

Potsdamer Beiträge zur Sozialforschung

Nr. 21, August 2004

Migrants in Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom: Patterns of Assimilation and Welfare

Silke Hans

Herausgeber: Prof. Dr. Dieter Holtmann

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Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät

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1. Introduction

From their beginnings to the present, modern Western societies have been shaped by migration to and from other countries. Previously, the idea was that newly arrived immigrants would either soon leave or else mingle with the native-born population and adopt their way of life, soon making them undistinguishable from other social groups. This process of assimilation was supposed to proceed in a linear way: The more time someone has spent in the host society, the more assimilated she would be. It was assumed that immigrants would assimilate to the middle classes, implying an improvement in their socio-economic position. In recent years, however, this pattern proved no longer to be true. In the case of the United States, socio-economic improvement did not happen for immigrants who arrived after 1965. An alternative theory proposes a different pattern, so-called segmented assimilation. According to this theory, assimilation includes multiple dimensions - immigrants do not always assimilate to the middle classes, but there are different paths, including assimilation to the lower classes, and adherence to the values and structures of the minority community.

The latter path is of crucial scientific and political interest. In recent years, debates have been going on in European countries not only about the desirability of migration itself, but also about whether or not integration of all immigrants to the respective host society should be aimed at. These debates can be brought down to a distinction between promoters of cultural adaptation of immigrants and promoters of multiculturalism and a pluralized society. But which path – adaptation or multiculturalism – is to be preferred? Is there scientific support for any of the two approaches? So far, researchers have found no sound evidence that assimilation and integration to the host society *generally* promote welfare and participation. On the contrary, in the United States, some immigrant groups scored better on indicators such as income, education, health, and crime rates when they did *not* assimilate to their social surroundings.¹ Assimilation can have both favorable and detrimental effects on the immigrants themselves and the host society. The pattern of integration and the consequences of assimilation depend on a variety of factors, such as ethnicity and the economic situation.

Significant insights can be gained from an analysis of the way that immigrants do or do not assimilate to a society. The aim of this paper is to show the effects of the social structure, immigration policies, and the different trajectories of assimilation on the welfare and social participation of immigrants. The main objective is to see if assimilation is a sufficient and / or necessary condition for welfare and participation. Specifically, using

¹ See, for instance Portes / Zhou 1993 and Rumbaut 1999.

individual and context data from three countries selected based on a most dissimilar cases design – Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom - the following thesis will be evaluated:

The more opportunities for integration and assimilation societies provide and the more assimilated immigrants are, the better their chances for participation and welfare.

Part two addresses relevant theoretical aspects of migration and assimilation. Part three presents the concept of social inequality and participation used to assess the situation of migrants. After an explanation of the research design (4), a closer look is taken at the welfare and migration regimes of the countries chosen (5). In the empirical analyses of part six, I compare migrants and the native population with respect to social participation and welfare, I analyze path(s) of assimilation of immigrant groups, and the effects of assimilation on participation and welfare. Part seven evaluates the empirical results in terms of the theories presented and part eight concludes.

2. Migration and Assimilation – Theoretical Approaches

2.1 Meaning and Definition of the Terms Migration and Migrant

Literally, the term “to migrate” means to move or to travel and indicates a change of geographic position. Usually, this change is assumed to be permanent. A short-term visit to another country does not qualify as “migration”, and neither does someone who commutes to work every day qualify as a migrant. The phenomenon of migration has multiple causes and consequences, can be forced or voluntary and can take various forms. Not only the permanency of the change or movement is an issue, but the direction of the movement itself. Thus, a change of residence from one end of the same street to the other is not considered migration, whereas a movement to another country is. The criterion given by Han (2000: 7 ff.) is that for any movement to be considered “migration”, there has to be a change of social or political entity, which gives the term a more sociological meaning as opposed to a purely demographic one. Again, the entity might be a different country, region, or even part of the city, depending on the level of analysis. The three components – change (of residence), permanence, and difference – are combined in a definition of migration given by Treibel (2003: 21), according to which “*migration is a movement of single persons or groups of people to another society or another region that is permanent or becoming permanent.*”²

For the purpose of this study, any person will be considered a migrant *who or whose*

² Translation by the author of this thesis.

ancestors moved to, permanently live in, or spend the most part of their (working) lives in a society different from their own. More specifically, the focus is on international migration, requiring a movement from a foreign country to a host society. Those who were born abroad and therefore “migrated” themselves are considered first-generation migrants, whereas those only whose parents were born abroad constitute the second generation.

2.2 Milton M. Gordon – Sub Processes of Assimilation

Milton M. Gordon, in his seminal contribution to the sociology of migration in the United States titled “Assimilation in American Life” (Gordon 1964), addresses the process of assimilation of a minority group to a majority culture. Gordon explicitly assumes the dominance of a core culture constituted by a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority to which different ethnic groups assimilate, although he concedes that integration is a mutual process in which both minority groups and the majority culture are involved (Gordon 1964: 68 ff., 72).

Gordon's major contribution in this respect is the elaboration and distinction of seven different sub processes of assimilation: cultural or behavioral assimilation (also referred to by the term acculturation) to the host society, structural assimilation (the entrance into institutions of the host society), intermarriage (also labelled amalgamation), identificational assimilation with the host society, the absence of prejudice, the absence of discrimination, and the absence of value and power conflict (Gordon 1964: 70 ff.). Some of these processes, such as acculturation, apply to the minority groups only, whereas others require contributions from the society at large. The major distinction for any analysis of integration and assimilation processes is between *cultural or behavioral assimilation*, which means more than the acquisition of a common language, dress, and food, but also includes values, attitudes and common memories and sentiments, and *structural assimilation*, the large-scale entrance of immigrants into groups and institutions of the host society on the primary-group level.

The outcome of Gordon's sub processes of assimilation is not predetermined. Thus, acculturation does not necessarily entail structural assimilation (whereas the reverse is true in most cases). Moreover, although acculturation is usually the first process to occur, the sequence is not always the same and, more often than not, stops before all sub processes have been completed. For instance, it is unlikely that acculturation only will lead to non-prejudiced attitudes and non-discriminatory behavior. On the other hand, whenever a large number of immigrant or minority group members have managed to enter social networks and institutions of the host culture, such as clubs and cliques, the other types of assimilation are very likely to follow. For example, primary-group contact between the immigrant and the majority group is

crucial for intermarriage. In a way, structural assimilation opens the door to complete assimilation to the host society. Once the majority culture has opened all of its institutions to minority groups, all other stages of assimilation will naturally follow. As structural assimilation is a prerequisite for other processes, such as intermarriage and non-discriminatory behavior on the side of the host culture, Gordon claims that it is the most important process and calls it “the keystone of the arch of assimilation” (Gordon 1964: 81).

However, no structural assimilation is possible without changes in the majority culture itself. The reason is that although migrants and minority groups might be willing to assimilate to the host society, the majority culture opposes complete integration. Yet Gordon fails to mention how minorities can achieve structural assimilation when prejudice and discrimination are in the way - he does not identify the variables that make structural assimilation likely. A number of other questions are never addressed. Are some institutions harder to enter or more crucial than others? Do certain positions within an institution have to be reached? Does a strong network of social relations within the minority prevent them from forming relations with the majority group? Why do behavioral, identificational and civic assimilation occur even though there is no acceptance of immigrants in society? Despite these shortcomings, Gordon’s model provides a superb framework for the analysis of assimilation processes

Aside from his elaboration of different components of assimilation, a Gordon's major contribution is the link he builds between ethnicity and class. Society, according to Gordon, consists of different ethnic sub societies. These do not only have their own social structures and ethnic identities, but constitute status groups within a larger framework of social classes in a vertically stratified society (Gordon 1964: 37 ff.). Thus, 15 years before discussions about horizontal stratifications of society and the persistence of vertical inequalities even started, Gordon made a connection between the two. This connection will be crucial for the generation of hypotheses and the empirical analysis of this study, where ethnicity and assimilation status are seen to structure the social participation of migrants.

2.3 Hartmut Esser - Acculturation, Integration, and Assimilation

For Hartmut Esser, the process of re-socialisation and re-organisation that migrants have to pass through to achieve their individual goals in a new social system consists of three main parts that take place in the following sequence: acculturation, integration, and assimilation (Esser 1980, cited in Han 2000: 58).³

³ Esser calls the entire process of acculturation, integration, and assimilation “Eingliederung”, which is synonymous to the word “integration” and for which there is no other English equivalent.

