

MAGHREB MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION ISSUES: A CASE OF FRANCE

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Abstract

Integration of Maghreb migrants into the French society has become a heavily discussed issue in recent years. There are contradictory opinions concerning the division of responsibility between the Maghreb migrants and the French state that influences with its policy the integration process. This study examines the French state assimilation policy and its impacts on integration of Maghreb migrants. The main argument is that the French state holds high responsibility for the integration problems of migrants. To justify the argument, I use a combination of different methods such as quantitative statistical data, small case studies, and comparative evaluations. One of the major findings of the study is that the French assimilation policy proved an unsuccessful way of integrating Maghreb migrants. This thesis concludes that the present one way assimilation model of integration in France is not sufficiently coherent with the two-way integration approach based on Common Basic Principles of European Integration Policy. Therefore, France should consider employing the latter principle to better integrate Muslim Maghreb migrants.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables and Figures	v
Abbreviations.....	vi
Introduction	1
Research Question.....	4
Methodology	5
The Objectives and Significance of the Study	6
The Structure of the Thesis	6
CHAPTER 1: Framework of Integration: Literature Review.....	8
1.1 Framework: The Definition of Migrant and Integration. Types and Three Models of Integration	9
1.1.1 Definition of Migrant.....	9
1.1.2 The Concept of Integration	10
1.2 Models of European Integration.....	13
1.3 Literature Review	16
CHAPTER 2: Maghreb Migration in France: Integration Problems.....	21
2.1 Maghreb Migration in France: A Brief History and Present Situation	22
2.2 Integration of Migrants	24
2.3 Integration Problems of Maghreb Migrants	25
2.3.1 Integration Problems: From the Migrants' Perspective	26
2.3.2 Integration Problems: From the Host Country Perspective	31
CHAPTER 3: The French Integration Policy	32
3.1 The French Integration Policy: Assimilation	33
3.2 Major Policy Changes and their Impacts on Maghreb Migrants: 1990s - Present	36
3.2.1 The National Identity Debate.....	39
3.2.2 The Headscarf Crisis	40
3.3 Impact of the State Policy on the Society's Attitudes towards Migrants.....	42
3.4 Impact of Integration Policy: The 2012 Presidential Elections	45
3.5 Assimilation Policy: Evaluation.....	48
Conclusion.....	51
Appendix 1	54
Appendix 2	55
Appendix 3	56
Bibliography	58

List of Tables and Figures

2.1 Maghreb Population Origin in France, Numbers are in Thousands (1999-2005)	24
2.3.1 Unemployment Rate among Foreign People aged 15 to 64 in France % (2003-2005)....	27
2.3.1 Degree of Expressed Racism: Distribution by 15 EU Member States.....	30
3.2 Maghreb Migration Flows to France (2004-2008).....	38
3.3 Integration or Assimilation of People into a Host Society (France)	44

Abbreviations

CBP	Common Basic Principles of Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU
COM	The European Commissions' Communication on Immigration,
EU	European Union
INSEE	The French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies Integration and Employment
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MIPEX	Migration Integration Policy Index
MS	Member State
MSs	Member States
NF	National Front Party in France
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SOPEMI	The Continuous Reporting System on Migration
UN	The United Nations

Introduction

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there are over two hundred million migrants in the world. In other words, almost 3% of the world's population is living in a migrant status.¹ As far as Europe is concerned, after the Second World War, the flow of migrants dramatically increased.² The reasons for this massive migration were various, among them the economic and political ones were the most important. For example, the rebuilding of post-war European economy increased the number of migrants from the third world, in particular from former colonial countries to Western Europe.³ Out of the European countries, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and the UK were the most attractive and therefore they became the main destination countries for migrants.⁴

Like other European countries, migration played an important role in the development of the French post-war economy. Due to lack of labour force as a consequence of the war, France in the 1950s and 1960s absorbed a huge amount of foreign workers from other European countries, particularly from Italy and Portugal. This way it became a hosting country for guest-workers by the late 1960s, with 7% of the total population being non-French or of a foreign background.⁵

After the French colonisation period ended in the 1960s, the former Maghreb colonies became the main “source“ of the foreign labor force of France. There are some important reasons for Maghreb migration in France. First is the impact of colonization. Algeria, Morocco and

¹ Brian Keeley, “International Migration: The human face of globalization,” *OECD Publication* 56503 (2009):2.

² Bülent Kaya, *The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century* (Neuchâtel: Council of Europe Publishing, 2002), 19.

³ Ibid.,52.

⁴ Randal Hansen, “Migration to Europe since 1945: Its History and its Lessons,” *The Political Quarterly* 74 (2003): 25–38.

⁵ Algan Yann, Landaïs Camille & Senik Claudia, “Cultural Integration in France,” *Royal Economic Society* 120 (2010):1.

Tunisia were colonies and protectorates of France until the 1960s, which plays an essential role in making a link between the past and the present Maghreb migration in France. Secondly, France and the Maghreb countries have close traditional and cultural links, as France has been one of the main trade partners of the Maghreb countries for centuries. Third, these agricultural countries with poor job prospects could not feed the unemployed masses of people, which resulted in high emigration pressure.⁶ Therefore, migration has always played an essential role in the relations between France and the Maghreb.

Today, more than 25% of the total population are foreigners in France, which gives it the second largest “destination” title for immigrant communities in Europe after Germany.⁷ According to the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), Maghrebians represent two thirds of migrants among the different migrant communities in France. At present, the majority of the migrants in Europe are settled in France, therefore France can be regarded as the principal target country, as well as the main “financial source” for Maghreb migrants in Europe.⁸ As migrants from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia constitute the vast majority of the migrants from Maghreb countries to France, I will focus my analysis on these three countries.

Migration, in particular, Islamic migration is one of the most hotly debated issues of today among local communities and national and local authorities in France. The rapid rise in numbers of Muslim migrants from Maghreb countries, in particular from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, in recent years has increased the negative attitudes and stereotypes in French society.

⁶ Moha Ennaji, “Migration and the Maghreb,” *The Middle East Institute* Washington, DC (2010):7.

⁷ Transnational Research Project MITI, “Measuring Integration: The French case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals,” *Sciences –po, CERI* (2008): 28.

⁸ International Organization for Migration, “Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region,” *Research and Publications Division* (2002):5.

For example, according to 42% of French citizens' opinion, the existence of Muslim communities is a threat to the national identity of the country⁹ and almost 70% of the population believe that Muslim migrants do not successfully integrate into French society.¹⁰

The increase in the number of migrants from the Maghreb region causes social problems between local residents and migrants.¹¹ Therefore, in recent years, integration issues of Muslim migrants have become the focus of greater attention in France. Among integration issues, the promotion of fundamental rights, non-discrimination and racism, providing equal rights and opportunities for everybody, have become the central integration issues of migrants.¹² Therefore the important question arises as to who are responsible for these problems. Are those the migrants who do integrate into the host culture or is it the state policy that makes the integration process difficult? To investigate these questions, in the following I will analyse the Maghreb migrant integration problems from both the migrant's and the state's perspectives. In particular I will mainly focus on the role of the French state in the integration issues of Maghreb migrants.

France is known to employ the assimilation policy to integrate migrants into the host culture over centuries.¹³ According to some scholars (Dillender, Kaya and Sekher)¹⁴, however,

⁹ Kristin Archick, Paul Belkin, Christopher Blanchard, Carl Ek & Derek Mix, "Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism," Congressional Research Service (2011):11.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Tiliç H et al., *Rethinking Global Migration: Practices, Policies, and Discourses in the European Neighbourhood* (Ankara: KORA-Centre for Black Sea and Central Asia, 2008), 117.

¹² European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union," Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM (2005) 389 final.

¹³ Amber Nichole Dillender, "The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy" (MA thesis., University of South Florida ,2011),16.

¹⁴ Amber Nichole Dillender, "The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy," University of South Florida (2011), Bülent Kaya, *The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century* (Neuchâtel: Council of Europe Publishing, 2002 and T.V. Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary," In *Migration and The Maghreb*, The Middle East Institute, Washington D.C., (2010).

this policy may not be the most successful approach to solve integration problems. Based on their work, I intend to investigate how the French assimilation policy impacts the integration process on Maghreb migrants. The main argument that follows from this investigation is that the French state holds higher responsibility for the integration problems of Maghreb migrants than the migrants themselves.

To analyse the French assimilationist model of integration, I will use the concept of integration as defined by the European Commissions' Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment (COM 2003.336): "integration of migrants is a two- way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant"¹⁵ as one of the fundamental definitions for this study.

Research Question

It is a widely held notion in France that the Muslim migrants themselves are chiefly responsible for their poor integration into the host society. According to the Common Basic Principles (CBPs) of Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU, "integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all migrants and residents of Member States."¹⁶ Accordingly, the role of the host country, as part of the integration process, is also very

¹⁵ Response of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM (2003) 336 final.

¹⁶ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," COM (2005) 389 final.

important. A particularly intriguing question is thus whether the French state policies have been able to guarantee a successful integration of the migrant communities to France.

Methodology

I had several options to study Maghreb migrant integration in Europe and, among them I chose France. I could focus on other countries in Europe, including Italy, Spain or Germany but France is better option to study my research problem because, the rapid rise in numbers of migrants from Maghreb countries in recent years has resulted to debate on the issues of migrants among local community and national and local authorities in France. In addition, currently, France has more social problems and struggles with Maghreb migrants than any other countries in Europe or in the world. This is why I find the case of integration issues of Maghreb migration in France appropriate for my research.

To study the research question, quantitative statistical data, small case studies, and comparative evaluations will be employed. In order to demonstrate the French responsibility for the problems of Maghreb migrant integration, I will analyze the integration issues from mainly the host society perspective. By analyzing the role and responsibility of the state, I will show the impact of the host country on the integration of Maghreb migrants. To do so, first I will highlight the French assimilation policy to assess the major policy changes and their impacts on migrants. Second, to evaluate the French integration policy from different perspectives and to understand what the weaknesses of the state policy are, I will compare and contrast the French assimilation policy with the European Common Basic Principles on Integration of Third- Country Nationals in the EU.

To determine the degree of integration of migrants- how they integrated into society, I will look at the economic and social indicators of integration that help to observe the problems of migrant integration. For economic integration indicators employment situation of migrants will be selected, while social integration issues will be assessed by investigating the problems of establishing social relations between migrants and the host country, as well as the adaptation of migrants to the culture of the host society. The role of economic indicators in the integration process will be studied by using quantitative statistical data taken from databases; analytical reports from the European Union, as well from other (non-) governmental organizations, scholarly research articles, online articles and websites.

