their parents chooses Chilean citizenship. Before this reform, only adult children qualified to receive citizenship through a parent. Additionally, some administrative barriers have been lowered, making it easier for migrants to attend public schools.

In April 2018, President Piñera presented a draft law on migration that was finally passed in May 2021. Anticipating a long parliamentary debate, the president also enacted several executive decrees addressing “urgent challenges,” which included modifications to the existing law on foreign residents (*Ley de Extranjería*). As a consequence, visas to stay in Chile now have to be issued in a person’s country of origin, and the ability to apply for a temporary work visa in Chile has been eliminated.

Although President Piñera belonged to the small group of Latin American heads of state that did not support the UN Global Compact for Migration of December 2018, he joined 10 additional Latin American countries in signing the Quito Declaration on the Venezuelan migration crisis in September 2018, which recognized the need for greater regional cooperation in this realm.

Citation:

On the progress of draft legislation and implementation of public policies:

Fundación Ciudadano Inteligente: <https://deldichoalhecho.cl>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

Official data on migration in Chile:

Chilean Immigration Office (*Extranjería*): <https://www.extranjeria.gob.cl/estadisticas-migratorias>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

On the new migration law:

Library of the National Congress (BCN), May 2021, <https://www.bcn.cl/leyfacil/recurso/ley-de-migracion-y-extranjeria>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Fact-Sheet Chile”, August 2019, https://www.acnur.org/op/op_fs/5d5c57fa4/chile-fact-sheet.html, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

On the Quito Declaration:

<https://www.procesodequito.org>, last accessed: 13 January 2022.

France

Score 6

Traditionally, France has an open policy toward immigrants. Every person born in France is considered French, or eligible to obtain French citizenship. Integration policies, in terms of long-term residence permits, access to citizenship and family reunification are open and generous. Presently, most new legal immigrants are coming due to family reunification. This partially explains the difficulty of integrating new immigrants, who often have no skills, no education and do not speak French. Processes of integration have to start from scratch. However, the problem is often the same for immigrants moving to France more generally; most are unskilled,

and as such, subject to vagaries of economic booms and busts, for instance in the construction sector.

The integration of the so-called second (in fact, often the third) generation of immigrants, especially coming from Maghreb countries, is difficult for many reasons: education system failures; community concentration in urban/suburban ghettos; high unemployment; cultural identity issues, practices of job discrimination and so on. Immigration from Eastern Europe, the southern Balkans and, more recently, from the Middle East has become a very sensitive subject exploited by the National Rally and more generally by the extreme right, which has been able to set the political agenda and force a focus on migration and identity issues. The reluctance of the French socialist government to put in place a serious migration policy was challenged by German Chancellor Merkel's sudden decision in August 2015 to open the doors to migrants from Syria, forcing the French government to revise its veiled but deliberate policy of restricting entry (low level of asylum admissions, cumbersome and discouraging bureaucratic processes).

President Macron has declared his intention to review France's immigration policy, combining acceptance and integration policies for immigrants and refugees with accelerated asylum-application procedures and stronger efforts to send back people whose applications are rejected. The process of screening requests has improved, but there has also been a deliberate policy to restrict residence permits. As it is very difficult to implement administrative or judicial decisions to expel illegal migrants, there is a growing number of migrants without legal residential status ("sans-papier") who are living in a kind of legal and social limbo. One peculiar illustration of this dramatic situation is related to the rejection of asylum seekers in the United Kingdom who are constrained to live in very poor conditions, and who try desperately to cross the Channel at the risk of their lives.

Citation:

OFPPA: Les premières données de l'asile 2020 à l'OFPPA

<https://www.ofpra.gouv.fr/fr/l-ofpra/actualites/les-premieres-donnees-de-l-asile-0>

Italy

Score 6

Large-scale immigration is a relatively new phenomenon in Italy compared to other countries in Europe. In recent years, the number of legal (mainly from new EU member countries) and illegal immigrants has increased significantly, making immigration one of the hottest political issues. Issues associated with immigration have been cast in negative or even xenophobic rhetoric by some parties (especially by Salvini's League) during electoral campaigns, with immigrants portrayed as dangerous social elements.

Policies dealing with the topic have concentrated more on controlling illegal immigration and temporarily hosting refugees than on integration. Past provisions for the large-scale regularization of immigrants, especially those working for and within

families, have not been repeated. As a consequence, a large number of immigrants are still involved in the underground economy, and are thus exposed to economic exploitation, dangerous working conditions and a lack of respect for their rights. In general, it is clear that in some sectors entrepreneurs and families are only able to operate by using the high number of migrants available to work. Agriculture, the building industry, private elderly care services, many childcare services and private cleaning services are dependent on legally or illegally employed immigrants. Access to citizenship for immigrants remains problematic. Discussions on the issue of the “*ius soli*” (i.e., granting Italian citizenship to children with a migrant background born in Italy) have been tense, and legislative proposals on the matter have ultimately failed to win parliamentary approval.

The school system has proved to be a positive factor in the process of integration, but schools have not received sufficient resources for achieving the best results in this field. Public housing policies have been weakened by the budgetary constraints. As a result, in many cities there are ghetto-like areas where immigrants live in extremely poor housing conditions. The universal healthcare system has in general been fairly effective in providing medical treatments also for immigrants. Charitable organizations, in particular organizations linked to the Catholic Church (e.g., Caritas), have contributed significantly to assisting and integrating migrants.

The efforts of successive Italian governments to promote a common European policy to address the phenomenon of migrations in the Mediterranean and to redistribute migrants have so far been ignored or opposed. The Draghi government has adopted a more flexible attitude toward illegal immigrants reaching Italy and – in view of the labor demands of some important economic sectors – it has significantly expanded the quota of legal immigrants to be admitted in Italy (Decreto flussi).