The cognitive process of *acculturation* is similar to what Milton Gordon understands by cultural / behavioral assimilation. *Integration* is a state of equilibrium in various dimensions. Generally, the term integration denotes a the cohesion of integral parts of a systemic entity, whatever this entity is, e.g. a personal or social system, whereas its opposite, segregation, denotes the co-existence of unrelated parts (Esser 2001: 2ff.). Personal integration refers to psychological stability and the absence of conflicting value orientations. Social integration, on the other hand, refers to social interactions with members of the majority culture and / or host society. Lastly, systemic integration is a balance of different social groups with the macro system of society. This kind of integration takes places through economic markets and the media, for example (Esser 2001: 7 f.). Overall, although some dimensions of the process of integration seem similar to Esser`s components of assimilation, integration refers more to the functions of society, whereas assimilation refers to a state to be achieved by the minority groups (Esser 2001: 18).

Assimilation, according to Esser, is a “state of similarity” of the migrants to the host society (Esser 1980, cited in Han 2000: 58ff.) and has absolute and relative characteristics. On the absolute dimension, a cognitive and an identificational or value dimension can be distinguished. The first refers to the accumulation of knowledge and skills required by the host society, whereas the latter refers to the appreciation of the same goals and values as those of the majority culture, the identification of an individual with a collective entity (Esser 2001: 12). Language proficiency is an example of cognitive assimilation and the identification with the host society as one's nationality is an example of identificational assimilation. These are similar to Gordon's cognitive and identificational assimilation, although Gordon stresses the process of assimilation, whereas Esser understands assimilation as a *state* of similarity – Gordon's *process* of assimilation accomplished. On the relational component of assimilation, Esser distinguishes between an interactive dimension referring to social assimilation and an institutional, or structural dimension similar to Gordon's concept of structural assimilation.

If and how members of minority groups can achieve the different forms of assimilation not only depends on their individual capabilities, motivations, and resources, but also on external, or context effects, such as opportunities, barriers and alternatives. Therefore, Esser views “Eingliederung”, or integration as a sequential, but segmented process with an uncertain outcome, depending on the social and institutional context. In this his concept is equal to Gordon's. However, Esser, more than Gordon, specifies the impact of the social context (Esser 2001: 22ff and Esser / Friedrichs 1990: 16 ff.).

2.4 The Concept of Integration and Assimilation

For the purpose of this study, I use a combination of the approaches presented above. I go along with Esser's definition of integration as the cohesion of integral parts of a system. Applied to migrants and minority groups, this definition leaves open the options of a blending of cultures or of a culturally pluralistic society with a co-existence of different, but essential subcultures. In a functionalist terminology, different parts may fulfil different functions and contribute to the cohesion of the system not in spite, but because of their difference. The question "melting pot versus salad bowl" is an empirical rather than a theoretical question.

Therefore, assimilation is assumed with Gordon to be a process of two different cultures becoming, rather than a state of being, more similar. This does not necessarily mean that only minorities become more similar to the majority culture, but assimilation is assumed to be mutual. Furthermore, assimilation is not a priori supposed to be a condition for an integrated social system. With Gordon and Esser, the main distinction is made between cultural assimilation, which has a cognitive and an identificational component, and structural assimilation involving social interactions and the interpenetration of institutions of the host society. The reactions of the majority culture can be captured with Gordon's concepts of the absence of prejudice and discrimination and will be called reciprocal assimilation.

In addition to integration and assimilation, Esser's individualist approach, which assumes immigrants to be rational actors restrained by opportunity structures, and Gordon's connection between ethnicity and class will be used to analyse the determinants of the socio-economic position of migrants. Thus, each of the theories introduced above has something to contribute to the analysis of welfare and social participation of migrants.

2.5 Straight-line Assimilation and its Implications

Theories that adhere to the approach of straight-line assimilation⁴ as do Warner / Srole (1945) and Park (1950), cling to the notion that the more time individual migrants or a minority group has spent in a host culture, the more assimilated they will be in every respect and regardless of their initial situation (Alba / Nee 1999: 140f.; Rumbaut 1999: 187f.). Successive generations face different stages of assimilation and the problems that go along with it, but ultimately, they will assimilate to the majority, middle-class, culture and experience the improvement in socio-economic position that goes along with it. This approach

⁴ The term has been brought into the discussion by Herbert J. Gans and later been modified by him to a concept of "bumpy -line assimilation" (Alba and Nee 1999: 140f.).

predicts that the second generation of migrants will be better assimilated than the first generation, the third will be better assimilated than the second, and so on.

This conception can be criticized on many grounds. First, it assumes the existence of a preferable, uncontested, and heterogeneous majority culture. Secondly, it neglects the possibility of a return of ethnic or other orientations as time passes. Thirdly, straight-line theories described the situation of immigrants (especially in the US) before the 1960ies, when the pattern of migration was different from what it is now. Fourthly, the approach has been criticized on empirical grounds because the pattern of assimilation it predicts was not found to be true for immigrants who arrived in the US after 1965 (Gans 1992).

2.6 Segmented Assimilation and its Implications

As a reaction to the theoretical and empirical shortcomings of the straight-line approach, Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) introduce the new concept of segmented assimilation. According to this concept, there is no one single linear path of assimilation. Rather, different groups of migrants follow different trajectories, depending on a variety of contextual factors. In their empirical analysis of adaptation processes of children of post-1965 immigrants to the US, Portes and Zhou find three such trajectories: Some groups assimilate to the white middle class and thus experience upward social mobility, others assimilate to the non-white underclass, a path which bears the risk of permanent poverty, while still others adhere to the values of their minority community while enjoying economic success (Portes / Zhou 1993: 82). Although previously, assimilation to the majority culture had been considered essential, adhering to a common cultural memory of a minority group creates social capital and avoids situations of disorientation and anomy and can therefore contribute to socioeconomic success (Portes 1995b: 249, 256f., Fernández Kelly/Schauffler 1996: 32ff.).

These findings contradict classical straight-line approaches in two main points: First, there is no guarantee that the assimilation process will ever be complete after a certain time has passed, and second, assimilation is not necessarily related to socioeconomic attainment. This again has two implications: The second and third generation of immigrants are not necessarily better off than the first; and there is no reason to assume that assimilation per se is beneficial for an integrated social system. In fact, in present societies, assimilation is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for integration on the macro level and for socioeconomic improvement on the individual level.

The theory of segmented assimilation has been tested in countless empirical studies, both qualitative and quantitative. The overwhelming part of these has found evidence in favor

of segmented assimilation patterns. In a review of empirical studies comparing immigrants with U.S. citizens, Rumbaut (1999) concludes that in fact being born in the US and / or spending more time there has unfavorable effects in fields such as health and education. More emphasis needs to be placed on the specific historical, political, and economic contexts of migration to completely understand processes of assimilation. While segmented assimilation has been widely discussed and tested in the US for more than a decade, the concept has only recently found its way into European sociology of migration. This paper, in addition to contributing to the understanding of the participation of migrants, is an attempt to find empirical support to the concept of segmented assimilation in a European context.

3. Social Inequality and Welfare – Theoretical Approaches

3.1 Dimensions of Inequality

Inequality in terms of welfare and participation has been a characteristic of all societies. The reasons for which such inequalities are considered legitimate have changed, however, just as the relevant dimensions, e.g. vertical inequality versus horizontal inequality based on ascriptive criteria like race, objective versus subjective inequality, carry different weight in different societies. Moreover, it is important to distinguish between actual inequalities and mere differentiations between groups of people. Following the definition of Kreckel (1997: 16ff.), social inequality means that persons' life chances, their access to social positions and to social goods generally defined as desirable are restricted due to differences between them. Therefore, ethnic groups do not constitute a category of social inequality per se, but only if people have different opportunities due to their particular ethnicity.

In order to capture all relevant dimensions of inequality, I use a classification based on a modified version of Kreckel's (1997) approach and distinguish between three components of inequality: Material conditions of welfare, political participation, and social participation. For each of these, both objective and subjective dimensions are taken into account. For instance, in the case of income, this means that both the actual income of a person and her personal satisfaction with it are considered. Of course, the three dimensions are not unrelated to each other. For instance, as Geißler (1996: 328ff.) shows, the occupational situation is highly associated with political participation and representation. Also social and political participation condition each other and the conditions of material welfare. For instance, solidarism (as opposed to social exclusion) is a mechanism requiring social interactions and participation and may well result in political participation and influence the occupational

structure (Parkin 1982). The following table 3.1 summarizes my classification of social inequality and some of its components.