The Objectives and Significance of the Study

The thesis wishes to contribute the academic literature by studying the importance of the European integration policies, in particular the French assimilation policy and its role in the integration process of Muslim migrants. The primary aim of the thesis is to analyse the recent Maghreb migrant integration problems from responsibility of the host society's perspective. There is a significant amount of study investigating the question of integration problems of Muslim migrants from different perspectives. However, not much attention has been paid to exploring the role of the host society's responsibility in the recently recognized deepening of the integration problems in France.

The Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is organized as follows: I will start the first chapter with defining the term migrant and concept of integration by involving four types and three different

models of European integration policies. In order to put the complex issue of integration into a perspective in this chapter I will summarise the major integration problems of migrants by focusing on a review of literature related to the research.

In the second chapter, I will introduce the question of Maghreb migration in France by briefly providing first a general historical overview. Special emphasis will be placed on the situation of migrants after the First and the Second World War, as well as in the present. This chapter will also analyse the integration issues of migrants from both the host country and from the migrants' perspectives. To demonstrate the problems from the migrants' point of view, I will give two examples of racism and discrimination.

The next chapter will discuss the French assimilation policy, the major policy changes and their effects on migrants. In this part I will analyse the impact of the French Muslim voters on the recent 2012 Presidential elections in France. Moreover, in order to evaluate the French assimilation policy, I will compare it with the Common Basic Principles of integration policies in Europe adopted by the European Commission.

In the conclusion part, I will summarise the major findings on the role of the French state in aggravating the integration problems of Muslim migrants in France together with suggesting possible solutions that can be applied by the French state.

CHAPTER 1: Framework of Integration: Literature Review

With the increase of the flow of migrants into the EU, the integration problems of migrants have attracted considerable attention in many academic fields in recent years. Integration problems are quite complex, and they have been investigated by scholars from different perspectives. There is a significant amount of scholarly work that deals with the integration issues from a host society and migrants' aspects. For example, in his work, Seljuq analyses cultural conflicts between North African migrants and French society and their negative impacts on social relationship between the host country and migrant community. Different from Seljuq, Sekher discusses the Maghreb migration problems from the French government's perspective. In this respect, the literature that accounts for integration problems of migrants can be divided into two approaches. According to one, the host country bears the main responsibility for the problems of integration of migrants, while the other argues that the failure of integration is mainly the migrants' responsibility. Both approaches emphasize that the assurance of fundamental rights of migrants and non-discrimination, provision of equal rights and opportunities for everybody and respect the host society's culture and values, are central issues of migrant integration in all Member States (MSs).¹⁷

The objective of this chapter is to summarise, evaluate and compare the authors' (Dillender, Kaya, Kristin, Martin, James, Evelyn and Ruud, Sanchez and etc) works on integration of migrants, as well as clarify their positions in relation to the problems of Maghreb migrant integration. After defining the term migrant and concept of integration and its types and models, I intend to highlight my main argument that French state is more responsible for the

¹⁷ European Commission. "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," COM (2005) 389 final.

problems of Maghreb migrant integration than the behaviour and actions of the migrants. Additionally, by analyzing the related literature, I intend to illustrate what has been done in this research area so far, as well as to demonstrate how it relates to my research.

1.1 Framework: The Definition of Migrant and Integration. Types and Three Models of Integration

1.1.1 Definition of Migrant

According to the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, “a migrant is a person who is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national.”¹⁸ This definition, given by the United Nation (UN), is very broad and it is not unique, because the definition of migrant has various meanings and interpretations. For example, migrant can be defined as a person who migrates within a state (internal migrant). In addition, there are three definitions of migrant which are based on nationality, country of origin and ethnicity.¹⁹ Therefore, there is no universally recognized definition of what the term “migrant” exactly means. Since this thesis will discuss international Maghreb migration in France, I will use the term “migrant” as defined by the IMO as one of the primary definitions for this study. According to this definition, “migrant is a person who migrates within a country or from one country to another to cover all cases where the decision to migrate was taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of personal convenience and without intervention of an external

¹⁸ International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Adopted by General Assembly resolution 45/158 of 18 December 1990. Article 2.

¹⁹ Translational Research Project MITI, “Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals,” 11.

compelling factor; it therefore applies to persons, and family members, moving to another country or region to better their material or social conditions and improve the prospect for themselves or their family.”²⁰

Although both terms migrant and immigrant are used interchangeably and mixed in the literature, there is a difference between these two terms. On the one hand, both terms are broad and there is no unique definition of these terms. On the other hand, the term migrant can be distinguished from the term immigrant in following ways: first, unlike migrant, immigrant refers to a person who leaves her or his home country in order to settle in another country, which does not imply internal immigrant. In contrast, migrant is a person who may migrate within a country, too.²¹ Another important difference is the period of settlement. In many cases immigrants stay in the country longer than migrants. In this thesis I will use the term “migrant” instead of “immigrant” as I will also include in this term first and second generation, nationalized Maghreb migrants in France.

1.1.2 The Concept of Integration

Integration is a broad concept and there are different explanations and interpretations of it. Most people have a general understanding of integration. In general, this term is a complex phenomenon, which affects various aspects and parts of the migrants’ life.²² According to IMO, integration can generally be described in two ways: first, “it is the process of introducing a new element into an existing system, for instance, introducing migrants to a new host society. Second, the process of bringing people of different racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds into

²⁰ IMO Report, “Migration and Development Series 2010,” Course on International Migration Law, United Nations Headquarters, New York. (2010):3.

²¹ Glossary on Migration, http://www.reintegration.net/europa/download/Glossary_on_Migration.pdf (accessed April 28, 2012).

²² Translational Research Project MITI, “Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals,”8.

unrestricted and equal association in a society.”²³ In general, integration refers to respecting diversity and the basic values of both the host and migrant communities.

To analyse the French assimilation model of integration, this thesis employs the concept of integration as defined by the European Commissions’ Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment (COM 2003.336) : “ Integration of migrants is a two way process” as one of the fundamental definitions for this study. This is an appropriate definition for this thesis because it covers the most widespread European interpretation of integration. According to this Communication, integration is “a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant. This implies on the one hand, that it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility of participating in economic, social, cultural and civil life and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity.”²⁴

There are a number of types of integration that are used to explain this term. Among them, economic, social, cultural and political integration are the most frequently used to describe migrant integration. This thesis will employ the following four types of integration.

²³ International Organization for Migration, “ Integration of Migrants,” Published by IMO 3.6 (2010):6.

²⁴ Response of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. (COM 2003. 336 final).

Economic integration of migrants- is one of the key parts of integration process as well as the key areas for encouraging the integration of migrants into the host country.²⁵ It refers to the economic relationship between migrants and local population, for example, integration of migrants into the labour market. The aim of the economic integration is to promote employment for migrants by providing an equal access to the labour market and economic incentives, for example, encouraging migrant entrepreneurship, and to prevent discrimination in employment based on national origin.²⁶

Social integration of migrants- is the fundamental element of integration. Usually, it refers to the availability of education, housing, social security and issues regarding discrimination and equal treatment of migrants. In addition, it shows the degree of the social relationship between migrants and the host society, the personal network of migrants with the local population.²⁷ The circle of friends among the local population, establishing of migrant media (newspapers, radio and TV) in the host country are the main indicators of social integration of migrants.²⁸

Cultural integration of migrants- the participation of migrants in cultural life of a hosting country. For example, introducing migrants to the history and arts of a recipient society. Basic knowledge of the receiving country's history, language and institutions are the essential elements

²⁵ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM (2005) 389 final.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ International Organization for Migration, "Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region," Research and Publications Division, (2002):12.

²⁸ Miguel Angel Gil Leal, "Immigrant Integration Indicators: Proposals for Contributions to the Formulation of a System of Common Integration Indicators," The Institute for Social and Cultural Policy Analysis (2006):17.

of cultural integration of migrants.²⁹ As the European Economic and Social Committee of the EU states, to organize different cultural programs, e.g. to introduce a cultural life and fundamental values of the host society to the migrant communities is one of the important characteristics of this type of integration.

Political integration of migrants- refers to political participation of migrants in local political decision-making process. In addition, political integration addresses questions regarding naturalization and citizenship.³⁰ The major objective of political integration is to provide migrants active participation in the democratic process of the host country.

1.2 Models of European Integration

According to Eurostat, 12.3 million non- EU nationals live in the European Union. The EU is regarded as a union of a wide cultural diversity and different ethnic and national groups.³¹ One of the most important objectives of the EU is to integrate the different nations into European society. To integrate non-EU nationals, the following three models of integration are commonly used in European integration policies.

Assimilationist model – this model of integration is generally used in the French integration policy.³² According to this model, it is preferred to assimilate migrants into the society by encouraging their full participation in social and cultural life that they become “full members” of the host community. Usually, the assimilationist model considers the nation as a

²⁹ European Commission, “Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,” Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM (2005) 389 final.

³⁰ International Organization for Migration, “Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region,”12.

³¹ Marco Martiniello, “Towards a coherent approach to immigrant integration policy(ies) in the European Union,” (2008):1.

³² Kaya, *The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century*,37.

territorial and political community and it does not determine cultural and ethnical criteria for it.³³

The general characteristics and impacts of this model on Maghreb migrants will be analyzed in the next chapters.

The differential model - this model of integration is traditionally symbolized in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. According to this model, a hosting culture cannot incorporate migrants' culture and traditions.³⁴ Unlike the assimilationist model, the differential policy is built on an ethnic and cultural conception of the nation; especially naturalization of migrants is restrictive.³⁵ The differential model of integration is based on cultural pluralism, and it does not support migrants to build their cultural diversity in a receiving county.³⁶

Multiculturalism model- refers to cultural diversity of the nation. Multiculturalism encourages promoting migrants' culture and traditions, as well as naturalization of migrants into a host country.³⁷ It prefers to cultural diversity within a state. Sweden is a good example for using this model in EU. From 1980s, multiculturalism became widespread in Europe. The following three characteristics describe the essence of multiculturalism:

- 1- Multiculturalism encourages naturalization of migrants into the host country and recognizes principles of place of birth (granting citizenship to migrants' children based on place of birth).³⁸

³³ Ibid. 38.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ International Organization for Migration, "Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region,"10.

³⁸ Kaya, "The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century,"39.