Citation:

on the decree for immigration quotas see: <https://www.lavoroediritto.com/leggi-e-prassi/decreto-flussi-2021-2022-testo> (accessed 5 January 2022)

Romania

Score 6

Romania is a country of emigration and the presence of foreigners in the country is heavily concentrated in the main urban centers. Official statistics show no major fluctuations in recent years, but a steady increase in third-country nationals is apparent due to the increase in migrant workers. In August 2021, the government approved a new National Strategy for Immigration for 2021-2024.

Romania’s integration program targets the beneficiaries of international protection who possess either refugee or a subsidiary protection status. The program consists of a series of services offered in cooperation with public institutions, local communities and non-governmental organizations, all under the coordination of the General Inspectorate for Immigration. The program includes counseling services and support

activities ensuring access to employment, housing, medical and social assistance, social security and education, and language courses and civic education, but not vocational training or labor market assistance – all of which is covered under government ordinance no. 44/2004. The program generally lasts for 12 months, and enrollment needs to start within 30 days of the date of granting protection. Enrollment offers certain benefits, such as non-reimbursable financial aid and housing at the government’s reception facilities for asylum-seekers for a limited period of 12 months, which is available to low-income refugees.

Citation:

European Commission. “Governance of migrant integration in Romania.” European Website on Integration. Accessed 18 December 2021. https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/country-governance/governance/romania_en
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Turkey

Score 6

Turkey’s new Law on Foreigners and International Protection took effect in April 2014. On the same date, the General Directorate for Migration Management officially took on responsibility for implementing the law to bring Turkey in line with European Union and international standards. In October 2014, Turkey adopted the Temporary Protection Regulation, which defines the rights, obligations, and procedures for people granted temporary protection in Turkey.

Turkey is increasingly becoming a country of destination for irregular migration. At the same time, it also remains a notable transit and destination country for irregular migration. Turkey hosts 3.6 million Syrian refugees along with 400,000 refugees from other countries. Additionally, around 1 million unregistered refugees are estimated to reside in Turkey. Children aged 0-18 make up 1,764,863 (47.5%) of the country’s Syrian population. About 51,945 Syrians were residing in temporary refugee centers as of October 2021. Istanbul hosts the largest number of Syrians (534,439); followed by Gaziantep (458,670) and Hatay (437,234).

The Human Rights Association (2020) observes that difficulties in accessing education, nutrition and suffering from violence persist. Though there is considerable uncertainty about how much money has been spent and on what, as the credibility of official figures and statements has been widely questioned by legal institutions and the opposition.

The refugees were one of the most vulnerable groups during the pandemic, as most of them lost their jobs and income. However, the government did not create a special program to help refugees. Rather it collaborated with international actors in order to ease the burden on its own budget. The EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, for instance, had mobilized €4.2 billion in funding for the refugees by August 2021.

Citation:

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United States

Score 6

Prior to the Trump presidency, the United States was ranked ninth out of 31 assessed countries and first with respect to anti-discrimination laws and protection. The United States also ranked high on the access-to-citizenship scale, because it encourages immigrants to become citizens. Legal immigrants enjoy good (but often low-paid) employment opportunities and educational opportunities. However, the United States does less well with regard to family reunification. Many legal permanent residents cannot obtain visas for other family members.

A large share of immigration to the United States has consisted of illegal immigrants, most of whom have crossed the border from Mexico and often have lived, worked and paid taxes in the United States for their entire adult lives without ever becoming legal residents. These illegal immigrants account for nearly one-third of the immigrant population, numbering 12 million to 15 million individuals or 3% to 4% of the country’s overall population. They have in effect been tolerated (or even virtually invited by the ease of illegal entry) for their economic contributions, often as agricultural workers or in low-paying service occupations. Children of illegal immigrants attend public schools, and businesses that employ illegal immigrants have not been subject to effective penalization. There have been several bipartisan efforts to enact major immigration reforms but such efforts have not succeeded.

Events taking place starting in 2016 profoundly increased the insecurities faced by large numbers of immigrants. President Trump’s election campaign was based on his opposition to immigration, especially from Mexico, the Middle East or other Muslim countries. Trump carried out a wide-ranging, aggressive attack on immigration – targeting illegal immigration in particular. Though his actions were often overturned in federal courts, Trump sought to ban the otherwise legal entry of individuals from a number of mostly Muslim-majority countries and to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (which protects adults who were brought into the country illegally as children from deportation). In addition, he declared his intention to abolish birthright citizenship (despite his lack of constitutional power to do so). Trump insisted on his demands to build a wall on the Mexican border. In what became an international human-rights scandal, his administration separated thousands of children from their parents who had entered the country, most often legally, in search of asylum. Trump also threatened to withdraw permanent resident status from immigrants who draw on public assistance.

Immediately after entering the White House, President Biden began to reverse Trump’s immigration policies, notably by reaffirming DACA protections, halting the

construction of the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border, and ending the travel ban on people from mostly Muslim-majority countries. Yet, the new administration did maintain some of the travel restrictions first enacted in 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Citation:

Migration Policy Institute (December 2017), *Immigration under Trump: A Review of Policy Shifts in the Year Since the Election*, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigration-under-trump-review-policy-shifts> (accessed December 2017)

Austria

Score 5

When in the fall of 2015 a comparatively high number of refugees and/or migrants came to Austria for a brief period, society's response seemed to go into the direction of a "welcoming culture." Related reforms pointed in the same direction. Yet this more liberal approach ended in 2016.

Despite some remarkable efforts, the Austrian approach to integration remains deficient in two key ways. First, there is too little formal recognition that Austria is a country that has been and will continue to be defined by immigration. Second, compared to other EU member states, acquiring citizenship in Austria is complicated for non-nationals (despite popular cases involving prominent figures, such as opera performers, athletes and billionaires).