Table 3.1: Dimensions of Social Inequality, their Preconditions and Indicators

Material Welfare	Political Participation	Social Participation
Education	Trust in political system	Trust in people
Income	Active participation in elections	Marital status
Occupation, employment	Passive participation in elections	Children
Health	Legal political protest	Structure of peer group
Safety	Illegal protest	Interaction with friends
Housing	Economic boycotts	Membership in associations

3.2 Welfare Regimes and Social Inequality

Modern welfare states are major determinants of the degree of social inequality. They differ in the amount of money they spend on social security, where the money comes from, how and to whom it is distributed. The most widely known and discussed classification of welfare states according to these last criteria is that of Esping-Andersen (1990). He differentiates between three types of welfare regimes according to certain configurations of institutional structure associated with a certain type of political ideology. In Esping-Andersen's classification, the three ideal types of welfare regime are the liberal, the conservative, and the social democratic welfare state. The conservative welfare state is characterized by a high degree of corporatism and etatism, whereas the social-democratic welfare state provides universal and egalitarian social transfers. Liberal welfare regimes, on the other hand, have private systems of pensions and health care. As many studies have shown, social inequality depends not only on the total amount of state spending on social security, but also on the kind of welfare regime. Thus, liberal welfare states are supposed to have the highest, and social-democratic welfare states the lowest degree of inequality.

3.3 Migration, Assimilation and Inequality

Social inequality is a crucial aspect in the analysis of migration and assimilation processes. One of the first to theorize the relationship between migration-related issues and social inequality was Thomas H. Marshall. His concept of the term citizenship includes general civil rights (e.g. equality before the law), political participation rights, and social rights like social security benefits. As these, especially the latter, are usually not accorded to non-citizens, citizenship is a major determinant of social inequality and exclusion (Gerhard 2001: 66ff.). Citizenship laws structure the relationship between migration and inequality.

According to Hoffmann-Nowotny (1970, 1973), inequality in terms of unequal distribution of legitimate access to resources and power in a country leads to structural tensions and might therefore be a cause of migration. Naturally, this is true for inequalities between nations as well. Poverty is thus a motive of migrants to seek their fortune in other, wealthier countries. Moreover, migrants are not only treated differently in the host society according to their social background – nation of origin, education, material wealth, ethnic group, religion – but sometimes they do not even get that far. Many countries admit only certain groups of migrants. The admission process is an issue of social inequality as well.

However, this paper is mainly concerned with the outcome of migration processes, that is, integration and assimilation. Migration and welfare policies to a large part determine the degree to which migrants have the same life chances as the native population. Therefore, denial of naturalization and citizenship will hinder migrants from certain forms of political participation, such as voting in national elections. The permissiveness of the host society in terms of work permits will determine whether or not migrants can seek regular employment and thus support themselves economically.⁵ The same is true for migrants' access to social benefits and transfer payments, such as old-age pensions and health insurance. Therefore, the kind of welfare and migration regime matters as well.

All of the points mentioned above concern the vertical component of social inequality. What about the horizontal dimension? Horizontal inequalities are inequalities based upon ascriptive criteria such as gender, race, or aristocratic birth, which have no relation whatsoever to the personal achievement of a person. The relationship between horizontal social inequality and migration is quite simple and straightforward: Migrant versus native / citizen status constitutes a dimension of horizontal inequality as well, as migrants are accorded different social and political rights than citizens simply because of their nationality. However, some other horizontal components affect migrants as well. For instance, certain groups of migrants are discriminated against because of their race or ethnic group. The same applies to religious denomination, which is quite a controversial issue today and results in systematic structural discrimination. For instance, in Germany public service employees such as teachers are not allowed to wear or display certain religious symbols in their workplace⁶ if they are Muslims, whereas the displaying of Christian symbols is allowed. Moreover, these components of horizontal inequality directly related to the migrant status of a person cross-cut

⁵ Of course, there is also the possibility of illegal employment. However, wages and benefits are much lower and the employment situation much more insecure, even if the danger of legal prosecution is disregarded. Therefore, the degree to which certain groups of migrants are employed illegally is a component of social inequality as well.

⁶ The same applies to France. However, the French situation is not as discriminatory as the German one as due to the laiciest nature all religious symbols – regardless of denomination – are forbidden.

with other horizontal dimensions, such as gender, resulting in mutually reinforcing effects of different components of inequality.

However, the horizontal dimension not only refers to ascriptive criteria, but also to different goals and values that people strive for in their lives. In the definition of inequality given above, the term “generally defined as desirable” appears, assuming that there is general consensus on values and goals to pursue. Usually, value orientations are developed during the socialization process quite early in life. Therefore, it is easily conceivable that migrants – depending on their country of origin and the age of arrival – have value orientations that differ from that of the majority population.⁷ This again influences social inequality in two respects. First, the host society might oppose any value orientations that differ from the majority culture and discriminate against people adhering to different values, leading to less participation and welfare chances for migrants. Secondly, the reverse is possible as well – maybe immigrants will perform better in terms of socioeconomic attainment and other dimensions of inequality precisely due to different value orientations. Sometimes, as Portes / Zhou (1993) and others have argued as well, adherence to traditional values and the minority culture as opposed to assimilation to the majority can in fact be beneficial to migrants. Also, value orientations structure the relationship between the objective and the subjective component of inequality. Therefore, due to less expectations, migrants might subjectively feel less deprived of certain resources than they objectively are. These different possible relationships between inequality and migration will guide the generation of hypotheses for the empirical analysis.

4. Research Design

4.1 Research Question and General Proceeding

The research question of this thesis is contained in the following thesis statement:

Thesis: The chances for social and political participation and for socio-economic success are greater the more opportunities and the less restrictions for integration and assimilation host societies provide and the more assimilated individual immigrants actually are.

The topic of this thesis paper is twofold: First, its aim is to assess the socioeconomic

⁷ This is not to assume that the majority population is completely heterogeneous in terms of value orientations. However, as the debates on a German “core culture” and on Christianity as a common European heritage (Leggewie 2000: 85) have shown, the assumption of a culture common to all, though abstract and not empirically verifiable, is essential in the debate on the assimilation and integration of migrants.

situation of migrants and their chances for participation in European societies and to name individual and contextual factors that structure these chances. The second aim is to test whether assimilation is a straight-line, or at least progressive, process or a segmented one. To empirically test the thesis presented above, I proceed as follows:

First, I compare different generations of migrants in three European countries to the native population on a variety of indicators of socioeconomic performance, political and social participation. This makes possible a general assessment of the situation of migrants and assimilation trajectories on a macro level. Next, to test the assimilation trajectories individually, migrants with different degrees of assimilation are compared with respect to their socioeconomic performance and participation. Lastly, the opportunity and restriction structures of societies are measured in terms of migration and welfare policies and individual attitudes towards migrants and their impact is tested in an aggregate analysis.

4.2 Sample and Data Base

For the thesis presented above to be tested systematically, comparative individual data is required. A new international project of data collection called European Social Survey (ESS) allows for the combination of individual sociodemographic and attitudinal data on immigration with institutional data in different European countries. Fortunately and unlike most other surveys, the ESS⁸ contains questions not only on the citizenship of a particular person, but also on her place of birth, on the place of birth of her parents, and on the time she spent in the respective country. This makes it possible to distinguish between natives and different generations of migrants. Moreover, the data set contains items on ethnicity, discrimination, and measures of both objective and subjective dimensions of social inequality. Therefore, the ESS practically lends itself to the proposed analysis.⁹

However, as with any data set, some methodological problems arise with the use of the ESS. The main methodological concern is that due to the sampling procedure, only people living in private households are included in the sample, which excludes people living in hospitals, boarding schools, and prisons, for instance, and adds a certain bias to the sample. This is problematic for the analysis of migrants, because it can be assumed that more than a negligible part of the immigrant population is not eligible to be drawn to the sample because

⁸ For further information, see <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org>.

⁹ Of course, panel data would be the ideal basis for such an analysis, because strictly speaking, cross-sectional data does not really contain information about long-term processes, at least not about those applying to an individual person during her course of life. However, no such internationally comparative data on migrants is available. In the trade-off between analyses of individuals and cross-national comparability, I opted for the latter.

they do not live in private households, because they have no permanent address, or for other reasons. This applies to an even greater degree to those who reside in a country illegally. Migrants, especially illegal immigrants, will be heavily underrepresented in the sample. This has to be taken into account in the interpretation of all empirical results.

As the focus is on the assessment of the performance of individual migrants due to their migration and assimilation status and on the impact on migration and welfare policies, only a limited number of countries should be included in the data set. Else, the danger increases that the results of the analysis are confounded by country-specific factors, such as the GNP or the fact that until recent years, migration was not possible to Eastern European countries. On the other hand, if the impact of migration and welfare policies is to be analyzed, the selection of cases should ensure variation of these variables. The ideal selection of cases is a small number of countries with a maximum difference in migration and welfare policies.