- 2- To promote a multicultural society, multiculturalism endorses the use of different languages, culture, customs and traditions of migrants into the host society. According to this model, there are schools for migrants' children in the host country where their native language is taught.
- 3- Multiculturalism greatly emphasizes the socio- cultural and economic integration and emancipation of ethnic and cultural minorities.³⁹

The three models of integration of migrants are different from each other. The major concept behind the assimilationist and the differential models is that the first considers migrants as long term perspective members of the society, while the second "separates" the identities between the host nation and migrant communities and regards migrants as "guest workers" who are expected to return to their homeland relatively soon. As Kaya argues, neither of the models are universal or absolute, but they help us to differentiate between various integration policies of MSs.

Many scholars argue that integration is a two way process, in which the attitudes of recipient societies are also important in the integration process of migrants. To analyze the French assimilationist model of integration, the thesis compares the French assimilation policy with the general integration model defined by the European Commissions' Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment. According to COM, the recipient country must guarantee fundamental rights of migrants. Equally, migrants must respect the traditional and cultural life and values of the host county and they should actively participate in the integration process, without denying or having given up their own identity.⁴⁰

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM (2005) 389 final.

1.3 Literature Review

According to general principles of EU, integration is a “two - way process” in which both the migrant and host society should equally participate.⁴¹ However, in his work, Pablo Sanchez argues “the current common migration policies and integration strategies leave the responsibility solely to local level actors at the ground level, which shows a lack of understanding, or will, on the part of EU national authorities to successfully integrate migrants into the European societies.”⁴² Therefore, a different approach towards migrant integration issues might be warranted, namely the shift of the focus of analysis to the responsibility of the majority of the host society, instead of to the migrants only. The behaviour of French state towards Maghreb migrants illustrates the complexity of this problem. As the influence of the extreme right-wing National Front (NF) party increased in the early 1990s, the attitude of the French government to the North African migrants has changed.⁴³ According to this party, North African Muslim migrants were mainly responsible for the economic, social and cultural decline of the society.⁴⁴ They were accused of “taking away” jobs from local people. In addition, this party considers Muslim migrants incapable of integration into society and adapting to French culture, tradition and values.⁴⁵ This is not only the NF party’s opinion, but it also reflects the negative attitude of the majority of French society. As indicated by Archick Kristin, almost 70% of the French

⁴¹ Response of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles to the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM (2003) 336 final.

⁴² Pablo Sanchez, “Migration and Integration at the EU Level: A Rights-based Perspective,” European Social Watch Report (2010) :5.

⁴³ T.V. Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary," In Migration and The Maghreb, The Middle East Institute, Washington D.C., (2010):2.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

population believes that Muslim migrants do not successfully integrate into society.⁴⁶ However, some scholars like James Hollifield and Philip Martin point to the fact that it was the French state and some politicians including Marie Le Pen (former president of the National Front party), who articulated their negative attitudes towards the increasing flow of Muslim migrants.⁴⁷ As French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua stated, “France has been an immigration country; but she wants to be no longer.”⁴⁸ Such attitudes towards migrants may cause serious integration deficit. Although some migrants may become French citizens like in the past, the above behaviour of the state and society may result in difficulties to become well integrated. As Sekher argues, “although living in the same community and sharing the host society’s culture and language, migrants will be denied equal status and be unwelcome in their host country, because of certain cultural attributes, they will remain, by definition, outsiders.”⁴⁹ I also argue that such negative attitudes towards migrants may result in xenophobia and racism, the increase of tensions between the local community and migrants, and as well as change the migrants’ attitudes towards the host society’s culture and tradition.

Significantly, Evelyn Ersanilli and Ruud Koopmans’ work clearly shows the negative consequences of the emotional feelings of migrants towards integration or host culture adaptation process. The authors argue that the French assimilation policy prefers unitary public culture, illustrated by banning the headscarf for civil servants and students that may elicit emotional conflicts in migrants who want to participate in public and social life, while retaining their ethnic

⁴⁶ Archick & Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,” 11.

⁴⁷ Wayne A et al., *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, second edition. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 199.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary," 5.

and religious traditions outside of their country.⁵⁰ This latter is one of the most important factors to adapt migrants to the host culture.

Although France is a multicultural country and is regarded as one of the immigration countries in the EU, it is still a monocultural state. The French assimilation policy towards migrants emphasizes denying any forms of cultural, linguistic and ethnic classification.⁵¹ According to this policy, migrants join the society as prospective members of the country, not as representatives of ethnic groups. Although culture, customs and traditions of the minorities are tolerated, the state's assimilation policy does not recognise ethnic or cultural diversity. In contrast, assimilation policy considers the nation as a political and territorial community.⁵² Until the 1970s, assimilation policy as a way towards integration was used in many European countries.⁵³ From the mid 1970s, the concept of integration replaced assimilation because of the culturally derogatory implications of assimilation.⁵⁴

A second approach in the literature focuses on the integration problems of migrants mainly from the migrants' perspective, highlighting the attitudes of migrants towards a host nation's culture, tradition, beliefs, values, national identity and way of life. The work done by Eloisa Vladescu was built on the idea that assimilating migrants into French society was one of the essential models of successful integration. Vladescu claims that Maghrebians' religious,

⁵⁰ Ersanilli Evelyn & Koopmans Ruud, "Ethnic Retention and Host Culture Adoption among Turkish Immigrants in Germany, France and the Netherlands: A Controlled Comparison," Social Science Research Centre Berlin (2009):8.

⁵¹ Dillender, "The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy," 21.

⁵² Kaya, "The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century," 38.

⁵³ Ibid., 36

⁵⁴ Ibid.

social, and cultural norms have prevented the integration process into French society.⁵⁵ However, there are clearly some problems with Eloisia's claim: her arguments are based exclusively on the one- way integration process. However, she left a number of questions open. For example, whether a host society itself is part of the integration process, or whether the French assimilation model of integration can or cannot guarantee the successful integration of the migrant communities. Other works, however, took a different approach by investigating integration not only from the migrants' perspective, but taking into consideration also the readiness of the host society to accept the new culture in order to accommodate migrants (two-way process). In a typical study, Han Entzinger and Renske Biezveld clarify the relationship between a hosting society and migrant community in the integration process. They argue that integration is not a one-way process in which only migrants should participate. The host society is obliged to bear equal responsibility for the successful integration.⁵⁶ In addition, the host community plays an essential role for the integration of migrants by promoting tolerance and cultural diversity in the society.⁵⁷

Based on this literature review, the thesis argues with the first approach that the host country has more impact on successful integration of migrants because, as Adler argues, coming from totally different culture and background, requires time to adjust in the host society's life style. I argue that in order to reduce the integration problems of Maghreb migrants, the French state needs to take into consideration the two- way integration process that would provide opportunities for migrants to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the society.

⁵⁵ Eloisia Vladescu, "The Assimilation of Immigrant Groups in France -Myth or Reality?" Jean Monnet/Robert Schuman Paper Series 5(2006):18.

⁵⁶ Entzinger Han and Biezeveld Renske, "Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration," The report has been written for the European Commission under contract no. DG JAI-A-2 (2002):28.

⁵⁷ International Organization for Migration, "Integration of Migrants," 7.

“Only if host society is actively involved in welcoming and integrating its new members will be the full beneficial potential of migration be realized. Often, the practices of their religion, and the celebration of specific cultural and traditional holidays, represent indispensable parts of the migrants’ previous social life and cannot be substituted by customs and holidays of the host country.”⁵⁸

A brief overview of the relevant literature on integration of migrants shows that debates over integration remain challenging. In order to integrate migrants into society, first the integration policy must ensure fundamental rights for migrants and to help establish social and cultural relationships between the host country and migrant communities. However, with the French assimilationist model of integration which “implies a rejection of the immigrant’s own culture”⁵⁹, it is quite difficult to expect good integration from migrants. As Seljuq points out, rejecting the cultural and traditional values of migrants may result in a cultural clash between the host and migrant communities.

In the next chapters, especially in chapter three I will demonstrate the impact of the French state’s integration policy on Muslim migrants in France.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁹ The Advocates for Human Rights, “The Facts: Integration of Immigrants,” The Advocates for Human Rights. http://www.energyofanation.org/sites/25e1f498-741c-478a-8a08-aa486d8533a5/uploads/integration_of_immigrants.pdf (accessed May 26, 2006).

CHAPTER 2: Maghreb Migration in France: Integration Problems

France has had a significant increase in the number of Maghreb migrants particularly from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia since the Second World War. Due to lack of labour force as a consequence of the war, France received a foreign labour force from its former colonies, especially from the Maghreb countries in order to develop its postwar economy. This was the beginning of the modern labor recruitment of Maghreb migrants in France.⁶⁰ Although the economic impacts of migration on the French postwar economy were positive, with the increase of the flow of migrants from the Maghreb to France, integration problems of migrants have become one of the most debated subjects especially in recent years.⁶¹ Today integration issues of migrants are regularly discussed in parliamentary debates, media, television and radio shows, academic and scholarly works, as well as by the local population.⁶² However, discussions focus mostly on the consequences rather than on the underlying causes of the integration problems.

The aim of this chapter is to briefly analyse role and responsibility of the French state for the major causes of integration problems of Maghreb migrants. To address the present migration situation in France, the general historical overview of Maghreb migration will be briefly outlined. Once I have summarised the historical development of Maghreb migration in France, I will address the integration problems from the migrants' perspective.

⁶⁰ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary,"1.

⁶¹ Council of Europe, *"Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the well-being of all in Pluralist Societies,"* (Paris: Council of Europe Publishing, 2010), 13.

⁶² Ibid.

2.1 Maghreb Migration in France: A Brief History and Present Situation

Maghreb migration in France has a long history. Since the first half of the 19th century, when the Maghreb colonization period began (1827), France brought workers from this region to France.⁶³ In the second half of the 19th century, France received foreign workers from neighbouring countries such as Italy, Belgium as well as Algeria, due to lack of adequate manpower to employ in a growing domestic economy.⁶⁴ During World War I, soldiers from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia participated in the French army to defend the country. These Maghrebian soldiers not only served in the army, but were also used as labour force on farms and in the arms industries in order to replace the French workers who were serving in the army and to reduce the labour shortage situation.⁶⁵ After the First World War, the number of young Algerian and Moroccan workers considerably increased. According to 1920s statistics, about 119,000 Algerian and a similar number of Moroccan workers came to France to work and to settle in the country.⁶⁶ With the end of the First and the Second World War and the French colonization era (1960s), the new period of Maghreb migration began, characterized by a significant increase of migrants in France.

After World War II, migrants from the Maghreb region became one of the dominating manpower flow among foreign workers in France.⁶⁷ Maghreb migration to France began mainly economic and labour migration. After the independence of three main emigration Maghreb

⁶³ Affan Seljuq, "Cultural Conflicts: North African Immigrants in France," Published by *the Journal of Peace Studies* 2, no.2, (1997).