These shortcomings are reflected in education outcomes. Education in urban areas, and to a lesser extent rural areas, has to deal with the challenge posed by children of first-generation migrants, in school systems with constrained resources. This means that children from migrant families find it more difficult to qualify for higher education and are often stuck in the lowest types of school. This also heavily nourishes discontent of "native" Austrian parents with children in such schools, where successful educational outcomes are increasingly difficult to realize. Special support policies for such children have recently been put in place, but it remains to be seen how successful these policies will be in the short to medium term.

With respect to the labor market more broadly, the Austrian government is only halfheartedly welcoming employees newly arriving from foreign countries. Its policies (including the "red-white-red card") are neither well received by economic actors nor are they succeeding in attracting highly skilled professionals. The indirect, undeclared alliance between organized labor (which defends the short-term interests of union-protected laborers, and is usually linked politically to the left) and the far-right (which exploits xenophobic resentments, especially in the case of the Freedom Party) creates a political climate that sometimes breaks into open hostility, particularly against migrants coming from Muslim countries.

The openly xenophobic rhetoric in recent Austrian policymaking, which characterized the ÖVP-FPÖ government (2017–19), has been abandoned. However,

widespread expectations that the participation of the Greens in the governing coalition would mark a huge step forward in integration policymaking have not been met. The current ÖVP-Green government is the first federal government to include a full minister for integration. However, the office has been controlled by the ÖVP, not the Greens.

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic hit migrants in Austria harder than the country's non-migrant population. For example, while unemployment among Austrian citizens in 2020 increased from 6.4% to 8.4%, the rate of unemployment among migrants increased from 10.8% to 15.3%.

More generally, in a survey among migrants in Austria conducted in April 2021, 48.3% of respondents with a migration history from Bosnia, Serbia or Turkey stated that they had been occasionally or more often discriminated against because of their origin.

Citation:

<https://www.migration-infografik.at/at-asylstatistiken-2021/>

<https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/918456/umfrage/diskriminierungsgefuehl-von-migranten-in-oesterreich/>

Greece

Score 5

The number of refugees and migrants arriving on the Greek Aegean Islands in 2020 and 2021 has reached its lowest level since the start of the so-called refugee crisis in 2015/6. According to the UNHCR, 4,109 people crossed from Turkey to the Greek islands in 2021. This compares to 9,714 in 2020 and just under 60,000 in 2019. After the change of government in 2019, there was a government policy shift. The shift amounted to preventing illegal immigration, particularly in the northeast of the country, where Greece shares a land border with Turkey. Human rights organizations have repeatedly criticized the Greek coast guard of illegally pushing migrants back to Turkey. The Greek government, however, has denied these claims.

The Migration and Social Integration Code, adopted in 2014 and amended in 2021, is currently the basic law regulating integration in Greece, regulating residence permits and access to the labor market. Two national strategies for the integration of third-country nationals had been launched in 2013 and 2018, respectively, before being replaced by the current national strategy, adopted in July 2019, after the change in government.

While the numbers of migrants and refugees have dramatically fallen, Greece has remained unable to properly manage the inflows of people fleeing war-torn and poverty-stricken regions of the Middle East and Africa. Many stayed for long periods of time at reception and identification centers (RICs) on the Greek islands facing Turkey, such as Lesbos, Chios and Samos.

Arriving migrants and refugees continue to find themselves stranded on the islands for a long time before their asylum applications are processed. Migrants and refugees used to live under squalid conditions in “hot spots,” such as at the Moria camp on Lesbos, which used to house 13,000 people. After a destructive fire in September 2020, that camp was closed. Then, the New Democracy government built new, better equipped camps on the same island and on Samos island. The government also gradually moved many asylum-seekers away from the islands.

In the period under review, migrants and refugees, who were not temporarily hosted in the RICs, were housed in camps on mainland Greece, in private hotels and apartments rented on their behalf by the Greek state. There were two government housing programs, the ESTIA (Emergency Support for Integration and Accommodation) and the HELIOS (Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection). However, in 2020–2021, mainland camps were in remote places, with grossly inadequate public transportation. Movement restrictions, imposed to avoid the spread of COVID-19 within the population, worsened the social isolation of migrants and refugees.

Meanwhile, EU authorities and NGOs have continued to provide significant support, as the situation has overwhelmed local Greek authorities. However, this valuable support to desperate people arriving on Greece’s shores in small boats does not extend to their educational and social integration. The integration of migrants into the education system has been functional to a certain extent at the primary and secondary level. It is also obvious that the vast majority of children who live in reception and identification centers (RICs) do not receive proper schooling.

The integration of migrants and refugees into the labor market remains problematic. Migrants and refugees mostly work in the shadow economy, for example, in the agricultural and construction sectors where they find low-paid and uninsured temporary jobs. A law passed after the change in government in 2019 requires a six-month waiting period for asylum-seekers before they apply for work permits. Other difficulties migrants and refugees encounter are obtaining tax registration numbers, enrolling in the social security system (the EFKA agency) and opening a bank account. In all these instances, they often come across language barriers, delays and the uncooperative stance of public sector workers.

Briefly, social integration has never been a strong focus of Greek migration policy. With the exception of Albanians, who probably constitute more than half of all migrants in Greece and first came to the country in the early 1990s, the country’s migrants – including migrants from Asia and Africa – face significant barriers to integrating into Greek society. With regard to cultural integration, it is telling that an official mosque for Muslims in Athens was finally opened only in June 2019.

In summary, significant challenges in terms of policy efficiency remain and policy setbacks are now obvious. Greece must reduce human suffering inside refugee

campus. By now this has grown to become a problem that obviously cannot be managed individually by the Greek state. The problem will remain unresolved as long as a more comprehensive and better resourced integration policy is formulated by national and EU authorities, as inflows of migrants and refugees into the European Union will not cease in the foreseeable future.

Citation:

Legislation on migrants and refugees has been codified by law 4251/2014 and amended by Law 4825/2021.