Taking this into consideration, the selection of countries for the analysis was done in a two-stage process. First, only those countries were considered that had a history of migration before 1990, which manifested itself in a sufficient number of migrants in the sample¹⁰. This step eliminated the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. Of the remaining countries, three were chosen according to their variation on two key explanatory variables: welfare and migration policies. According King et al. (1994: 137, 140ff.), selection of cases on explanatory variables creates the least bias and poses no problems for statistical inference. With maximum variation on the explanatory variable, effects on the dependent variable(s) can easily be estimated. Non-context, individual-level effects can still be estimated by regarding the three different national sub samples individually.

Table 4.1: Classification of Countries according to Esping-Andersen`s Welfare Regimes¹¹

Conservative	Liberal	Social-Democratic
Austria	Switzerland	Netherlands
Belgium	United Kingdom	Norway
Germany (Ireland)		Sweden

The basis for the selection of countries according to their welfare and migration policies is Esping-Andersen`s (1990) classification of countries into three welfare regimes described in chapter 3 above. Table 4.1 above shows how the countries eligible for the

¹⁰ The minimum number of people in the national sample not born in the respective country is set at 100.

¹¹ Greece, Israel and Luxembourg were not included in Esping-Andersen`s analysis. The classification of Ireland is ambivalent, as it scores low on all types of welfare regimes.

analysis are classified according to Esping-Andersen. One country from each category is selected, while it has to be ensured that the countries differ with respect to their migration policies, but not in other aspects. As Switzerland and Norway are the only countries in question that are not members of the EU – which has consequences for the analysis of citizenship and voting rights – and as the classification of three countries is missing or unclear, these countries will be excluded from the analysis. From the category of liberal welfare regimes, only the UK remains. As migration policies are to a large part determined by the migration history of a country, and both the UK and the Netherlands have a colonial history that still shapes their immigration pattern and migration policies, Sweden, rather than the Netherlands, is selected to represent the social-democratic welfare regimes. Of the remaining three conservative welfare states, Belgium, which is constituted by the regions of Flanders and Wallonia, is a culturally and linguistically pluralistic society even when migration effects are not taken into account. This might disturb results when Belgium is compared to the more homogeneous countries Sweden and the UK. Therefore, the choice is between Austria and Germany. As there are some more cases of non-citizens and foreign-born people in the German subset, Germany is selected as the third case for the empirical analysis. An overview of the relevant migration and welfare policies in the three countries is given in chapter 5 below.

4.3 Operationalisation and Indicators

Only three items in the survey are required to distinguish between the *native population and migrants*: the place of birth of a person, the place of birth of her father and her mother's place of birth. Anyone who was born abroad herself and whose parents are born abroad is considered a first-generation immigrant. Likewise, anyone whose parents were born abroad, but who herself was not, is considered second-generation. Those with native-born parents constitute the native population.

Before appropriate indicators are found, a specification of the concept of *assimilation* is needed. I distinguish between a structural component regarding the institutional penetration, and a cultural component referring to cognitive and identificational issues. Reciprocal assimilation is found in the reaction of the majority culture (in terms of discrimination).

Structural assimilation is measured using three indicators: citizenship, EU membership, and membership or other forms of participation in social organizations¹². The

¹² These include sports clubs, cultural organisations, trade unions, business, consumer, humanitarian, teachers' and science, environmental, and other voluntary organisations, churches, political parties and other social clubs.

reason for the choice of the latter is obvious – it is part of Esser`s concept of social integration and Gordon`s structural assimilation. EU membership and citizenship are important because they determine to a large degree which social institutions are open to migrants. For instance, the access to the labor market, voting rights, and marriage, to name but a few, depend on whether someone is citizen of a EU member country.

The *cognitive aspect of cultural assimilation* refers to the knowledge of norms and customs of the host society and is to a large part determined by language proficiency. Although no question about actual language proficiency is included in the data set, people are asked about the language that is spoken most frequently in their private homes, and the language that is the second choice.¹³ Out of these items, a new index was constructed. This index takes the value 1 if a language of the host country is the one most frequently spoken at home and no foreign language is spoken as a second language. People who speak a language of the host country most frequently, and a foreign language in addition, are attributed the value 2, if the reverse is true, the value 3. Those who do not speak a language of the host country in their private homes at all get the value 4. This is no direct measure of language *proficiency*, but a good indicator of language *assimilation*, which is even better. It can be safely assumed that people who are assimilated with respect to the language (that is, who speak that language at home) will be proficient in it, while the reverse is not necessarily true.

The *identificational aspect of cultural assimilation* is much harder to measure, as it depends both on self-definitions and value orientations according to Esser`s concept. Only one indicator is used: religious denomination.¹⁴ This is quite controversial because it is easily conceivable that identification with a certain society is possible regardless of the denomination. Also, religious denomination might be considered a component of cognitive or structural rather than identificational assimilation. However, nobody will deny that religion is a major aspect for self-definition and value orientations. Moreover, religion is a major part of most cultures. Those who do not adhere to the majority religion may be faced with a variety of problems. Therefore identificational assimilation is measured dichotomously according to

Out of these, a new variable for membership in social institutions was calculated. This variable has the value 0 for all persons who are members in none of the organisations mentioned, 1 for all who are members of one, 2 for those who are members of two, 3 for those who are members of three, and four for those who are members of four or more organisations. This ensures that each category is populated by between 15 and 25 per cent of all cases – cases of people belonging to five or more clubs occur only rarely.

¹³ These were recoded into dichotomous variables with the categories “language of the host country” and “foreign language.” In the case of the second language spoken at home, the category “none” is possible as well.

¹⁴ In exploratory analyses of the value orientation items contained in the data set, migrants were found not to diverge much from the native population in terms of value orientations. It seems that most of them do share the same goals and values – although the host society itself is, naturally, by no means a heterogeneous entity, but very divergent in terms of value orientations. This is an issue neglected by Esser. Therefore, no central goals or values could be found on which to base a distinction of migrants in terms of identificational assimilation.

whether someone has a religious denomination different from that of the majority.¹⁵

The last component of assimilation, *reciprocity*, is based on the notion that a migrant is assimilated when she perceives herself to be so, feeling close to and – most important - accepted by the majority culture and feeling that her aspirations are considered legitimate. This concept of reciprocal assimilation is measured by items that ask whether or not someone feels discriminated due to their nationality, language, religion, race, or ethnicity in addition to a variable asking whether someone is member of a minority ethnic group.

The overall measure of assimilation is an unweighted additive index consisting of all indicators mentioned above, ranging in theory from 0 to 16 and empirically, from 0 to 14. The specific indicators are not weighted because there is no a priori reason to determine how much weight should be given to each specific indicator. Of course four or five point indices, such as the language assimilation and membership in social clubs carry more weight than the dichotomous variables, but this way it is still ensured that each of the different components of assimilation – structural, cultural, and reciprocal – carry about the same weight.

Socioeconomic performance is often measured using an additive index of income, education, and occupational prestige. In this analysis, conditions of economic and material welfare will be considered separately. These include objective and subjective dimensions of the following components: income, employment, education, health, and personal safety.

The amount of the personal *income* of a person is measured in twelve categories and also controlled for the number of people living in a household. In addition, the main source of income, which might be income from employment, social benefits etc., and the subjective satisfaction with personal income (measured on a four-point ordinal scale) and the state of the national economy (measured on an eleven-point scale) are considered.

The *educational attainment* of a person is measured using two variables: First, the years of full-time education completed, and second, the highest level of education measured in seven stages from “not completed primary education” to “second stage of tertiary education”. The latter variable is used to measure the level of education of a respondent’s parents as well. Comparing the level of education of the respondent and that of her parents indicates inter-generational downward or upward mobility. On the subjective dimension, respondents were asked for their satisfaction with the state of education in the country.

The measurement of a person’s *employment situation* is more complex. First, the employment situation in terms of employment and self-employment (or no paid employment) is considered. The presence of a trade union at the workplace and the kind of employment

¹⁵ That is to say, Protestantism in the UK and Sweden and Protestantism and Roman Catholicism in Germany.

contract (limited or unlimited) are indicators of the degree to which employees are taken advantage of. Authority relations are measured using five variables that each measure the influence of an individual on her personal employment situation on an eleven-point scale: flexibility in working hours, influence on daily organization of work, on the job environment, on the direction of work and on the changing of work tasks. As all five variables measure the same construct¹⁶ – the influence of an individual on her workplace – they are combined to an unweighted additive index ranging from 0 to 10. Cronbach's Alpha for this scale is 0.87, indicating that the items correlate highly with each other and the scale. The subjective dimension of the employment situation is measured on an eleven-point scale of personal satisfaction with the situation at the workplace. Also, respondents are asked to assess their chances to get the same or a better job with another employer or to start their own business.