⁶⁴ Transnational Research Project MITI, "Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals," 25.

⁶⁵ Seljuq, "Cultural Conflicts: North African Immigrants in France."

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary," 1.

countries: Algeria (1962), Morocco (1952) and Tunisia (1952), the flow of migrants greatly increased. The reasons for the increase in the number of migrants can be explained by the following factors. On the one hand, the economic effects of the war on the Maghreb region caused to move many workers from this region to western Europe and the region became one of the labour exporting countries similar to Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and the former Yugoslavian countries.⁶⁸ On the other hand, France needed to rebuild its post-war economy; therefore it opened its border to migrants from former colonies in order to reconstruct the economy of the country by employing a cheap labour force for a short period.⁶⁹ In addition, among France's decolonization purposes, attracting migrants from the former colonies in North Africa was one of the most important targets.⁷⁰ Moreover, although the majority of the migrants were unskilled or low-skilled and undocumented workers, the French government permitted them to work in order to promote economic development of the country.⁷¹ Therefore, the number of foreign workers between the 1950s and the 1970s increased from 4.9 % to 7.7%, with most of them coming from the Maghreb region.⁷² Among Maghreb countries, Morocco became the first official worker supply country to France in 1963.⁷³ All these three major events: colonization, the First and the Second World War have had a strong influence on the status of the current Maghreb migration in France.

According to INSEE, today the number of Maghreb migrants constitutes two third of the foreign migrant communities in France. Among European countries France is regarded as

⁶⁸ Kaya, "The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century," 51.

⁶⁹ Mark Sedgwick, "Different, Yet the Same: Immigration in Germany and France, 1945-2004," *Political Quarterly* 1 (2005):4.

⁷⁰ Kaya "The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century," 20.

⁷¹ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary," 1.

⁷² Kaya, "The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century," 20.

⁷³ Transnational Research Project MITI, "Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals," 57.

Europe's biggest Maghreb Muslim migrant community.⁷⁴ According to Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion and Public life, today the number of Muslims in France is more than 5 million (almost 10% of the total population), and most of them originally with Maghreb background.⁷⁵ The Table 1 illustrates how the Maghrebian population is growing in France in recent years.

Table 1: Maghreb Population Origin in France, Numbers are in Thousands (1999-2005)

Maghreb Countries	1999	2005	1999/ 2005 %	% French Population (61.000000 in 2005)
Algerians	1,577	1,865	+18.3%	3.1%
Moroccans	1,005	1,201	+19.5%	2.0%
Tunisians	417	458	+9.8%	0.8%
Total	2,999	3,524	+17.5%	5.8%

Source: <http://eps.revues.org/index3657.html>

As shown in the table, the number of Maghrebians in France is approximately 3.5 million, which comprises 5.8% of the total French population. Moreover, between 1999 and 2005 the number of Maghrebians increased by 17.5%. The rapid rise of Maghreb population raised many questions about its consequences, especially questions related to the integration issues of Muslim migrants became one of the most hotly debated issues in France.⁷⁶

2.2 Integration of Migrants

The integration process is one of the major concerns of all aspects of migrants and the

⁷⁴ Archick & Belkin eds., "Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism," 10.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Evelyn & Ruud, "Ethnic Retention and Host Culture Adoption among Turkish Immigrants in Germany, France and the Netherlands. A Controlled Comparison," 6.

host society's life.⁷⁷ The mutual understanding of migrants and the host society is a very important factor in the success of integration. Within the integration process socio-economic, cultural, legal, and attitudes from the host communities towards migrants play an essential role.⁷⁸ Since the increase of the flow of Maghreb migrants in France, the social and cultural integration of migrants has become an important task for the government in recent years. According to the European Commission, it is not possible to integrate migrants into the host country without considering the importance and role of integration policy, which involves socio-cultural aspects of the relationship between the host society and migrant communities. Good integration policy ensures the rights of migrants and helps establish social relations between the host society and migrant communities.⁷⁹

The analysis of the role and importance of integration policy will be further explained in chapter three where the French integration policy towards Maghreb migrants is discussed.

2.3 Integration Problems of Maghreb Migrants

The assurance of fundamental rights, non-discrimination and racism, providing equal rights and opportunities for everybody, are the key integration issues of migrants in many EU Member States, including France.⁸⁰ The rapid increase of Maghreb migration boosts xenophobia, racism and discrimination, causes tensions between migrants and local community, leading to calls for a radical overhaul of the migration policy.⁸¹ There are a number of reasons for the

⁷⁷ International Organization for Migration, "Integration of Migrants,"7.

⁷⁸ Entzinger & Biezeveld, "Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration,"5.

⁷⁹ International Organization for Migration, "Integration of Migrants,"6.

⁸⁰ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,," Brussels, 1.9.2005 COM (2005) 389 final.

⁸¹ Council of Europe, "*Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the well-being of all in Pluralist Societies*," 164.

inefficiency of the integration of migrants in France. For example, the lack of sufficient knowledge of the host society's language, the lack of participation of migrants in the social life of the host community, the high unemployment rate among migrants, their discrimination at their work places by employers, etc.⁸² With the increasing tensions in the integration process the question arises who is accountable for the problems and what is the role and responsibility of the hosting country. In order to address this question, in the following, I will briefly discuss the issues of integration from both the migrants' and the host community's view points.

2.3.1 Integration Problems: From the Migrants' Perspective

Degree of integration of migrants can be explained by analysing and evaluating indicators of integration. Among indicators employment, educational and language level, as well as social relations of migrants with the local population are the most frequently mentioned. According to COM, "employment is a key part of the integration process."⁸³ This indicator illustrates employment and unemployment rate of migrants and their participation in the labour market. Within MSs, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Spain have the highest unemployment rates among foreign workforce.⁸⁴ Table 2 illustrates selected data of unemployment rate in France.

⁸² International Organization for Migration, "Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region,"5.

⁸³ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions," COM (2005) 389 final.

⁸⁴ The Continuous Reporting System on Migration, "Trends in international migration," Annual Report of OECD (2009).

**Table 2: Unemployment Rate among Foreign People aged 15 to 64 in France %
(2003-2005)**

Nations	Men	Women	All
All population	9	11	9.9
French	13.3	18.1	15.6
EU 15	5.5	10	7.4
Non EU foreigners	22.4	32.5	26.2
Moroccans	22.3	34.8	26.4
Chinese	7.1	18.8	11.8

Source: Final Report on Measuring Integration: The French Case, 2008

As Table 2 shows, between 2003-2005 the unemployment rate of Moroccan migrants was one of the highest (26.4%) among foreign workers in France. This high figure also indicates the problems of the Moroccans in the labour market as underlying reason for unemployment.

As shortly mentioned above, employment is seen as the fundamental tool of integration. Dillender argues that the high unemployment rate among Maghrebians cannot only be explained by their educational level; discrimination based on migrants' origin and race is also a major factor responsible for the high unemployment rate.⁸⁵ In addition, the low rate of employment of migrants within the local population is one of the main reasons for the failure of current policies in many MSs, including France.⁸⁶

To improve Muslim migrants' integration in the EU, European governments introduced new legislation such as citizenship laws, language requirements and laws against racism and

⁸⁵ Dillender, "The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy," 25.

⁸⁶ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.," (2005) 389 final.

discrimination.⁸⁷ Notwithstanding these measures, the European Commission holds the view that racism and discrimination remain one of the major challenges for migrant communities in Europe.⁸⁸ Migrants face racism and discrimination because of their ethnic origin, cultural background and colour of their skin, in their daily life. The following two cases which happened in France exemplify this type of tension between local people and Arab migrants.

Example 1 Racism: A young girl who is a daughter of the Moroccan migrant narrates about racism she faces all the time.

“Just now, at the supermarket checkout, I heard two women talking. They were talking about migrant workers. They were saying they were sick of all these foreigners that they grab other people’s jobs, they are dirty- all the old stuff people keep saying about us. These people all talk without thinking: they talk about individual cases they never see what the real problem of migration is. They take one”bad” migrant worker and end up saying they are all bad. Not all Moroccan fathers are like mine: I know some who really care about their families, who do not despise their wives, and who talk to their children.”⁸⁹

Example 2 Discrimination: A young Arab worker who changed his name in order to be a marketing manager

“It is a shame, but all I had to do change my first name to be a marketing manager - a position I would probably never have secured under my old name, Abdulatif. After changing my name,

⁸⁷ Archick & Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,”1.

⁸⁸ European Commission, “Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,” COM (2005) 389 final.

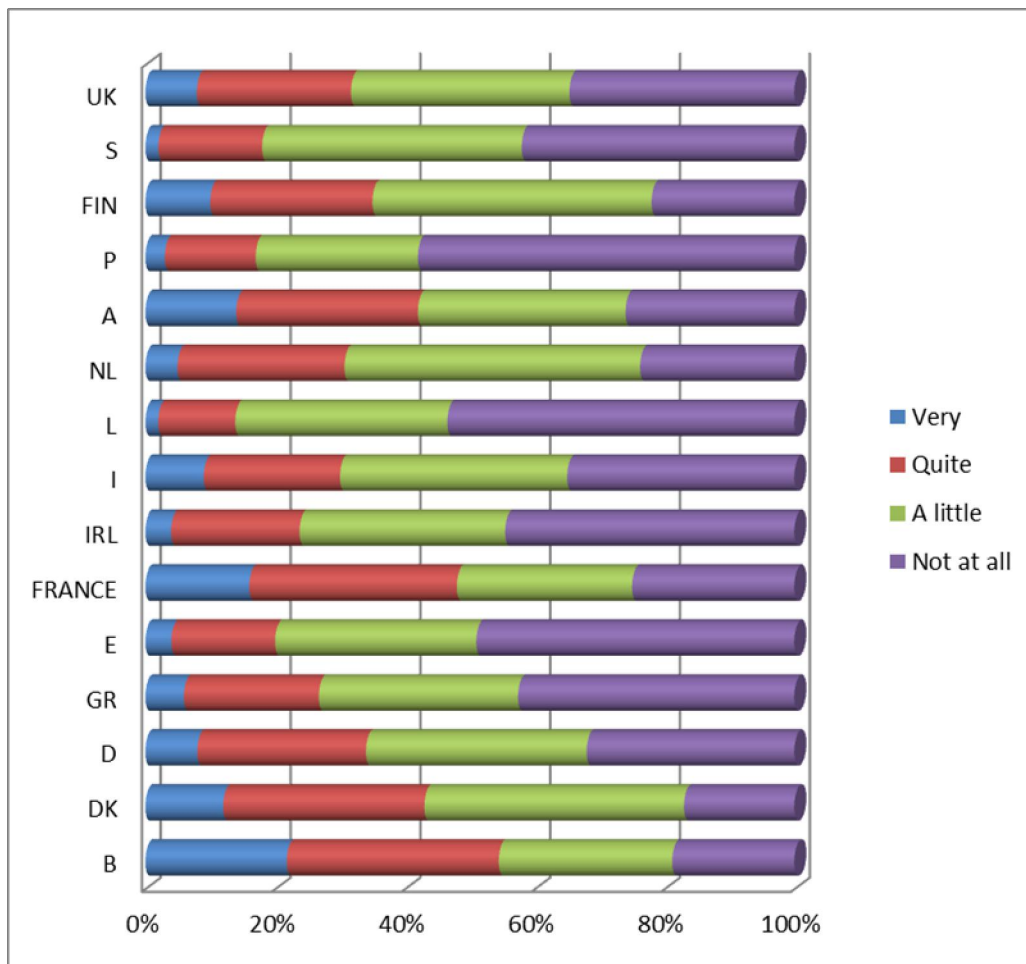
⁸⁹ Kaya, “*The Changing face of Europe Population Flows in the 20th Century*,”46.