Information on social integration of migrants and refugees in Greece is available at: N. Leivaditi, A. Ilias, E. Papatzani and E. Petracou (2020), "Integration Policies, Practices and Experiences. Country Report: Greece," EU's Horizon program 2020 "RESPOND – Multilevel Governance of Migration and Beyond," University of the Aegean, June 2020.

UNCHR data on migration flows into Greece is available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

Greece's national strategy on the social integration of migrants and refugees is available (in Greek) at <https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/%CE%926-%CE%95%CE%B8%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE-%CE%A3%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE-2019.pdf>

The reorganization of the Directorate of Social Integration at the Ministry of Migration and Asylum was effected through Presidential Decree 106/2020. The Directorate's website is available at <https://migration.gov.gr/en/migration-policy/integration/i-ypiresia/>

Israel

Score 5

In Israel, we need to distinguish between two general types of immigration: immigration of non-Israeli Jews, which is legally recognized and encouraged, not least through financial and other support for immigrants; and immigration of non-Jews, who migrate as refugees or as illegal immigrants, for which no coherent framework exists. Though there is a continuous presence of migrant workers in sectors such as agriculture, construction and elderly care, workers are defined as temporary. In addition, in recent years, Israel has tried in various debatable ways to deport illegal immigrants, particularly migrants from African countries.

Legal immigrants have full access to the labor market and the education system. In addition, they are eligible for free-of-charge preparatory courses in various professional domains and general orientation for the Israeli labor market. Adults and children are also eligible for dedicated Hebrew language courses. However, illegal immigrants have restricted and non-inclusive access to the labor market. Access to the education system depends upon local authorities' policies. Due to their illegal status, they are officially eligible only to receive emergency medical services, and other medical services are provided by humanitarian and medical NGOs or private doctors.

Citation:

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Latvia

Score 5

Latvia faces challenges in integrating two categories of immigrants: migrant workers and non-citizens. Non-citizens are long-term residents of Latvia who were not eligible for citizenship when Latvia gained independence from the Soviet Union and have not been naturalized since independence. In 2021, non-citizens comprised 10.1% of the total population. While non-citizens have permanent residency rights and social guarantees similar to citizens, they do not have the right to take part in the elections.

Rights for all other immigrants generally depend on the type of residency permit. Individuals holding a temporary residence permit are particularly vulnerable, as they do not qualify for public healthcare, legal aid, or unemployment support. An individual holding a permanent residency permit or who has acquired long-term resident status within the European Union has the same rights as Latvian non-citizens. As of March 2010, all children, including children of migrant workers holding temporary residence permits, have access to free education. No restrictions are placed on the right to work for high-skilled migrant workers, foreign students or immigrants who have moved for family reasons. However, access to the local labor

market is restricted for migrant workers who have obtained only a temporary residence permit. These individuals' work rights are tied to the employer who invited them to Latvia. Temporary migrant workers do not have the ability to freely change employers or their position within the company.

In 2015, Latvia was ranked second-to-last among 38 European and North American countries in the Migrant Integration Policy Index. The index noted that Latvia still has the weakest policies among EU member states. Since then, Latvia has improved its integration policies by granting more equal opportunities and basic rights. For example, a law on citizenship for non-citizens' children was introduced in 2019, which now entitles them to Latvian citizenship by birth. As a result, the overall MIPEX score improved by three points in 2020 (to 37 out of 100). This is only a minor improvement, however, and Latvia's performance is still described as "equality on paper," with its policies creating more obstacles than opportunities for integration.

Overall, immigrants in Latvia enjoy basic rights and protection, but not equal opportunities. A key issue for immigrant groups in Latvia is that they do not have voting rights in local elections, and cannot be members of political associations. Third-country nationals with temporary residence permits cannot organize protests or marches.

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South Korea

Score 5

Since the 1990s, South Korea has evolved from a net-emigration to a net-immigration society. In 2018, South Korea experienced a particularly large increase in the number of foreigners resident in Korea of nearly 9%. However, the net-immigration trend reversed for the first time in a decade in 2020 due to coronavirus-related immigration controls. In 2020, the number of foreigners in Korea declined to a 5.5 year low. The number of migrant workers fell from an annual average of

50,000 to 7,000, and the number of immigrant marriages decreased by 35%. In late 2021, as the country shifted to “living with COVID-19,” and in an effort to address labor shortages, Korea relaxed entry restrictions on migrant workers that had been in place for the past two years.

Despite improvements in the legal conditions and official support provided to immigrants, the country’s cultural, education, and social policies still fail to systematically address the role of migrants in Korea. Foreign investors, ethnic Koreans with foreign passports, and highly educated foreigners are treated more favorably, while migrant blue-collar workers (who are often treated as “disposable labor”), multicultural families, North Koreans and asylum-seekers face considerable discrimination. From a legal perspective, migrant workers are accorded rights very similar to those enjoyed by native Korean employees, but employers routinely infringe these rights. While courts have offered some protection to migrant workers, the government has not actively pursued enforcement measures against employers that exploit the precarious status of migrant workers. In 2021 – spurred by the deaths of several migrant workers living in vinyl greenhouses assigned to them as living quarters – the Ministry of Labor made an inspection and found that nearly 70% of migrant farm/fisheries workers live in makeshift structures. Migrant workers also reported more than KRW 150 billion (6.6 million) in unpaid wages for 2020. Experts suggest that Korea’s Act on the Employment of Foreign Workers and Employment Permit System contribute to making migrant workers vulnerable. Because their visas are tied to specific employers, migrants have limited bargaining power and options for recourse when unfairly treated by their employers. Granting migrants the freedom to choose and change employers could help improve their working conditions. One expert suggests providing permanent residential status for foreign workers so that there is more incentive to integrate migrants into Korean society.