Respondent's long-term state of *health* is measured by asking whether they are hampered in their daily activities by health problems or disabilities. The answering categories are "a lot", "to some extent" and "no". Like the question of personal safety, this item might contain a subjective dimension as well, as individuals with the same illness or disability might differ a lot in their feeling of being hampered by it. Nevertheless, two additional subjective indicators are used: respondents' satisfaction with her personal state of health (on a five-point scale) and her satisfaction with the country's health care system (on an eleven-point scale).

The question of *personal safety* is addressed on the objective dimension with a question asking whether or not any member of the respondent's household has been a victim of burglary or assault within the last five years. This item can be criticized due to the fact that the definition of the term "assault" might mean very different for individuals and different cultural groups. The subjective dimension asking for a respondent's feeling of safety in her local area at night. Again, the subjective variable is measured on a four-point scale.

All of these components constitute different dimensions of material welfare that may or may not be associated with each other. Therefore, no comprehensive index of material well-being is constructed. Rather, the different components are regarded separately.

Different measures of *political participation* are used. First, subjects are asked whether they voted in the last national election (including the category "not eligible"), which is indicative of an individual's opportunities for political participation in itself. Next, people are asked whether or not they feel closer to a particular political party than to all others.

¹⁶ This is confirmed by an exploratory factor analysis of the five variables which results in only one factor with an eigenvalues larger than one. The screeplot of eigenvalues confirms the one-factor solution. Moreover, the factor loadings of the individual variables are almost similar – they vary from 0.72 to 0.87 – indicating that each of them carries the same weight.

Though party affiliation is not a direct measure of political *participation*, it is an indicator of *interest* in politics, which mediates participation. Interest in politics is also measured directly on a four-point scale. As political participation can take many forms – legal or illegal, passive or active – ten dichotomous indicators of different forms of political participation done within the last 12 months¹⁷ are combined to an additive, unweighted index ranging from 0 to 10. Cronbach's Alpha for this scale is 0.66, which is not a great, but still an acceptable result, especially considering the dichotomous structure of the data in this case.¹⁸ In addition to interest in politics, political participation is structured by the feeling people have of the legitimacy of the political system (Westle 1989; Pickel / Walz 1997) which is here measured on an eleven-point scale as trust in politicians, the parliament, and the government, and satisfaction with democracy in the country. Additionally, political participation is determined by the cognitive dimension of being informed about politics and the political system. The latter dimension is measured subjectively through the item “politics are too complicated to understand” to which people can respond on a five-point scale.

Following Esser in his distinction of social assimilation based on interactions and a structural, institutional dimension of relational assimilation, *social participation* is here assumed to consist of two distinct components. First, there is the membership in different social associations and clubs, which is measured according to the description given above. Secondly, social interactions on the primary group level have to be taken into account. These mainly concern the family, colleagues, peer group, and friends. For instance, interviewees are asked whether or not they have someone to discuss intimate matters with, which is indicative for the danger of anomy and personal disintegration, how often they meet with friends, relatives and colleagues, how often they take part in activities compared with people of the same age, and they are asked (on a four-point scale) for the number of immigrant friends and colleagues. Finally, social interactions are determined by the general trust in other people. Therefore, respondents are asked on an eleven-point scale whether they believe that most people can be trusted and whether they believe that most people are fair instead of trying to take advantage of them. As a sum-up and as a subjective evaluation of all forms of well-being, material welfare, and participation, people are asked the very general questions how happy they are and how satisfied they are with their life as a whole.

The *opportunities and barriers* that immigrants have to face in their assimilation

¹⁷ These are: contacted a politician / government official, worked in political party, worked in another association, wore / displayed campaign sticker / badge, signed a petition, took part in lawful demonstration, boycotted products, bought product for political / ethical reasons, donated money to political organisation, participated in illegal protest.

¹⁸ Alpha is a suitable measure for dichotomous data as well (Schnell et al. 1999: 147).

process are found both on the macro-level in the form of permissive or restrictive welfare and migration policies, migration history, and the general state of the economy as indicated by the GNP or the unemployment rate. However, public attitudes towards minorities, immigrants, and migration measured on the individual level might be a more decisive factor.

In this particular round of the ESS, the focus was precisely on attitudes towards migration, which is why a very large number of items concerning this issue are in the data set and cover a variety of dimensions of the topic. These include the number and kind of immigrants that should be allowed, their qualifications, question on whether people believe that immigration is beneficial or harmful to the economy and the culture of their country, and attitudes towards migration laws and policies. In order to empirically test which latent constructs are covered by the items on attitudes towards migration, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on all suitable items, that is, on all items with a sufficient number of categories. This analysis yields ten factors with eigenvalues larger than one, although the screeplot of eigenvectors suggests that a solution with less factors might be more appropriate. The following table 4.2 shows the variables loading high on the first seven factors.

Table 4.2: Variables on Migration Attitudes Loading (> 0.5) on Factor, in Order of Loading

Factor 1: Economic Impact	Immigrants: take jobs away; get more in terms of taxes and services than they put in; bad for the economy; make country worse place to live; bring average wages down; harm economic prospects of the poor more than the rich; make crime problems worse; undermine culture
Factor 2: Who should be allowed	How many of following groups of immigrants should (not) be allowed: from richer countries outside Europe; from richer European countries; of same race/ethnic group as majority; from poorer countries in Europe; of different race/ethnic group; from poorer countries outside Europe
Factor 3: Treatment of Refugees	Refugee applicants: Should not be allowed to work; Should not be kept in detention centers (neg. loading); Government should not be generous judging refugee status applications; Granted refugees should not be allowed to bring family; Applicants should not get financial support
Factor 4: Personal Acceptance	Would mind if immigrant: Of same race / ethnicity would marry close family member; of race / ethnicity would be boss; Of different race / ethnicity would be boss; Of different race / ethnicity would marry close family member
Factor 5: Meritocratic Qualifications	Important qualification for immigration: Good education; Speak language; Work skills needed; Close family
Factor 6: Traditional Qualifications	Important qualification for immigration: Be White; Christian background; Be wealthy; Not better for country if everyone share customs and traditions (negative loading)
Factor 7: Cultural Pluralism	Not better for country if all speak common language (negative loading); Immigrant communities should not be allowed separate schools

Variables loading high on the same factor are combined to additive, unweighted

indices of different dimensions of attitudes on migrants and migration, with high values indicating opposition to migration or immigrants and values of zero indicating complete acceptance. The reliability coefficients for these new scales range from $\alpha = 0.72$ to $\alpha = 0.93$, which are acceptable levels of internal consistency.

In addition to the opportunities and restrictions offered or imposed upon by societies, a number of *other factors* determine the likelihood that migrants succeed in terms of welfare and participation. These factors are related to individual achievement and ascriptive criteria and include education, religiousness and religious denomination, duration of residence in a country (on a four-point scale), duration of residence in an area (in years), area of residence (urban versus rural environments), and the origin in terms of the continent of birth (of the person herself and of her father), which is an indicator both of geographical distance to the host society and of ethnicity. Also, value orientations might structure the performance of individuals and are taken into account as well.

5. Migration, Welfare and Inequality in Three European Countries

As argued above, the social context in terms of migration history and policies, welfare policies and resulting differences in the social structure of a country has effects on the process of assimilation, the socioeconomic performance, and social and political participation of immigrants. These effects structure assimilation directly or indirectly through public attitudes.

In order to be able to understand possible differences between countries in the empirical analysis below, an overview of relevant aspects of post-World War II migration history and policies in Germany, Sweden, and UK is given in table 5.1 below. Overall, migration policies in all European countries are subject to more coordination and mutual adjustment on the EU level, with a strong trend towards a rational planning and skilled migration due to economic and demographic considerations (Düvell 2002: 138).

The history of migration of a country includes a variety of different factors: the number of immigrants that moved to the country in particular periods of time, their country of origin and cultural distance to the host country and different motives for migration. According to Fassmann / Münz (1996: 18ff.) there are at least five different kinds of migrants and migration that carry different weights in different countries. These are colonial and postcolonial migration, ethnic migration, labor migration¹⁹, refugees, and others. A similar typology is given by Thränhardt (1996a: 33ff.), who distinguishes between post-colonial

¹⁹ This includes the migration of families and relatives of labor migrants at the same time or later.

migrants, nationals, mediterranean recruitment, which is similar to labor migration, and refugees. Naturally, the kind of briefly summarize both the history and the policies of migration in the three countries chosen for the analysis.