suddenly I started getting interviews. I do not look so much like an Arab, and my surname does not sound particularly Arab, so the interviews are going pretty well. But afterwards, when I get home, I am ashamed – I feel I have denied my real identity, just for the sake of fitting in and getting on.”⁹⁰

These two examples demonstrate that such negative stereotypes like racism and discrimination have not only considerably influence the integration process of migrants, but also, as Kaya points out, they may result in a major threat to the liberal democratic principles of the country. Therefore, the French government passed laws that prohibit racism and combat discrimination against migrants (see Appendix 1). Although the French government tries to improve its laws against discrimination and racism, the degree of expressed racism in France is one of the highest in MSs. To determine the degree of racism among European nationals, in 1997 the Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs Directorate (DGV) of the European Commission made an interview of the MSs Citizens within the framework of Eurobarometere 47.1. Figure 1 below indicates four degrees of expressed racism in the selected the EU countries.

⁹⁰ Naseer Negrouche, “Changer de prenom pour trouver un employ. Discrimination racial à la française,” *Le Monde diplomatique* (2007).

Figure 1: Degree of Expressed Racism: Distribution by 15 EU Member States



Source: Racism and Xenophobia in Europe. Eurobarometere Opinion Poll no 47.1

As the chart shows, after Belgium France has the second highest degree in both the “very racist” (16%) and in the combined “very and quite racist” (45%) groups among the selected fifteen MSs. Taking into account the much higher population of France than Belgium, these numbers may mark very serious problems.

2.3.2 Integration Problems: From the Host Country Perspective

The French government has traditionally pursued an assimilation policy with respect to its migrants in order to integrate and adopt them into the host community. As Marks points out, “assimilation lies at the heart of integration policy in France.”⁹¹ However, this policy has not always been completely successful or promoted the development of a diverse society. As mentioned above, many Maghreb workers live in poor and unemployed conditions in France and have social tensions with local people. In their work, Kristin, Paul, Christopher, Carl and Derek give an example from a December 2010 survey, which indicates that 31% the French population consider that Islam encourages rejection of Western values and 68% of them believe that Muslims do not integrate into the host culture.⁹² However, many scholars argue that a lack of economic opportunity is the key aspect behind the integration problems rather than religion.⁹³

Since my argument is that the French state is more responsible for the integration problems of Maghreb migrants than the migrants themselves, in the next chapter I will broadly discuss the French state’s policy towards the migrants in order to support my argument. To do so, I will analyse the integration policy of the state and its influence on migrants and on the attitudes of French society towards Maghrebians.

⁹¹ Sedgwick, “Different, Yet the Same: Immigration in Germany and France, 1945-2004,”11.

⁹² Archick& Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,”11.

⁹³ Ibid.,7.

CHAPTER 3: The French Integration Policy

Today integration of migrants has become one of the most important objectives of public policy in recipient countries.⁹⁴ In order to integrate migrants into the host society, receiving countries use three different major integration policies: multiculturalism, assimilationist and differential policies. Member States use these three different integration policies based on a country's history, culture, customs and traditions, political system, and other national and historical aspects of the state.⁹⁵ France is regarded as a country that applies the assimilationist model of integration. Assimilation is the core of integration policy of the state.

France is characterized as a multicultural country with great cultural diversity from various backgrounds. Migrant communities came to France from Europe, North Africa, Middle East, Caucasus, Asia and from a number of other regions with widely different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. To assimilate into the French community is easier for European migrants than for the Maghrebians.⁹⁶ For example, some migrants with a European background have similar religion, education and culture to the French people. However, migrants from Maghreb countries are geographically, historically and traditionally very different in these respects. The most important differences are in their religion, culture, customs and traditions. As the former Interior Minister of France, Gaston Deffere (1982-1984), stated, "when Poles, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese live in France and decide to naturalize, it matters little whether they are Catholics, Protestants, Jews, or atheists . . . But the rules of Islam are not simply religious rules.

⁹⁴ Evelyn & Ruud, "Ethnic Retention and Host Culture Adoption among Turkish Immigrants in Germany, France and the Netherlands: A Controlled Comparison," 6.

⁹⁵ Antidio Martinez, "Evolution of Integration Policies for Immigrants in Europe: Key Elements for Their Analysis," Universidad Pública de Navarra (2008):2.

⁹⁶ Vladescu, "The Assimilation of Immigrant Groups in France - Myth or Reality?"17.

They are rules of living that concern . . . marriage, divorce, the care of children, the behaviour of men, the behaviour of women . . . These rules are contrary to all the rules of French law . . . What is more, in France we don't have the same habits of living.”⁹⁷

In this chapter I will analyse the French integration policy and its impacts on integration of Maghreb migrants together with an evaluation of the current assimilationist policy of the state, focusing specifically on the major policy changes in recent years.

3.1 The French Integration Policy: Assimilation

The French Revolution of 1789 played an essential role in the foundation of the current integration policy of the state. Although the revolution was not a movement against the Roman Catholic Church, it was important to achieve a secular society based on liberty and equality. Moreover, the ideology of the revolution has had a long lasting impact on the development of the current nature of migration and integration policies in France.⁹⁸ Traditionally, the French way of integration of minorities into the host culture aimed at building a state based on a monocultural nation.⁹⁹ For example, historically Burgundy had its own culture, tradition and customs which were different from French culture and values. After Burgundy had become a French autonomous region, Burgundies were transformed into French citizens.¹⁰⁰ After the Second World War this traditional way of assimilating foreigners has also been used to integrate

⁹⁷ Sedgwick, “Different, Yet the Same: Immigration in Germany and France, 1945-2004,”15.

⁹⁸ Dillender, “The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy,”15.

⁹⁹ Piter Reitsma, “Migrant Policy and Muslim Integration in France and the Netherlands: Comparing Theory with Practice,” *Comparative European Research in Migration, Diversity and Identities*, (2007):7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

migrants into the dominant culture by considering them as permanent members of the host society.¹⁰¹

France still uses assimilation as an effective model of integrating migrants into the host culture. However, in recent years the French government has been facing many criticism challenging the suitability of her assimilation policy to facilitate the struggle of migrants to assimilate into the dominant culture.¹⁰² The real question is how to support the successful assimilation of Muslim migrants. They are regarded as “incapable” of integrating into the French culture and way of life according to the opinion of the majority of French society.¹⁰³ However, some scholars stress that Muslims are not granted an equality of rights to allow them to fully participate in the socio-cultural and economic life of the country.¹⁰⁴ Although a number of modifications in the labour market, housing and education have been adopted in recent years, the outcome of these modifications is considered to be insufficient.¹⁰⁵ Abida, Laitin and Valfort argue that the existence of discrimination based on religion in the French labour market creates difficulties for Muslim migrants to integrate into the local labour market. For example, in France, a Muslim applicant has 2.5 times less chance to be called back for a job interview than his/her counterpart with other religion.¹⁰⁶

Over the past twenty years the French integration policy has become more complex. France is now far away from her initial policy of being an immigration country. Rather, it seems

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Vladescu, “The Assimilation of Immigrant Groups in France - Myth or Reality?”6.

¹⁰³ Sekher, “Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary,”2.

¹⁰⁴ Archick & Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,”11.

¹⁰⁵ Transnational Research Project MITI, “Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labor market inclusion of third country nationals,”19.

¹⁰⁶ Claire L. Adida, David D. Latin and Marrie-Anne Valforst, “Identifying barriers to Muslim Integration in France,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 107, (2010).

today that Maghreb migrants have gradually become unwelcome workers in the country and the various political parties are using them to achieve their short-term election goals.¹⁰⁷ As stated in the first chapter, traditionally France used to be an immigrant country, but she does not want to be any longer.¹⁰⁸ Maghreb migrants, just like many of their counterparts in the World, tend to dwell in the poorest, crime infected neighbourhoods. The easiest solution to this problem, namely to promote return migration, was initiated by the French authorities quite frequently, but without much success.¹⁰⁹

Freedom of religion is one of the basic common principles of integration. Today more than 5 million Muslims live in France; they constitute almost 10% of the total population. Although more than 60% of the population is Catholics, there is no officially recognized state religion in France. With the implementation of the law on separation of the Churches and State in 1905, France became a secular state. According to article 2 of the law, “The French Republic neither recognizes, nor salaries, nor subsidizes any religion.”¹¹⁰ The institutionalization of secularism has become one of the most recognizable characteristics of integration policy towards migrants, which separates the state from religion.¹¹¹ However, it is not a simple separation case in France, with the increase the number of Muslim migrants, the government made an effort to remove the religious affiliation from the public life of the state.¹¹² As Dillender argues, although

¹⁰⁷ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary,"4.

¹⁰⁸ Cornelius, Tsuda, Martin, and Hollifield, eds., *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*,199.

¹⁰⁹ Sekher, "Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary,"4.

¹¹⁰ Barry A. Kosmin & Andrea Keysar, “*Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*,” Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture (2007):116.

¹¹¹ Dillender, “The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy,”6.