South Korea has a poor record with regard to fulfilling its obligations under the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951. From 1994 to 2020, less than 2% of the 71,042 applicants for refugee status have received approval, prompting criticism by the United Nations Refugee Agency. A further 3% of applicants were granted “humanitarian stay” visas, which afford less protection. In 2018, the government gave in to anti-refugee protests by granting humanitarian stay visas to approximately 500 Yemeni refugees that arrived in Korea. Again in 2021, Korea accepted approximately 300 Afghans as “special contributors” rather than as refugees. In 2020, Korea revised the Refugee Act in ways that raise the bar for asylum-seekers and make it easier to reject refugee applicants – prompting some to call this revision a “refugee refusal policy” or “K-Deportation” policy.

Foreigners in Korea have also faced COVID-19-related discrimination, both officially and informally. Informally, foreigners have been treated as more likely to be carriers of the virus, and in some instances (particularly during the early waves of the pandemic) have been barred from restaurants and other social venues. There have also been cases of official discrimination by the government. Several local

governments targeted foreign (particularly migrant) workers for selective COVID-19 testing. On the other hand, many foreigners have been selectively excluded from receiving COVID-19 disaster relief funds. Responding to petitions lodged by a coalition of migrants' rights groups, the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) found in May 2020 that excluding foreign residents from local government disaster relief programs was discriminatory, as local governments are obliged by the Local Autonomy Law to provide equal administrative benefits to all residents. The NHRCK accordingly instructed the Seoul metropolitan government and Gyeonggi provincial government to provide relief funds to all registered foreign nationals. However, in November 2020, NHRCK did not recognize the exclusion of foreigners from state disaster relief programs as discrimination, because the central government has the discretion to determine the range of its program beneficiaries. Migrants' rights groups plan to file another petition in early 2022, as many migrants were excluded once again from another round of disaster relief provided by the state in September 2021. They argue that all foreign residents who have been paying taxes to the state should be eligible for state disaster relief programs. They also note that the country's policies go against recommendations from international agencies such as the International Organization for Migration that all migrants should be given equal access to COVID-19-related support.

In sum, government immigration and integration policies are mixed. Migrants seem to be tolerated because of the need to address workforce gaps caused by the shrinking population. Experts have for some time flagged the need for a comprehensive anti-discrimination law to strengthen protection and inclusion of migrants and other marginalized groups.

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Cyprus

Score 4

Foreign labor increased from 20.6% in 2019 to 21.9% of the employed workforce in 2021 (with 11.2% other-EU workers and 10.7% non-EU workers). The composition of labor started to change in 1989 with an initial flow of workers from southeast Asia, then from Central-East Europe, and from other-EU member states after 2004. The need to manage the increase in undocumented migrants became urgent in 2020 and 2021. Policies largely focused on stopping the flow rather than managing integration.

Despite pressure, particularly from the Council of Europe and NGOs, to respect migrants' rights, official policies, practices and rhetoric have been blatantly racist and, compounded by mainstream media reports, have exacerbated the already high rates of xenophobia. Official statements targeting migrant children prompted an immediate reaction from the child protection commissioner. COVID-19 measures very negatively affected migrants' rights, and the situation in reception and detention centers, which was already critically poor.

In a long letter to the interior minister, in March 2021, the Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights asked for reports about the pushback, ill-treatment and collective expulsion of migrants, as well as poor conditions at reception centers and the deprivation of migrants' rights to be investigated.

Poor performance on most relevant indicators persists, including access to the labor market, culture and education, and on reuniting families and ensuring civil rights. A positive response to recommendations by the ECRI (2016) was expected to include a comprehensive policy framework. However, rhetoric and actions have moved in the opposite direction, with the situation worsening.

What has dominated the public sphere has neutralized positive actions. In the framework of EU programs, local authorities and others are involved in integration projects. Education is provided to all children and special programs to facilitate

inclusion are run in schools, albeit in a climate of negative official discourse and society reactions. The labor market has somewhat opened to migrants, but securing formal employment or obtaining long-term residence status remain extremely difficult. Given the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, migrants' AROPE rate has remained very high, twice that of Cypriots.

The above points to inconsistencies, contradictions, and an official stance that lacks genuine concern for human rights and dignity.

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Czechia

Score 4

Since Czechia's accession to the European Union in 2004, the number of foreigners living in the country has significantly increased, reaching 6.1% in September 2021. EU citizens make up about three-fifths of this number. Of those from outside the European Union, a large proportion of people are from Ukraine, Vietnam and the Russian Federation. Czechia's integration policy, developed from 2000, is targeted at citizens from outside the European Union, and includes the provision of language courses and guidance on life in Czechia. However, the budget for integration measures is small. In 2021, CZK 54 million financed the equivalent of about 50 employees. The most common reason for staying in Czechia is economic activity. According to the 2021 census, among foreigners in Czechia, the percentage of university-educated people is generally higher than the average. However, most foreigners are only temporarily resident. Barriers to obtaining citizenship are such that citizenship was granted to only 2,973 people in 2019. Typically, foreign workers, especially those from outside the European Union, are recruited in their country of origin by employment agencies and come to work in the manufacturing industry, often staying in company accommodation with little integration into society. Reports from the Labor Inspectorate confirm that many foreigners are paid less than Czech employees in comparable jobs and their employment conditions often fail to comply with the law. Although Czechia is not located on one of the major routes used by refugees entering Western Europe, there have been significant numbers of applications for asylum, peaking in 2001 at 18,094 of which 83 were granted. The number of applications was particularly low during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, 1,164 applications were submitted and 72 were granted. This record reflects the hostility and suspicion directed toward foreigners by a proportion of the population, which is exploited and reinforced by some leading politicians. Although four-fifths of Czechs agree that foreigners come to work, more than half of citizens (53% in March 2020) agree that foreigners coming in recent years represent

a problem. However, when Czechs consider the issue of incoming foreigners with specific reference to their place residence, the proportion that perceive foreigners as a problem is lower (24%).