Table 5.1: Summary of Migration History and Policies

	Germany	Sweden	United Kingdom
Foreign population in 2000 ²⁰	8.9 per cent	5.4 per cent 11.3 foreign-born ²¹	4.0 per cent
Most important countries of origin ²²	Turkey, former Soviet Union ²³ , former Yugoslavia	Finland / Scandinavia, former Yugoslavia, Near and Middle East	Ireland, former colonies
Most important kinds of migration	Labor, ethnic	Labor, refugees	(Post-)colonial
Qualification criteria	Mainly traditional based on heritage / ancestry	Mixed	Rational - meritocratic, geared to economic needs
Mode of integration ²⁴	Assimilation to majority culture desired	Cultural pluralism	Pluralism, but continuing racial / ethnic segregation
Welfare/political rights	Low	High	Mixed
Obtainment of citizenship, naturalization ²⁵	Difficult	Easy	Medium
Naturalization rate ²⁶	2.5 per cent	8.9 per cent	3.7 per cent
Multicult. policies ²⁷	Low	Medium	Medium

Welfare policies and the resulting structure of inequality affect migrants both directly and through the mediation of migration policies. One example of such possible interactions is the relationship between the welfare system, demographic structure, and migration policies. Almost all Western European countries face the problem of high pressure of on their systems of social security due to declining birth rates and increasing life expectancy and the resulting change of the demographic distribution in terms of age (Düvell 2002: 137ff., 159; Sassen 1997: 17). This is just as true for health care systems as it is for old-age pensions. However, in countries which – like Germany – rely on a “contract of generations” and employment-related

²⁰ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/24/6/2956514.xls> and <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/47/2956510.xls>

²¹ The low number of foreign population in Sweden is a consequence of its high naturalization rate. Many foreign-born do not appear as foreigners in the statistic. Therefore, the percentage of those foreign-born is given.

²² in 2000: OECD - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/4/46/2956579.xls>

²³ Ethnic Germans from countries of the former Soviet Union and other European countries are often naturalized and therefore do not always appear in the population statistics as “foreigners”. However, they often face the same problems of integration and are therefore taken into consideration as well.

²⁴ My classification roughly corresponds to Castles` (1995: 303ff.) classification of nation-states based on ethnic belonging, as in Germany, political / cultural community, as in the UK, or pluralism, exemplified by Sweden.

²⁵ see Fathi 1996: 234.

²⁶ In 2000. Per cent of foreign population acquiring nationality. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/24/5/2956518.xls>

²⁷ Following the classification of Banting/Kymlicka (2003: 25ff.). Multiculturalism policies include dual citizenship, exemptions from dress codes, funding of bilingual education, affirmative action, funding of ethnic organizations, ethnic representation / sensitivity in the media and in school curricula, government ministry or advisory board to consult with ethnic minority groups, parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism.

social transfer systems, the impact of such demographic changes might be larger than in countries that rely on individual provisions of care. These countries experience less pressure on their social security systems and can be expected to be under less pressure to resolve the problem through higher demands for immigration (as the average migrant is younger) manifested in different migration policies. Table 5.2 below provides an overview of the most important characteristics of Germany, Sweden, and the UK with respect to welfare and social inequality. Obviously, the social democratic welfare regime of Sweden performs best on all indicators of social equality, whereas the conservative German welfare regime shows medium, and the liberal regime of the UK shows low performance.

Table 5.2: Summary of Welfare Regime and Social Inequality Characteristics

	Germany	Sweden	United Kingdom
Welfare regime	Conservative	Social-Democratic	Liberal
Social benefits	Employment-Related, Household Level	Universal and Individualistic	Private Provisions
Public social expenditure (per cent of GDP) 1994-98 ²⁸	27.2	32.9	25.6
Inequality in net income (GINI-Index) ²⁹	28.2	23	32.4
Poverty rate ³⁰	9.4	6.4	10.9
Gender wage gap ³¹	20.7	16.8	25.1

6. Empirical Results

6.1 Performance of Migrants Compared with Natives

With respect to the performance of different generations of migrants compared with natives, the straight-line approach towards assimilation expects migrants to perform worse than the native population, but for the second generation to perform better than the first. The segmented assimilation approach, however, expects a more differentiated pattern, with the second generation possibly performing worse due to assimilation to the wrong values.

Because of their initial disadvantaged position in the country of origin, the first

²⁸ Data Source: OECD - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/14/2087083.xls>. Public social expenditures include old age pensions, unemployment, sickness, disability benefits, family, health, and housing services.

²⁹ Data source: OECD - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/47/2492180.xls>.

³⁰ Per cent of population with less than 50 per cent of the median income. Data source: OECD - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/47/2492180.xls>.

³¹ Difference between male and female median full-time earnings as per cent of male median full-time earnings. Data source: OECD - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/47/2492180.xls>. Due to the calculation based on full-time earnings, the numbers do not contain effects of lower female employment or more female part-time work.

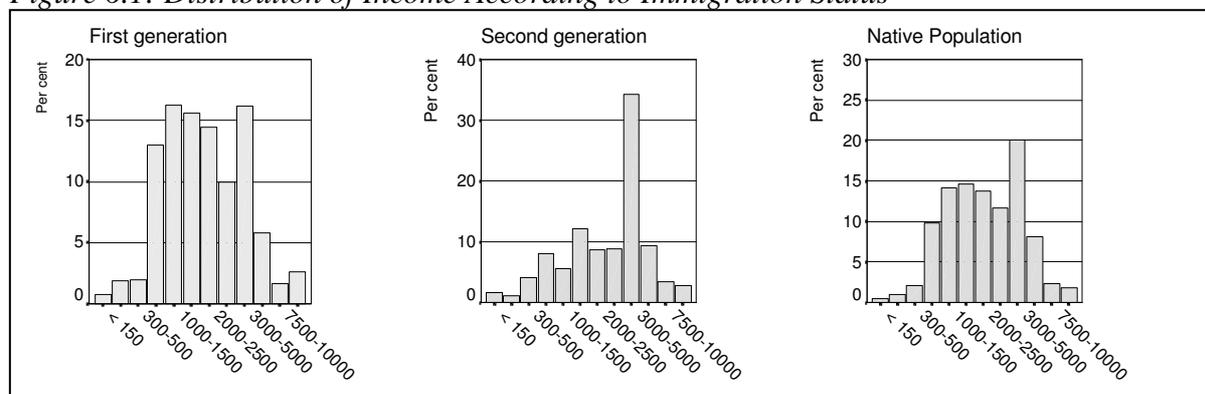
generation³² of migrants will be more content with their situation in terms of welfare and participation than natives with the same level of performance and second generation migrants. Therefore, feelings of subjective deprivation will be more common among those born in the country. Following this reasoning, I arrive at the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a: The degree of material wealth, social and political participation depends on the migration status, with natives performing better than second generation immigrants and first generation immigrants performing worst.

Hypothesis 1b: The degree of subjective satisfaction with material wealth, social and political participation depends on the migration status, with first generation immigrants being more content than second generation immigrants and natives.

The following figure and tables give an overview of the objective and subjective situation of migrants with respect to indicators of material welfare, social and political participation. Some of the results of the comparison of immigrants and natives are quite surprising and refute conventional wisdom and some of the theoretical approaches mentioned above. The assumption that first-generation immigrants are worse off than second-generation immigrants and those again are worse off than the native population does not hold in general. It was strongly confirmed by indicators of political participation, which to a large degree depends on the institutional structure, and partly by indicators of social participation. In terms of the material conditions of welfare, mostly indicators of individual achievement, not much such evidence could be found. Contrary to common assumptions, many immigrants perform just as good or even better than the native population with respect to income, education, and health. These objective criteria are partly reflected in the subjective dimensions of inequality.

Figure 6.1: Distribution of Income According to Immigration Status



³² As second generation migrants were not born in another country and are therefore only familiar with the institutions of the host society, their perceptions should be similar to the native population.