¹¹² Ibid.

secularism refers to separate state and church, in France it is a tool to force, rather than a support for assimilation.¹¹³

Today France has become one of the most culturally diversified countries of the EU. Although the French government attempts to retain the country as a monocultural society, with the increase in the number of people with different ethnic and cultural background, the state cannot be typified as a monocultural country. The French President Nicolas Sarkozy argued that multiculturalism has failed and the state does not consider itself as a multicultural society. However, currently France has become a pluralistic state but it is still culturally homogeneous. The assimilation policy of the state is one of the official efforts of the government to preserve French monoculturalism.¹¹⁴

As Dillender argues, one of the reasons Muslims face problems is the socioeconomic marginalization that affects their willingness to integrate well into the host culture. He points out that the French assimilation policy cannot be regarded as a good example for a “shining success.” Nevertheless, there are obvious successes of this policy despite unintentional consequences.¹¹⁵ Employing the assimilation policy as a universal integration model of the state remains an alternative policy to failed multiculturalism.¹¹⁶

3.2 Major Policy Changes and their Impacts on Maghreb Migrants: 1990s - Present

During the last two decades the French government has significantly changed its migration and integration policies in order to address security issues originating from migrants, in

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 64.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

particular from Muslim migrants. One of the main reasons for introducing a more restrictive approach to migration is to minimize the continuous increase in the flow of migrants after the Second World War. In addition, in the 1990s the government implemented several new laws in various fields of domestic policy. For instance, to regulate and restrict the family unions of foreign nationals in France, in 1993 the government passed a law on family unification. According to this law, French nationality is not automatically granted for those born in France like before.¹¹⁷ To keep the level of low skilled at minimum, in 1993 the French Parliament passed the Act on Immigration Control and the Act on Conditions on Entry and Residence of Foreigners in France (see Appendix 2). These acts implemented more restrictive laws against illegal migration and reviewed certain provisions of laws including citizenship, housing and marriage. For example, according to the Act on Conditions on Entry and Residence of Foreigners in France, migrants cannot bring family members to France until they prove that they are financially secure and they have a house to bring their family.¹¹⁸ The Act on Immigration Control restricts illegal migration and it considers illegal migrants as a threat to the community. Such laws caused a decrease in the number of migrants from Maghreb region in recent years. As Table 3 shows, in four years the number of Maghreb migrants decreased by almost 5%.

¹¹⁷ Transnational Research Project MITI, “Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labor market inclusion of third country nationals,” 29.

¹¹⁸ Sarah Verbosky, “Immigration in France: The Economics and Politics of a Sensitive issues, “Lehigh University (2000):3.

Table 3: Maghreb Migration Flows to France (2004-2008)

Countries	%Migrants of all migrants 2004	%Migrants of all migrants 2005	%Migrants of all migrants 2006	%Migrants of all migrants 2007	%Migrants of all migrants 2008
Algeria	15.2%	14%	14.1%	12%	11.2%
Morocco	11.4%	10.4%	9.4%	9.5%	11.1%
Tunisia	4.7%	4.5%	4.5%	4.4%	4.3%
Maghreb	31.3%	28.9%	28%	25.9%	26.6%

Source: Statistiques détaillées sur les flux d'immigration, Ined, 2011

The acts mentioned above seek to minimize illegal and low-skilled migrants living and coming to France, in addition, they apply restrictive rules for legal migrants. Such new laws and acts can be significant reasons behind the observed decrease in number of migrants in recent years (Table 3).

Currently the French government tries to promote the Maghreb Muslim migrants integration into the host culture. As the Minister of Interior Affairs (2004-2007) and as President of France (2007-2012), Nicolas Sarkozy introduced new legislation affecting migration. In 2004 the government enacted a law mandating the deportation of illegal migrants and stating that integration is possible only for migrants who had already been residing in the country. According to migrant advocates, however, French officials were in the forefront of disseminating the notion that Islam and therefore Muslims exert a growing threat to French society. This has gradually created a negative image of Islam among the French people.¹¹⁹ Despite the very strong anti-

¹¹⁹ Archick & Belkin eds., "Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism," 12.

migrant rhetoric aimed at winning the sympathy of both the conservatives and the far-right voters, President Sarkozy lost the 2012 Presidential elections.

3.2.1 The National Identity Debate

The rise of the National Front party showed that the identity issues have significantly become politicized in recent years.¹²⁰ The rapid rise of the Muslim population in France causes clashes between the French culture and Islamic tradition. The head scarf scandal clearly demonstrates this issue. As a consequence, interaction between Islam and the French culture is becoming one of the main subjects of the national identity debate. According to the Constitution of France, all French people are equal under the law. Therefore, regardless of their origin or religion, citizens of France cannot be differentiated. One of the main aims of the government is to build a single and strong national identity based on homogeneous culture. In order to achieve this objective, the government traditionally uses assimilation policy to integrate foreign nationals into the host society. However, some important events such as the headscarf issues (started in 1989 with refusing three Muslim schoolgirls access to a classroom for wearing the headscarf in northern France)¹²¹ proved that assimilation was not a successful policy towards Muslim migrants. Despite all these events, the French government is still trying to make an effort to assimilate Muslim migrants to reduce increasing tensions between Muslims and the local population. To do so, the government initiated a series of national debates in November 2009 to discuss the basic question of what does it mean “to be French in the 21st century.” From many observers point of view, instead of meaningful discussions, this national debate was often mixed

¹²⁰ Sedgwick, “Different, Yet the Same: Immigration in Germany and France, 1945-2004,”13.

¹²¹ Matthew J.Gordner, “Challenging the French Exception: Islam and Laïcité,” *In-Spire Journal of Law, Politics and Societies* 2 (2008):81.

with racist and xenophobic elements.¹²² A further series of debates running under the title Convention on Islam and *laïcité*¹²³ were held in April 2011. According to critics, these discussions, together with the 2010 law supported by President Sarkozy on banning full face veils in France, served the only reason of increasing the popularity of the President before the coming 2012 presidential elections.¹²⁴ Abderrahman Dahmane, who is a former advisor to Sarkozy,” criticized Sarkozy’s approach to integration, addressing the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) party “a plague for Muslims,” and adding that the April Convention on Islam and *Laïcité* was planned by a “handful of neo-Nazis.”¹²⁵

3.2.2 The Headscarf Crisis

In September 2010 the French parliament passed the law on the ban on wearing full-face veils in the country. This law elicited most heated debates on the issues of Muslim integration in France.¹²⁶ After one year in April 2011, the law took effect in the whole territory of the country. As mentioned above, the French Constitution states that France is a secular democratic country and the Constitution guarantees the respect of all beliefs. The law on banning the wearing of the headscarf followed logically from the spirit of the *laïcité* that nobody can differentiate him or herself by religious symbols. That is why the majority of the French population supports the ban

¹²² Archick & Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,” 12.

¹²³ Means French secularism (separation of state and religion).

¹²⁴ Archick & Belkin eds., “Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism,” 12.

¹²⁵ France’s Sarkozy Sacks Diversity Head Dahmane, BBC News, (March 2011). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12714957> (accessed May 17, 2012).

¹²⁶ Britton D. Davis, “Lifting the Veil: France’s New Crusade,” 34 B.C. Int’l & Comp (2011):1.

on wearing a headscarf. Moreover, as Nicolas Sarkozy argues, “the burqa is simply not welcome to France and it hurts the dignity of women and is unacceptable in French society.”¹²⁷

Besides human dignity, the supporters of this restrictive law also stress that wearing the headscarf is a violation of equity (*égalité*) between men and women, a most important constitutional right. Veiling a women’s face can be regarded as a clear sign of their submission in a society, which can also be not tolerated by the French Constitution. The security police raised another issue that concerns public safety, especially in the light of the 9/ 11 events. Fully veiled person cannot be identified by the security forces and this poses serious potential threat. The validity of the supporters’ opinion is demonstrated by the results of Pew Research Centre, showing that 82% of the population supports the ban on women wearing veil in schools and government offices and only 17% disagreed with this legislation.¹²⁸ Muslims, however, have a dissenting opinion on this issue. They argue that the law will rather denounce Muslims than find solutions to the problems of integration. They argue that the minority (only two thousand religious Muslim women) wear the headscarf therefore the whole problem is exaggerated by the government. The opponents of the law firmly believe that this legislation served the political aims of President Sarkozy. He tried to gain the sympathy of conservative voters and that of the right wing, racist people by demonstrating his willingness to solve at least a part of the integration issues of Muslims.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Steven Enlarger, “Sarkozy Wants Ban of Full Veils,” *The New York Times* (April 2010). <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/22/world/europe/22france.html> (accessed May 13, 2012).

¹²⁸ Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Widespread Support for Banning Full Islamic Veil in Western Europe,” Pew Research Centre, (July 2010) <http://www.pewglobal.org/2010/07/08/widespread-support-for-banning-full-islamic-veil-in-western-europe/> (accessed May 9, 2012).

¹²⁹ Jonathan Laurence, “Interview on National Public Radio, “The Dianne Rehm Show 76, no3, (July 2010).

3.3 Impact of the State Policy on the Society's Attitudes towards Migrants

Apart from the local French people, many different nations and ethnic groups live in France. According to INSEE, there are about 65 million people live in France and foreigners constitute more, than 25% of them.¹³⁰ Maghrebians represent the majority of the foreigners. The rapid rise in numbers of Muslim migrants from Maghreb countries in recent years has impacted on the attitudes and stereotypes in French society. Among the majority of the local population there is a general opinion that many migrants who are from Muslim background are not well assimilated into the dominant French culture.¹³¹ Unfortunately, such attitudes towards migrants effect on the relationship between the host and migrant community.

There are several factors which influence the society's attitudes towards migrants. Among these factors, stereotypes are the most used and harmful ones. "Migrants are criminals", "they take away our jobs and increase unemployment rate", "they are less educated than we are", "migrants' children bring down education levels in our schools", "migrants think they are at their own home", "they want to create a parallel society", and "they are threat to our society"¹³² etc. are examples for such harmful stereotypes. However, stereotypes are not always true. Migrants are the economic recourses of the country, for example, the jobs which they do, the local people no longer want to do for low wages.¹³³ In addition, migrants play an essential role in the cultural diversity of the society. On the one hand, negative stereotypes can impact on the social relationship between migrants the host society, and on the other hand, they may lead to

¹³⁰ Transnational Research Project MITI, "Measuring Integration: The French Case. Regional indices of social and labour market inclusion of third country nationals," 28.

¹³¹ Archick & Belkin eds., "Muslims in Europe: Promoting Integration and Countering Extremism," 11.

¹³² Council of Europe, *Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the well-being of all in Pluralist Societies*, 122.

¹³³ Ibid.