Japan

Score 4

In spite of its aging and shrinking population Japan maintains a fairly restrictive immigration policy. The number of legal foreign residents reached a total of 2.9 million in 2020, the highest number on record; yet, the foreign-born workforce represents only about 2% of the total.

Bilateral economic-partnership pacts have allowed Filipino, Indonesian and Vietnamese nurses and caregivers to enter Japan on a temporary basis since 2008. Efforts to attract more foreign workers have been piecemeal. For example, the LDP-led government has relaxed some immigration restrictions in an effort to attracting highly skilled foreign professionals. In mid-2018, then-Prime Minister Abe announced plans to allow about 70,000 workers into Japan annually until 2025, for a total of about 500,000. Two new temporary visa categories were added in 2019, covering low-skilled and semi-skilled workers in 14 industrial sectors facing labor shortages. The resultant gradual increase in the number of foreign workers has not lessened the country's serious labor shortages, which has been exacerbated by the demographic shifts and the pandemic-related demand for low- and semi-skilled workers, including care workers. Concerns over human-rights issues related to the treatment of the technical interns and other low-skilled workers, and the lack of adequate labor protection and long working hours imposed on foreign workers have also contributed to Japan's reputation as a not-so-attractive destination for foreign workers. In November 2021, the government announced plans to give foreign workers in certain blue-collar jobs long-term residency beginning in 2022. Japan will have to implement more open immigration policies and stronger employment protections if it wants to attract more foreign workers of all skill levels.

The Japanese government still appears reluctant to embrace a full-fledged immigration policy and is cautious of rhetoric pointing in this direction. Despite the Japanese public's positive support for immigration, the nationalistic viewpoints held by many LDP lawmakers pose a particular challenge in this regard. Nevertheless, while the new measures cannot be regarded as a comprehensive package, there has been some progress in facilitating an increased inflow of valuable foreign workers.

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Malta

Score 4

Malta's geographical location places it at the center of migration flows from Africa to Europe. On a per capita basis, the island has been known to receive a high number of migrants and asylum-seekers, with the numbers having increased drastically over the last decade. It is estimated that Malta received 20% of the persons rescued or intercepted by search and rescue teams following departure from Libya between January and August 2019. However, between January and October 2021, the island saw a 73% reduction when compared to the same period in 2020. Due to COVID-19 Malta's ports were closed for a number of months. Access to closed detention centers was further restricted. In addition, all irregular migrants that disembarked in Malta were automatically detained. Additional legal and social issues emerged during the COVID-19 crisis, including a substantial rise in homelessness. Furthermore, access to healthcare, welfare, employment and judicial services were restricted, while residence cards were invalidated due to unemployment. The report by the CPT in 2020 stated that conditions of detention appeared to be bordering on inhuman and degrading treatment as a result of institutional neglect.

Malta was given a score of 48 out of 100 on the 2020 Migrant Integration Policy Index, which states that Malta's current policies do not encourage the public to see immigrants as neighbors, equals and fellow citizens. It concludes that obstacles emerge for immigrants in Malta with regard to reuniting with their families, settling long-term and achieving citizenship, and participating in education and public life. Being unable to vote further restricts their access to public life.

Malta has begun to consolidate its policy approach to integration only recently, with a migrant/integration policy launched at the end of 2017. Under the current government, the Ministry for Home Affairs is responsible for migration together with various governmental stakeholders. The Human Rights Directorate is responsible for the provision of integration courses, including Maltese and English language classes, as well as cultural-orientation classes, awareness campaigns and integration measures. The unit is also implementing the EU-funded "I Belong" program. Meanwhile, the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum-Seekers is responsible for the provision of some services, including employment, housing, education, healthcare and welfare information. The agency is also a facilitator between public services and serves as a pre-integration functionary. The Office of the Refugee

Commissioner spearheads important initiatives, such as the new initial reception centers, the creation of a work registration system and detention policy reform.

A large number of migrants have been granted subsidiary or humanitarian protection. UNHCR figures indicate a rejection rate of 21% for the first seven months of 2019. In 2016, the government introduced a new migration strategy, which terminated the practice of automatic detention. Moreover, refugees and asylum-seekers granted protection are eligible for unemployment benefits. Maltese legislation has now been brought in line with EU Directive 2003/86 and the relevant domestic law was amended in 2017 to facilitate family reunification, especially in the case of refugees. These reforms aim to lessen the hardship on migrants seeking work and their own accommodation. Furthermore, the Malta Declaration was signed by all EU member state leaders in February 2017 as the first step toward concrete solutions for combating illegal migrant routes across the Mediterranean. Coordination centers were set up in Malta and Libya in 2020 in a joint effort to reduce migratory pressures originating in North Africa.

Evidence of poverty and homelessness among migrants indicates the need for the government to allocate more resources to this group. A recent ministerial policy, which limits access to employment for asylum-seekers from a list of “safe countries,” is regarded by the Malta Refugee Council and various NGOs as a way to push migrants even closer to poverty.

The incidence of rent-related exploitation has also increased. Integration difficulties in communities with large migrant populations remain especially pronounced, while numerous riots in detention centers have highlighted ongoing difficulties. Malta’s migrant relocation system has often been characterized by disorganization, a lack of coordination, deficiencies in information provision, a lack of sensitivity toward migrant experiences, and low-quality conditions at the migrant reception center and other migrant service centers.

Improved watchdog and oversight mechanisms are needed to ensure that the migrant workforce is not exploited. The current system for the care of young unaccompanied migrants (which account for about a fourth of all arrivals) remains inadequate. Current arrangements fail to ensure the appointment of legal guardians with sufficient experience in asylum issues. There is also a need to build capacities within local communities to prevent migrants from becoming ghettoized. The issue of citizenship for the children of asylum-seekers born in Malta also needs to be urgently reassessed. Currently, these children have no right to citizenship. Statistics indicate that the number of foreign students in the country’s primary and secondary schools has increased by 700% over the last 10 years, which may also lead to integration challenges in the future. Indeed, a study of this cohort found that a third of these students have been bullied at school, while almost half experience name-calling on a daily basis.