Table 6.1: Indicators of Material Welfare, Social Participation, and Political Participation

Indicator	First Generation	Second Generation	Native
<i>Employment Situation</i>			
Employed or self-employed	56.4 %	72.2 %	55.2 %
Trade union at workplace	43.0 %	45.7 %	52.4 %
Unlimited employment contract	83.7 %	82.9 %	86.6 %
Personal influence on work place	4.0	4.9	5.2
Satisfaction with work situation	6.1	6.0	6.1
Correlation Influence/Satisfaction	0.04	0.35	0.26
<i>Level of Education</i>			
Primary or Less	6.9 %	0.7 %	2.7 %
Secondary	60.7 %	75.2 %	68.8 %
Tertiary	24.2 %	24.2 %	28.5 %
<i>Educational Mobility</i>			
Downward	16.3 %	19.4 %	18.3 %
None	44.0 %	42.8 %	51.3 %
Upward	39.7 %	37.8 %	30.4 %
<i>Satisfaction with Education</i>			
	0.56	0.49	0.49
<i>Objective and Subjective Health</i>			
Hampered by ill health	16.8 %	12.1 %	25.5 %
Subjective health good	70.3 %	72.2 %	65.1 %
Satisfaction with health care	5.5	4.8	4.9
<i>Personal Safety</i>			
Victim of crime in last 5 years	18.6 %	24.8 %	17.3 %
Feeling unsafe in area – all	34.4 %	36.9 %	27.7 %
-if victim of crime	37.0 %	45.9 %	34.7 %
-if no victim of crime	31.5 %	34.2 %	26.3 %
<i>Voted in last national election</i>			
Yes	42.4 %	54.7 %	77.7 %
No	24.9 %	17.3 %	17.3 %
Not Eligible	32.7 %	28.0 %	5.0 %
<i>Political participation</i>			
Average (out of ten)	1.1	1.4	1.6
None	50.3 %	34.3 %	34.5 %
<i>Interest and Knowledge</i>			
Quite / very interested in politics	52.0 %	57.4 %	59.1 %
Party affiliation	41.5 %	45.1 %	50.1 %
Politics frequently complicated	13.9 %	6.5 %	10.0 %
<i>Trust in / Satisfaction with</i>			
Politicians	3.91	3.83	3.66
National Parliament	5.10	4.65	4.61
National Government	4.48	4.00	3.69
Democracy in Country	5.95	5.29	5.20
<i>Interactions with friends</i>			
Meet friends at least once a week	66.8 %	69.6 %	64.1 %
Activities: much less than most	13.1 %	3.0 %	7.8 %
Person to discuss intimate things	92.0 %	95.1 %	94.4 %
Several immigrant friends	56.3 %	29.4 %	11.9 %
Several immigrant colleagues	27.8 %	18.2 %	10.5 %
<i>Not member of club</i>			
	29.3 %	17.6 %	19.2 %
<i>Trust in People</i>			
Most people can be trusted	4.8	4.6	4.9
Most people are fair	5.4	5.0	5.8

A comprehensive and encompassing measure of subjective well-being are the levels of satisfaction with life in general and personal happiness. These are shown in table 6.2 below. Overall, contrary to expectations, the native population is generally happier and more satisfied than immigrants, especially the second generation.

Table 6.2: General Measures of Subjective Well-Being

Indicator	First Generation	Second Generation	Native Population
Happiness	7.1	6.9	7.5
Satisfaction with life in general	6.7	6.7	7.1

These preliminary results strongly support the assumption of a segmented process of assimilation. Immigrants, neither the first nor the second generation, are by no means a homogeneous group of people. On many indicators, their level of performance is much more dispersed than that of the native population. The question of whether there are different trajectories of assimilation and whether these make a difference in terms of performance will be further explored in the following subchapter.

Table 6.3 Empirical Support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b

Indicators of	Hypothesis 1a	Hypothesis 1b
Income	refuted	mixed evidence
Health	refuted	mostly supported
Safety	mixed evidence	refuted
Education	mixed evidence	supported
Employment	supported	supported
Political Participation	supported	supported
Social Participation	mixed	mixed

6.2 Different Trajectories of Assimilation

The straight line approach contains two assumptions. First, migrants are more assimilated to the majority culture the longer they stay in a country and second, the majority is constituted by the middle classes, to which migrants assimilate and experience socio-economic improvement. Thus, I arrive at hypotheses four, five, and six. Testing these amounts to a test of the theory of segmented assimilation versus the straight line approach. If the first hypotheses do not apply, this is evidence in favor of the theory of segmented assimilation.

Hypothesis 4a: The degree of assimilation to the majority culture increases the longer an individual immigrant has stayed in the country.

Hypothesis 4b: The degree of assimilation to the majority culture increases with each consecutive generation.

Hypotheses 4 are easily tested by cross-tabulating the length of the duration of residence of individual migrants and the migrant generation with the degree of assimilation to the majority culture, as in tables 6.4 and 6.5 below. The evidence in favor of hypotheses 4a and 4b is overwhelming. Moreover, hypotheses 4a and 4b are confirmed with respect to structural and the cognitive component of cultural assimilation, but not for reciprocal assimilation (discrimination), which is not at all associated with the duration of residence.

Table 6.4: Degree of Assimilation³³ and Duration of Residence for the First Generation

Degree of Assimilation	Duration of Residence (years)			
	less than 5	5 to 10	10 to 20	more than 20
<i>Comprehensive Index</i> (0 to 16)	7.2	6.9	6.2	5.3
	Spearman`s Rho = -0.33*;		Somers' D = -0.30*	
<i>Structural</i>				
Citizenship - yes	26.1 %	58.2 %	67.3 %	66.3 %
EU membership – yes	36.9 %	61.6 %	76.6 %	82.2 %
Membership in clubs – none	43.1 %	44.9 %	30.7 %	17.8 %
- overall	Spearman`s Rho = 0.25*;		Somers' D = 0.23*	
<i>Cultural</i>				
Cognitive – language (av. 1 to 4)	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.0
	Spearman`s Rho = -0.3*;		Somers' D = -0.27*	
<i>Identificational – Other Religion</i>	69.9 %	53.4 %	64.2 %	63.6 %
<i>Reciprocal</i>				
Discrimination – (5-point scale) ³⁴	Spearman`s Rho = -0.003;		Somers' D = -0.002	

* coefficient is significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 6.5: Inter-Generational Degree of Assimilation

Degree of Assimilation	First Generation	Second Generation	Native Population
<i>Comprehensive Index</i> ³⁵ (0 to 16)	6.0	4.7	2.9
<i>Structural</i>			
Citizenship - yes	58.1 %	78.8 %	99.9 %
EU membership – yes	69.8 %	87.3 %	99.9 %
Membership in clubs – none	29.3 %	17.6 %	19.2 %
– three or more	26.4 %	30.7 %	39.7 %
<i>Cultural</i>			
Cognitive – language (av. 1 to 4)	2.3	1.6	1.1
- language = 4 ³⁶	13.3 %	3.9 %	0.0 %
<i>Identificational – Other Religion</i>	63.5 %	66.2 %	9.8 %
<i>Reciprocal</i>			
Discrimination—at least one form ³⁷	16.3 %	23.2 %	1.9 %
Minority ethnic group	38.1 %	26.7 %	1.3 %

³³ The index of assimilation ranges from 0 to 16, with low values indicating a high degree of assimilation and proximity to the host culture and high values indicating a low degree of assimilation.

³⁴ Out of discrimination due to race, ethnic group, language, nationality or religion.

³⁵ See chapter four for explanation.

³⁶ Does not speak any official language of the host country either as first or second language at home.

³⁷ Out of discrimination due to race, ethnic group, language, nationality or religion.

According to the theories presented above, assimilation and welfare are related:

Hypothesis 5: The degree of material welfare, political and social participation depends on the degree of assimilation. The more assimilated migrants are, the higher will be their material welfare, political and social participation.

To test this assumption, some representative indicators of welfare and participation used for the comparison of natives and migrants are correlated with the degree of assimilation of first and second generation migrants. The results are reported in table 6.6 below. It is astonishing that almost all of the indicators of objective welfare and participation have a substantial statistical association with the degree of assimilation, especially considering that correlations in individual, as opposed to aggregated, data sets are usually quite low. Those more assimilated on the average earn more, have more influence on their workplace, a higher level of education and political participation. This does not mean that assimilation leads to better performance of migrants. Rather, it is possible that those who perform better assimilate more easily. Although some of them are statistically significant due to the high number of cases, most correlations with indicators of subjective deprivation are not strong enough to assume an association between the indicators and assimilation, with the exception of the feeling about the personal income. Therefore, although immigrants tend to perform better the more assimilated they are, they are not more content with their situation and the institutions of the host country. Hypothesis 5 finds empirical support only with respect to objective indicators.