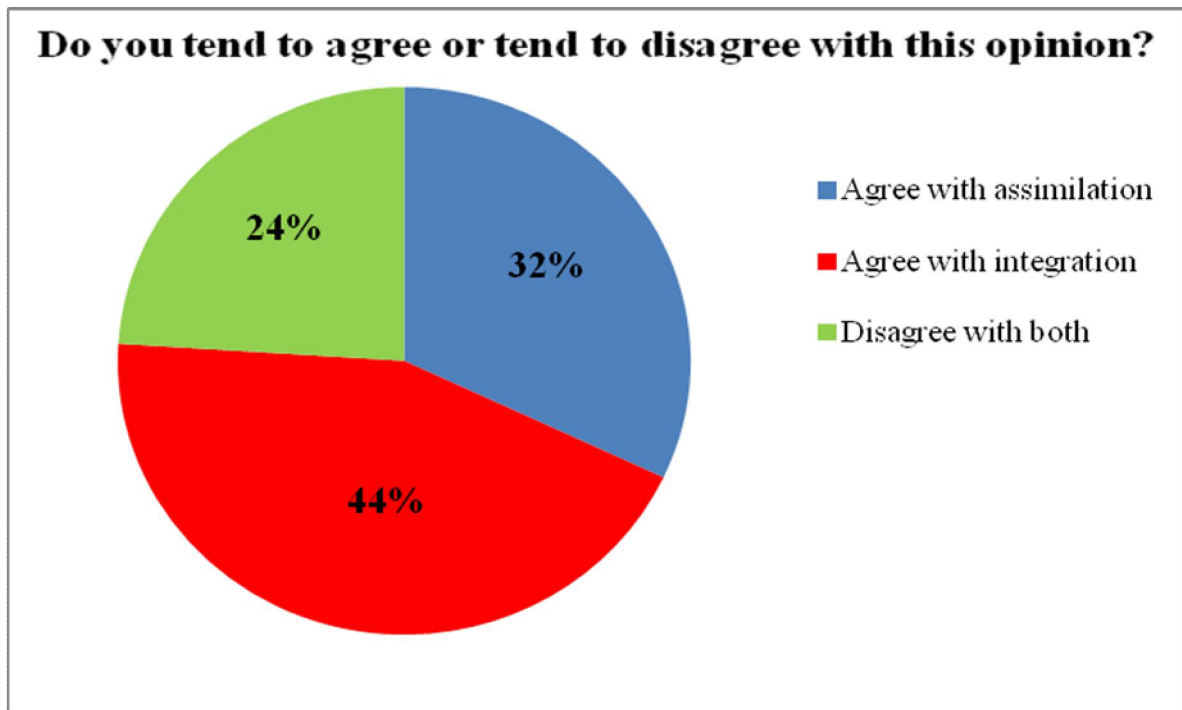
xenophobic and discriminatory attitudes in the host society. Therefore, in such cases, the role of the state is very important to initiate better information campaigns among the local residents outlining the importance of migration in the economic, social and cultural life of the state.

The state policy towards migrants is one of the influential sources on the host society's behaviour to migrants. Statements and expressions of the state officials and politicians can impact on the society's attitudes towards migrants. A successful integration policy requires effective two- way dynamic integration strategies involving both the hosting communities and the migrants. Therefore, the French government needs to focus on integration of Muslim migrants by involving them in a positive relationship with the local population in order to build mutual respect and tolerance. As I stated above, in order to create a positive atmosphere between the host community and migrants, and to reduce negative attitudes of the society towards migrants, the local authority officials should provide the local residents with more information about the contribution of migrants to the economic development and cultural diversity of the country. To do so, the government should demonstrate the positive impacts of migration on the society. Obviously, the role of media and newspapers are very important in influencing the society's attitudes towards migrants.¹³⁴

As the French government seeks to better assimilate Muslim migrants into the host culture, the question arises as to what are the opinion of the local population towards the state assimilation model of integration. Although the state applies the assimilation policy to integrate migrants, the survey below indicates that the only 32% of the total population supports this policy.

¹³⁴ Entzinger and Biezeveld, "Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration,"30.

Figure 2: Integration or Assimilation of People into a Host Society (France)



Source: Racism and Xenophobia in Europe. Eurobarometere Opinion Poll no 47.1

According to this survey, the people were asked whether they tend to agree to assimilate or to integrate foreigners into the host society. The opinions indicate that 32 % of the French population tend to agree with assimilation and with the policy that in the course of integration into the society, minority groups must give up their own cultural identity. In contrast, as shown in the chart, the majority of the population (44%) tend to agree with integration policy. Based on this statistics, I argue that in order to achieve a successful integration policy, the French state needs to take into account her population's opinion about the current assimilation model of integration policy. One of the important goals of integration policy is to build an interaction between the host society and migrant community. Therefore, the local population can be regarded as one of the key actors of integration process.

3.4 Impact of Integration Policy: The 2012 Presidential Elections

Few things show better the failure of the hard-liner, assimilationist policy towards French Muslim migrants than the outcome of the recent French Presidential elections. President Sarkozy lost and his hard stance against migrants during, and even before his presidency must have played a decisive role. Before he was elected President of France in 2007, Mr. Sarkozy served the Fifth Republic as the Minister of the Interior. In this position he cracked down to the African and Maghrebian youth who initiated the 2005 October Clichy-sous-Bois riots. He declared a state of emergency in November 2005 and condemned the rioters with humiliating and unacceptable statements. He went on even further by saying: “I have told the *préfets* that foreigners, who are legal or illegal immigrants, who have been indicted, are to be expelled immediately from our territory, including those who have a residence permit.”¹³⁵

Following the massacre committed by Muhammad Merah taking the life of seven innocent people in Toulouse in March 2012, very close to the date of the Presidential election, the anti-migrant rhetoric of Sarkozy especially strengthened. To please his French-born countrymen Mr. Sarkozy declared on the day of the first lethal shootings by Merah’s that there were “too many foreigners in France.”¹³⁶ He also promised that should he be re-elected he would further tighten laws on migration, control the use of Islamic websites, strengthen police actions against illegal migrants and even increase deportations. The ultra right wing anti-immigrant NF party has further incited hatred, its leader Marine Le Pen being quoted as saying by the same source: “How many Muhammad Merahs are arriving on boats and planes each day, filling

¹³⁵ Antoine Lerougetel, “France’s state of emergency—Sarkozy threatens mass deportations,” *International Committee of the Fourth International* 74, no.2 (November 2005), <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/nov2005/fran-n12.shtml> (accessed May 10, 2012).

¹³⁶ Doug Saunders, “France, an Election About Immigrants, Without Immigrants,” *Globe and Mail* 109,no.6 (March 2012), <http://dougsaunders.net/2012/03/france-election-sarkozy-merah-immigration/> (accessed May 10,2012).

France with immigrants? How many Muhammad Merahs are among the children of our immigrants?”¹³⁷ After such rhetoric it was not surprising that the French Muslim communities got alarmed.

For the leaders of the Muslim community the most important goal was to mobilize Muslims to participate in the election. As opposed to the over 80% usual turn out rate of the total voters in France, 56% of the migrants, concentrated mostly in the outskirts (*banlieue*) of the cities remained absent from the previous election.¹³⁸ Associations like AC Le Feu organized programs for the migrant youth with performers as early as November 2011 to persuade them to be more active in elections.¹³⁹ The Union of Muslim Families of Bouches du Rhone (UMF13) also called their followers to “punish arsonists ... who by calculation and political manoeuvres have thrown Muslims, inner-city youths, the unemployed and foreigners to the mob”¹⁴⁰ as quoted by the Washington Post.

In a so far unprecedented move, now even imams and Islamic associations called Muslims to exert their rights as citizens of France and go to the polls and “punish” President Sarkozy for his former anti-Islamic and anti - immigrant stance.¹⁴¹ As the Washington Post quotes, a well known sociologist, Francoise Lorcerie stated: “[French] Muslims can’t stand it anymore. They are fed up with these debates about national identity, halal meat, the veil or

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Thomas Haley, “AC Le Feu Turns on the Banlieue,” *Mediapart* (November 2011), <http://blogs.mediapart.fr/blog/thomas-haley/131111/ac-le-feu-turns-banlieue> (accessed May 13, 2012).

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Karine G. Barzegar, “Fed up’ French Muslims mobilize to unseat Sarkozy,” *The Washington Times*, April 19, 2012. <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/apr/19/french-muslims-mobilizing-to-unseat-sarkozy/?page=1> (accessed May 10, 2012).

¹⁴¹ Ibid

fundamentalism all over the place.”¹⁴² Jean Bauberot, an expert on secularism is quoted as saying: “In the current atmosphere, Nicolas Sarkozy is doing all he can to alienate the Muslim electorate ...,” “When they (imams) say go out and vote, people think ... you shouldn’t vote for Sarkozy.”¹⁴³ Mosque leaders, like Mr. Hamza also suggested Muslims vote this time for the leftist candidate. The results marked “a true rejection of Nicolas Sarkozy,”¹⁴⁴ according to Julien Goarant, research director of the polling company Opinionway.

The result of mobilization was overwhelming. A fresh poll taken by Opinionpoll agency almost immediately after the second round of the French Presidential elections showed that the vast majority, 93 % of the approximately 2 million French Muslims, voted for the socialist presidential candidate François Hollande in this round, while Nicolas Sarkozy received only 4 per cent of the votes.¹⁴⁵ Five years ago, in 2007, the socialist candidate Ms. Ségolène Royal received only 64 percent of French Muslim vote.¹⁴⁶ According to the final results of the elections, the median turnout of voters was 81% and Mr. Hollande received 51.7%, while President Sarkozy got 48.3% of the votes.¹⁴⁷ According to the official statistics of Constitutional Council of France, 35.9 million voters casted their ballot. From these data one can calculate that Hollande received 18, 6 million votes, while Sarkozy was elected by 17.3 million voters. The difference is 1, 22 million voters. Therefore, in my opinion the almost 1.9 million (93% of 2 million totals) Muslim voters might have had a decisive role in the results of the elections: in fact

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ <http://muslimvillage.com/forums/topic/67182-throwing-sarkozy-into-the-rubbish-bin-of-history/> (acceded May 12, 2012).

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ International Islamic Agency, http://iina.me/wp_en/?p=1008269 (acceded May 11, 2012).

¹⁴⁶ Barzegar, “Fed up’ French Muslims mobilize to unseat Sarkozy,” *The Washington Times*, April 19, 2012.

¹⁴⁷ Simon Rogers, “France election results 2012 listed: how did the French vote and where?” *The Guardian*, (May 2012), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/may/07/france-election-results-list?newsfeed=true#data> (acceded May 11, 2012).

their votes were significant in the failure of President Sarkozy. Based on the above results I argue that the 93% ratio of protest votes should send a clear signal to French policymakers that without a successful integration policy towards Muslims they cannot achieve their one of the most important goals, election victory.