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 Report to the Maltese Government on the visit to Malta carried out by the European Committee for the prevention of torture and inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment 17-22 September 2020

Slovakia

Score 4

While the share of foreigners in the Slovak population is still relatively low compared to most other EU member states, the inflow of migrants increased in the years before the COVID-19 pandemic due to a shortage of labor. After the resignation of Prime Minister Robert Fico in March 2018, the Smer-SD-led government softened its strong anti-immigration stance. At the EU Summit in June 2018, new Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini agreed to accept 1,200 migrants. Moreover, the government started to ease foreign access to the Slovak labor market in order to mitigate the shortage of labor in certain regions of the country. The new center-right government has built on these moves. It has made Ján Orlovský, who had worked as an executive director of the Open Society Foundation in Slovakia for five years, head of the Migration Office, where he presented in 2021 a new migration strategy for the next four years (Ministry of the Interior 2021). The strategy's main goals include creating the conditions for legal migration in keeping with the country's other priorities and its capacity to both receive foreigners and support their integration. It emphasizes the need for well-managed labor migration in order to prevent social, economic and environmental tensions. Interestingly, the policy also specifies the need to prioritize the security of Slovakia and the rights of its inhabitants (both nationals and legal migrants). Clearly, securitizing migration continues to inform the new government's approach to migration (Skolkay 2020).

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Slovenia

Score 4

Successive governments, including the Šarec and Janša governments during the period under review, have done little to foster the integration of migrants into society by opening up health services and schools, offering anti-discrimination support or encouraging political participation. In June 2015, however, the National Assembly adopted new legislation on foreign employment that improved protections for foreign workers employed in Slovenia, and as of 1 September 2015, foreign workers receive a unified work and residency permit. While the number of active work permits for foreigners dropped from 85,000 in 2008 to a mere 16,993 in 2016 as a result of the economic crisis, it has been on the rise since 2017 and reached 44,967 in first half of 2021. At the same time, the period under review saw an increase in the number of asylum-seekers on their way to neighboring Italy and Austria. The government has responded by erecting an additional fence along the southern border, which is guarded by a higher number of policemen and (assisting) army personnel. In this context, NGOs complain that the right to asylum is systematically denied. Since 2018, more than 28 000 people have been expelled, mostly to Croatia where they face being pushed back to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, they complain about the situation of the Roma community living in settlements with no access to water and sometimes no electricity.

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Bulgaria

Score 3

According to official NSI statistics, Bulgaria registered 6,600 emigrants and 37,400 immigrants in 2020, showing a shift toward positive net migration. Among those migrating to Bulgaria, 34.2% are aged 20 – 39, 32.3% are aged 40 to 59 years, and 13.6% are under 20 years of age. For Bulgarians migrating to other countries, Germany (22.2%), the Russian Federation (14.6%) and Turkey (13%) are the preferred destination countries.

Although immigration offers clear potential benefits to the economy, Bulgaria does not have a developed policy for integrating migrants.

Integration policies in the country can be illustrated by the recent refugee crises. During the Kosovo crises of 1999, the government of Bulgaria refused to allow refugees entry into the country. Some 9,000 refugees, mostly from Iraq and Afghanistan, were nonetheless allowed to immigrate in 1999. A targeted study then

proved that these immigrants arrived with savings that exceeded the amount of money needed for accommodations and legal processing.

The refugee influx related to the war in Syria brought nearly 22,000 refugees to the country (of which some 2,000 remained), but xenophobic politicians and anti-EU parties used this statistically insignificant case to boost their popularity.

In fact, the number of illegal stays in the country declined from 9,267 in 2016 to 2,053 in 2020.

Refugees typically receive temporary shelter from the National Refugee Agency throughout the period of time it takes to formalize a legal stay. After this period, they tend to seek support from others in the diaspora, and many strive to integrate, with a dozen NGOs in Bulgaria that aim to help them with this.

After 2001, the number of immigrants who settled in Bulgaria increased by 240%, but their share among the population is at 4% the lowest in the EU.

Citation:

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Croatia

Score 3

In 2020, a total of 33,414 people immigrated to Croatia from abroad, while 34,046 people emigrated. Thus, for the first time since Croatia joined the EU, both flows virtually balanced each other out. In previous years Croatia was first and foremost a country of strong emigration. Immigration to Croatia is mostly composed of ethnic Croats from neighboring countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, or parts of the Croatian diaspora (25% of migrants).

In the first nine months of 2021, a total of 1,858 persons sought asylum in Croatia and just 32 persons were granted this right, which constitutes a marked decrease over 2018 and 2019. Generally, Croatia's economic and social model is not attractive to potential asylum-seekers and migrants, a fact that will exacerbate Croatia's future demographic and economic challenges. There is neither a coherent strategy to attract culturally similar immigrants, which could facilitate their integration, nor a policy to integrate existing migrants. Integration is complicated by weak intersectoral

cooperation between institutions responsible for carrying out immigration policy with local communities and civil society organizations. Skills shortages will constitute one of the key impediments to potential growth in the coming years, and Croatia's decision in 2021 to lift the quota on foreign workers won't be of much help unless it manages to improve incentives for digital nomads and young immigrants.

Hungary

Score 3

Migration is a highly polarizing issue in Hungary and is one cornerstone of the Orbán government's othering narrative, which takes Islam and the European Union as two "them" poles. While the Orbán government has favored the migration of ethnic Hungarians, it has sought to keep refugees and other migrants out. Instead of fostering their integration, it has campaigned against them. Hungary does not support the Global Compact on Refugees. In February 2021, a government decree regulating the entry of migrants to Hungary was modified with the intention of widening the competencies of the police and customs officers to reject the entry of asylum-seekers and other migrants to Hungary. As a result, only 117 asylum-seekers were registered in Hungary in 2020 (UNHCR 2021). Integration into Hungarian society is a huge challenge for migrants (Hungarian Helsinki Committee 2021). There is no integration strategy, access to education for immigrant children is restricted, rules against domestic violence do not apply to foreign victims, and NGOs in the field do not have access to EU funds.

Citation:

Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2021): Universal periodic review of Hungary 2021. Budapest (https://helsinki.hu/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/10/UPR2021_Hungary_Refugees.pdf).

UNHCR (2021): Fact Sheet Hungary. Geneva (<https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/Bi-annual%20fact%20sheet%202021%2002%20Hungary.pdf>).

Mexico

Score 3

Mexican integration policy remains weak to nonexistent. The dominant cultural narrative in Mexico tends to assume that migration means emigration. Mexico was and remains a major source of emigration, but has not effectively addressed problems related to immigration that have been steadily increasing during the last 15 to 20 years. There are serious problems related to migrants entering Mexico from Central America, but also from Haiti, and many Asian and African countries, with most seeking entry to the United States and a minority wanting to stay in Mexico. Few are able to acquire formal documentation. In their desperation, such people are often preyed upon by criminals or even recruited into local drug gangs. Homicide rates are also high among this group. The Mexican authorities mostly do not welcome this kind of immigration and do their best to discourage it. However, there is no effective integration, transit or migration policy to deal with these issues.

Mexican authorities also downplay the incidence of criminal attacks on Central American immigrants, although the international media has cast a spotlight on this population's predicament.

The number of asylum applications rose sharply in 2021 in particular. At 108,195, almost three times as many people applied for asylum as in the previous year. However, applications are being processed very slowly, which further exacerbates the situation of asylum-seekers. The number of undocumented migrants has also increased dramatically. The "Remain in Mexico" program was set up in cooperation with the Trump administration in the United States, and continued under the Biden administration. Under this program, people who apply for asylum in the U.S. from Mexico will remain in Mexico until they receive an appointment with U.S. migration authorities.

Contrary to what emerges from the media, more Mexicans have been leaving the United States since 2008 than have emigrated to the United States. A particular problem is that of "returnees" (i.e., young Mexican nationals or children of Mexican nationals who come to Mexico after living in the United States, either voluntarily or through deportation). This issue becomes particularly relevant as the Trump administration decided to terminate DACA. Many of these students are not fluent in Spanish and have problems integrating into Mexican schools since they have studied under a different school system utilizing different teaching and evaluation methodologies. The Mexican education system is not ready to provide sufficient resources to improve these students' language skills and their sense of belonging.

Citation:

<https://apnews.com/4b37a351ad294a52b3834ba0c4a23e27>

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/extracontinental-migrants-latin-america>

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/protection-and-reintegration-mexico-reforms-migration-agenda>

https://www.latinnews.com/component/k2/item/91002.html?archive=33&Itemid=6&cat_id=827029:mexico-new-agreement-prolongs-remain-in-mexico

Poland

Score 3

In terms of numbers, emigration from Poland has always been higher than immigration to Poland and previous governments rather engaged in campaigns to motivate Poles to return to their home country. In 2012, Poland had developed an integration concept following EU pressure, while the number of Ukrainian and Vietnamese workers was low. Since PiS return to power in 2015, and following the increase in migration to Europe during the Syrian and other Middle East conflicts, the government's discourse has been very much against immigration, especially regarding Muslims and people from outside Europe. In 2017, the parliament amended the Act on Foreigners with a view to tightening the domestic institutional framework for dealing with immigration. In the 2019 election campaigns, PiS representatives have continued to denounce Muslim immigrants as potential terrorists, a risk to public health, and a threat to Polish culture and society.

Meanwhile, the number of migrants from Ukraine and Belarus has substantially increased. Since 2014, more than two million Ukrainians have arrived, pushed by the poor economic situation and the war, and pulled by labor shortages and higher wages in Poland. Most Belarussian migrants arrived following the violent suppression of protests in the course of the fraudulent elections in August 2020. While smaller in scale, immigration from countries such as Nepal, India and Bangladesh has also increased. Policies for integrating migrants are weak, as the assumption is that most migrants will only stay temporarily and move on to Western Europe or are so close in cultural and linguistic terms that integration is no real problem (Economist 2020).

In summer and autumn 2021, a new migration crisis occurred at the border between Poland and Belarus after Belarussian state institutions called for and organized flights from the Middle East to Belarus promising quick entry into the European Union. These people got stuck at the border and faced a harsh response from Polish authorities (Bodnar/ Grzelak 2021; Piątek 2021). Criticism from international experts regarded several issues, including that the Polish police were involved in illegal pushbacks of migrants who managed to cross the border; that authorities were not ready to check their asylum applications; that no journalists, NGOs or international medical organizations were allowed to enter the zone after the government declared a state of emergency in the regions of Lublin and Podlaskie; and that Frontex was not invited to assist as the government always claimed this to be a bilateral problem. In August 2021, Prime Minister Morawiecki announced the erection of a 180–190 km fence along those parts of the border to Belarus that would allow for an easier crossing. The parliament passed the bill in October 2021. NGOs and the local population provided various kinds of humanitarian support to migrants on the border.

Citation:

Economist (2020): How to mess up migration: Poland is repeating the mistakes of other European countries, February 22.

Bodnar, A., A. Grzelak (2021): In Poland, where is Frontex? in: Politico, November 4 (<https://www.politico.eu/article/poland-frontex-belarus-border-migration-crisis/>).

Piątek, J.J. (2021): Internal Security of the Republic of Poland and International Migration, in: European Research Studies Journal 24(4): 196-205 (DOI: 10.35808/ersj/2681).

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