3.5 Assimilation Policy: Evaluation

The French assimilation model of integration which prefers monoculturalism has failed, because migrants nowadays demand a culture of belonging to more than one culture.¹⁴⁸ As stated above, from the French perspective, integration means that people who come to France for permanent stay and become French. In other words, they are warmly welcomed to France if they want to become French; if they do not want to become French then they are not so warmly welcome.¹⁴⁹ In addition to this, as French President Nicolas Sarkozy stated, “If you come to France, you accept to melt into a single community, which is the national community, and if you do not want to accept that, you cannot be welcome in France.”¹⁵⁰

In order to evaluate the French assimilation policy, I will compare the French integration policy with the European Common Basic Principles on Integration of Third- Country Nationals in the European Union (see Appendix 3). As mentioned in chapter 1, according to Common Basic Principles of the European Commission, integration is a two way process of adaptation of both the host and migrant communities into the social, cultural and political life of the country. Integration is generally a positive societal concept which is based on a friendly relationship between a recipient county and migrants.

¹⁴⁸ Reitsma, “Migrant Policy and Muslim Integration in France and the Netherlands: Comparing Theory with Practice,”9.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.,8.

¹⁵⁰ Emmett Tyrrell, “Multiculturalism has failed,” *RFI*, <http://www.english.rfi.fr/france/20110211-sarkozy-tf1> (accessed May 8, 2012).

Different from the European Commission's approach, the French assimilation policy does not prefer a two way process or mutual adjustment, rather it favours a one way process by which migrants need to give up their cultural or social customs and traditions to assimilate into the French dominant culture.¹⁵¹ However, denying any form of cultural, linguistic and ethnic classification of migrants is contradictory to the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. According to article 22 of the Charter, "the EU shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity."¹⁵² To address the integration issues of migrants, "the European Commission includes amongst elements of successful integration the right to maintain his or her own cultural identity."¹⁵³

As mentioned before, one of the main goals of assimilation policy is to encourage migrants to become full members of the host society which is not distinguishable from the local population.¹⁵⁴ In other words, as the National French Party claims, "to be French, you have to deserve it."¹⁵⁵ This is based on a monocultural value system within a multinational society which is not an efficient policy. Reitsma argues that to be welcome in France, newcomers have to check their identity and need to take a new French identity.¹⁵⁶ However, as the European Commission's CBPs indicate, cultural diversity must be protected in all MSs as in the globalization period migrants want to belong to more than one culture.

The history of the French way of assimilating foreigners dates back to the 19th century. Although, since the 19th century assimilation policy has changed several times, the government

¹⁵¹ Dillender, "The Integration of African Muslim Minority: A Critique of French Philosophy and Policy," 35.

¹⁵² Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. (2000/C 364/01).

¹⁵³ Council of Europe, *Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the well-being of all in Pluralist Societies*, 79.

¹⁵⁴ International Organization for Migration, "Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region," 10.

¹⁵⁵ Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, (Boston: The President and Fellow of the Harvard College 1994), 138.

¹⁵⁶ Reitsma, "Migrant Policy and Muslim Integration in France and the Netherlands: Comparing Theory with Practice," 9.

uses this model of integration to integrate its foreigners into French society. As the IMO states, today integration of migrants requires modernism and multi- faceted migration policy systems.¹⁵⁷

In order to meet the criteria of successful integration, the policy needs to include the following two main conditions. First condition is pluralism and respecting diversity. The second condition is that all citizens must be involved in the integration process “to combat social and economic exclusion, marginalization, symbolic and territorial segregation and the structural and institutional discrimination experienced in schools, on the labor market, in housing and in access to the media and public life, etc.”¹⁵⁸

Based on the nature of assimilation policy, I argue that the French state’s assimilation policy may create negative effects on the integration of Muslim migrants. Moreover, the assimilation policy is mainly influenced by the state’s pressure rather than the common basic European principles of integration. Although only 32% of the total population supports the assimilation policy, the government uses this model to integrate migrants. As I stated in the second chapter, among MSs France has one of the highest degrees of expressed racism against foreigners and I argue that the officials and politicians statements against migrants affect the societal behavior, which can be one of the main “sources” for the local peoples’ negative stereotypes about migrants.

¹⁵⁷ International Organization for Migration, “Integration of Migrants,” 3.

¹⁵⁸ Council of Europe, *Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the well-being of all in Pluralist Societies*, 80.

Conclusion

The thesis analysed the integration problems of Maghreb migrants in France from the perspective of the French assimilation policy by analysing the central question of whether the French state policies have been able to guarantee a successful integration of the migrant communities to France. Although it is obvious that the interaction between the host country and migrant communities plays an essential role in the integration process, the influence of the state policy on the integration of migrants is much stronger than the behaviour and actions of the migrants themselves. As demonstrated in chapter three of the present work, a successful integration policy needs to imply a two way process, involving both the migrants and the host society. Employing the one-way approach, the assimilation policy does not seem to result in successful integration of migrants. Comparing the French integration policy with the recommendations set out in the European Common Basic Principles on Integration of Third-Country Nationals clearly shows the validity of this statement.

One of the major conclusions of my study is that integration policy of France is not sufficiently coherent with the common basic principles of European integration policy. Since the 1970s, many European countries have gradually replaced the policy of assimilation with a different integration model. Nevertheless, France still has the practice of assimilating migrants into the dominant culture despite serious warning signs, like the headscarf issue, indicating that the assimilation policy does not work satisfactorily towards Maghreb Muslim migrants in France. Comparison of the French and the European migration policy (CBP) has clearly shown the shortcomings of the French standpoint in this issue.

The failure of the hard line approach towards Muslim integration issues was also been demonstrated by the results of the 2012 Presidential elections. Recently however, the French state seems to recognise the failure of her integration policy. As President Sarkozy states: “we cannot keep accommodating as many people in our territory because our integration system has failed; many people are attracted by our welfare system which is one of the most generous in the world.”¹⁵⁹

Since integration is a two way process according to the Common Basic Principles of Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU, migrants should also bear responsibility for the integration problems. However, as this study focuses on the role of the host county in the integration issues, the thesis gives certain recommendations for the French state that could help reduce the tensions between the Maghreb migrants and the host state. First, France should stop denying the cultural and ethnic identity of migrants as it certainly results in resistance in migrants towards the host society. Requiring them to become fully loyal to French society and give up their own cultural and traditional values will cause serious difficulties in achieving successful integration results. Therefore, in order to achieve better migrant integration, the French state should acknowledge the desire of migrants that they wish to retain their cultural identity and the state should also accept the presence of cultural diversity instead of monoculturalism.

Second, to reduce the tensions between the local residents and migrant communities the French state should try to promote the interaction of Muslim migrants and local population that would help to gradually build a constructive relationship between them based on mutual respect

¹⁵⁹ Hüseyin Koyuncu, “French Elections: Preview of May 6 Runoff,” The Centre for Voting and Democracy (2012):1.

and tolerance. As an example the government, through local newspapers and media, could provide residents with more information about the contribution of Maghrebians to the French domestic economic and social development.

Third, the government should prevent discrimination of Muslim migrants in the labour market and promote equal rights and access for them to participate in the economic life of the country. Fourth, the French state should very strongly step up against racism. As Figure 2 shows, the degree of expressed racism in France is much higher than in many MSs. Unless the French state is determined to suppress anti-Islamic sentiments among its citizens all her efforts for a better integration of the Maghreb migrants are bound to fail.

Although this thesis analyzes the integration problems of Maghreb migrants only, it would be also important to compare the situation of Maghreb migrants with other, non-Muslim migrant groups in France. A comparative study would put the French assimilation policy in a broader perspective and could help to understand how the same policy affects the integration of different migrant communities within the same state. On the basis of this approach, it is worthwhile to study this type of research in the future.

Appendix 1

France: Constitutional and Legislative Measures to Combat Discrimination

	1	Constitutional Provisions
	2	Anti-Discrimination Body
	3	Labour Legislation to Combat Discriminatory Employment Practices
	4	Penal/Civil Code to Combat Xenophobic or Racist Practices
FRANCE	1	Article 2 of the French Constitution states that “France is a Republic, indivisible, secular, democratic and social. It shall ensure the quality of all citizens before the law, without distinction on the basis of origin, race or religion.” In addition, the preamble of the Constitution specifies that no- one shall be mistreated in their work on ground of their origin, opinion or belief
	2	The function if the High Council of Integration is to examine the conditions of the integration of aliens resident in France and to respond to any relevant question submitted by the Prime Minister; develop policies towards integration; and to gather information and statistics on immigration and integration
	3	The French Labour Code, which was amended in 2002, includes provisions preventing discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin. No person may be discriminated against on the grounds of, i.e., their origin or race, nationality or ethnic group in any aspect of his/her working life. If the cases can be supported with sufficient evidence, the burden of the proof is shifted to the employer
	4	Article 224-1 ff. Of the Penal Code defines the type of discrimination subject to punishment. The discrimination must be based on origin, membership in an ethnic group or nationality, race or religion and must produce some effects such as refusal of service, employment or others indicated in the legal text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - refusing to supply to product or service; - impeding the normal exercise of an economic activity - refusing to employ, or disciplining or dismissing a person; - subjecting an offer of employment to a condition based one of the discriminating elements

Source: International Organization for Migration, Migrants from the Maghreb and Mashreq Countries. A Comparison of Experiences in Western Europe and the Gulf Region, Research and Publications Division, July 2002

Appendix 2

The Act on Immigration Control and the Act on Conditions on Entry and Residence of Foreigners in France (July 1993)

- A foreign spouse of a French citizen will not become eligible for a residence permit until after one year of proven conjugal life and even then would not be automatically protected from expulsion;
- Children of immigrants must choose to be French only after the age of 16. They are not automatically citizens even if they are born in France;
- Foreigners living in France illegally can marry, but they are not automatically eligible for a residence permit.
- Immigrant workers cannot bring family members for at least two years and then only after proof of housing and sufficient finances. Students cannot bring anyone at all;
- Legal immigrants deemed a threat to public order can be deported.
- Legal immigrants whose papers are not in order will not receive any health insurance coverage.
- Police are permitted to make identity checks, even if no suspicious behaviour is observed.

Source: Sarah Verbosky, Immigration in France: The Economics and Politics of a Sensitive Issue. 2000

Appendix 3

The Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union.
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public-policy formation and implementation.

11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.

Source: European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Common Agenda for Integration Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union.

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