Table 6.6: Correlation of Degree of Assimilation with Indicators of Welfare and Participation

	Pearson`s r	Spearman`s Rho		Pearson`s r	Spearman`s Rho
<i>Objective</i>			<i>Subjective Dimension</i>		
Income	-0.374***	-0.398***	Coping with income	0.297***	0.282***
Conditions at work	-0.355***	-0.340***	Satisfaction economy	0.024	0.031
Level of education	-0.214***	-0.225***	Satisfaction workplace	0.010	0.014
Educational mobility	-0.095**	-0.085*	Satisfaction education	0.147***	0.154***
Health	0.014	0.043	Satisfaction with health	0.020	0.006
Political participation	-0.358***	-0.387***	Satisfaction democracy	0.077*	0.105**
Meetings w/ friends	0.092**	0.099**	Satisfaction with life	-0.025	-0.025

* correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

** correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

*** correlation is significant at the 0.001 level.

Out of hypotheses 4 and 5, hypotheses 6 follow:

Hypothesis 6a: The degree of material welfare, political and social participation increases the longer an individual immigrant has stayed in the country.

Hypothesis 6b: The degree of material welfare, political and social participation increases with each consecutive generation.

As hypotheses 4a and 4b were not confirmed with respect to reciprocal assimilation and hypothesis 5 was not confirmed with respect to the subjective dimension of welfare, hypotheses 6 is not tested for the subjective dimensions. Moreover, hypothesis 6 has already been tested in the previous subchapter, where no unambiguous evidence in support of it could be found, except for the case of political participation.

6.3 Trajectories of Segmented Assimilation and their Determinants

As the degree of assimilation has a substantial impact on the performance of migrants, it is important to know whether and which groups of migrants are more assimilated than others. In order to estimate the effects of possible determinants of assimilation – in previous bi- and trivariate analyses, country, age, education, duration of residence in the area and the country, area of residence and continent of birth of the father were found to influence the degree of assimilation-, these variables were simultaneously included in a multivariate OLS-regression model. Variables measured on a nominal scale – country, area of residence, continent of birth –were recoded as dummy variables.

The results of the OLS-regression are given in table 6.7 below. For the most part, they confirm the results of preliminary the bi- and trivariate analyses. All variables have a sizeable effect. Moreover, living in Germany as opposed to Sweden seems to matter more in terms of assimilation than living in the UK as opposed to Sweden, although neither effect is significant at the 5 per cent level. Moreover, an adversarial effect of not living in a city on assimilation is confirmed for the UK, whereas the reverse is true for the other countries, as the signs for area of residence and area of residence in the UK point in opposite directions. It is confirmed that the duration of residence in a country, the area of residence, and education have the most substantial effects on assimilation. Moreover, Warner and Srole (1945) are sadly confirmed in their assumption that race and geographical distance matter as well. This is also confirms proponents of the segmented assimilation approach like Portes and Zhou (1993) who argue that minority groups differ in their path of assimilation and that the assimilation trajectory also depends on the urbanity of the residential environment.

Overall, the variables explain 0.33 per cent of the variation in assimilation. This result is disturbing considering the fact that all of the variables included but education are non-achievement-based. Therefore, the social surroundings seem to matter a great deal when the degree of assimilation is to be explained, confirming the segmented-assimilation theory.

Table 6.7: Results of Multivariate OLS Regression – Dependent Variable: Assimilation

<i>Multiple R² = 0.34; Adjusted R² = 0.33</i>	unstandardized coefficient	standardized coefficient	T-value	significance
Intercept	9.283		15.919	< 0.001
Years of full-time education	-0.143	-0.238	-7.198	< 0.001
Age	-0.015	-0.095	-2.755	.006
How long lived in this area	-0.024	-0.115	-3.167	.002
Duration of residence in country	-0.465	-0.243	-7.658	< 0.001
UK dummy	0.622	0.120	1.522	.128
Germany dummy	0.724	0.142	1.832	.067
City dummy	1.677	0.287	8.387	< 0.001
Continent of birth – Asia dummy	0.823	0.149	4.829	< 0.001
Interaction – UK and city residence	-1.990	-0.168	-4.806	< 0.001

6.4 Policies, Attitudes, and Assimilation – an Aggregate Analysis

With respect to the effect of different welfare regimes, due to the encompassing, individual-based social care systems and the low level of social inequality of social-democratic welfare regimes, it can be expected that migrants and natives show higher levels of welfare and participation in those countries. Levels of welfare and participation for all should be low in the UK because it is a liberal welfare regime with a low degree of social transfers and a focus on private provisions. Therefore, hypothesis 7 states that:

Hypothesis 7: The general level of welfare and participation depends on the welfare regime, with Sweden performing best, Germany second best, and the UK worst.

With respect to migration policies, however, the expectation is a little different. Although Germany can be expected to have a higher level of welfare generally, due to employment-related systems of care and limited access of immigrants to the labor market, and due to its rejection of cultural pluralism and low naturalization rates, the differences between immigrants and the native population in terms of welfare and participation will be more substantial than in the UK. Again, Sweden is expected to perform best because it extends social rights to non-citizens as well. Therefore, hypothesis 8 states:

Hypothesis 8: The difference in performance between migrants and natives in terms of welfare and participation depends on migration and welfare policies and is largest in Germany and lowest in Sweden.

To evaluate hypotheses 7 and 8, table 6.8 summarizes the average values of selected indicators of welfare and participation by country, giving mixed evidence for the hypotheses. The main dividing line is between Germany on the one hand, with low overall performance and large differences between natives and migrants, and Sweden and the UK on the other.

Table 6.8: Country-Specific Averages of Selected Indicators of Welfare and Participation

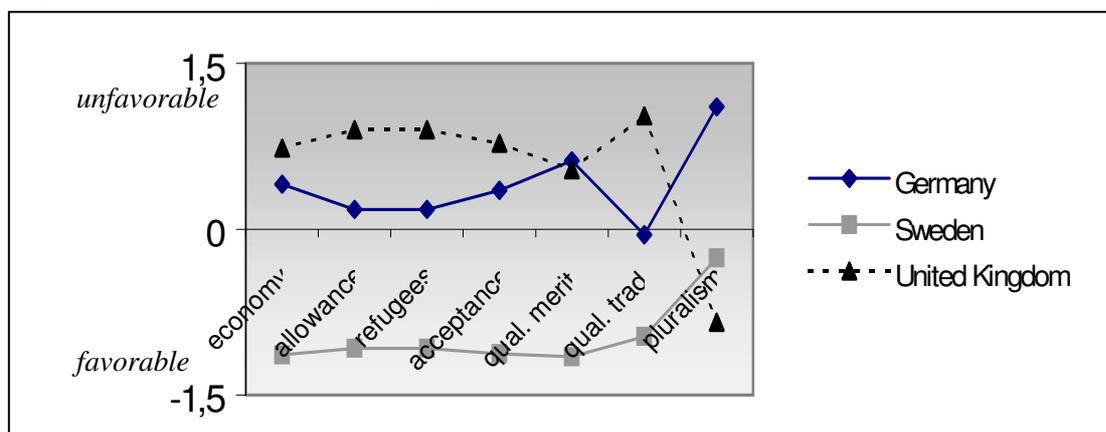
Country	Income			Work Conditions			Political Participation		
	1 st gen.	2 nd gen.	native	1 st gen.	2 nd gen.	native	1 st gen.	2 nd gen.	native
Germany	6.34	6.49	6.93	2.78	3.04	4.54	.83	.89	1.62
Sweden	6.69	6.79	6.91	6.26	6.39	6.41	1.53	1.63	2.00
UK	7.24	7.51	7.26	5.47	5.70	5.78	1.44	1.52	1.51

The history and policies of a country in terms of migration and the prevailing political theory should influence attitudes of the population towards migrants. Germany, with its ius sanguini and ethnicity based approach should therefore have low levels of acceptance of migrants, with the exception of those of the same ethnic group. The UK, because of its colonial history, has a longer history of migration and a conception of the inclusion of post-colonial migrants in the Commonwealth, and because of limited multiculturalist policies, can be expected to accept migrants more easily and have a more positive attitude towards them. However, reservations have to be made with respect to ethnic and racial conflicts. Therefore, the UK occupies a medium position, with the possible exception of higher acceptance of those who fulfill meritocratic criteria. The Swedish population, due to cultural pluralism and a high naturalization rate, can be expected to have the most positive attitude towards immigrants:

Hypothesis 9: Attitudes towards migration and migrants depend on the history and policies of migration. Therefore, attitudes should be most favorable in Sweden and least favorable in Germany.

Figure 6.2 displays the (standardized) scores of the attitudes of the native population in with respect to different indices. Overall, Swedes have the most favorable attitudes towards migration and Germany and the UK are very similar in their scores, with the UK opposing migration slightly more than Germans. Again, hypothesis 9 is only partly supported, with the main difference between Sweden on the one hand, and the UK and Germany on the other.

Figure 6.2: Attitudes towards Migration



All of the things mentioned, welfare regimes, migration policy, and popular attitudes, also determine the degree of assimilation of migrants. It is easily conceivable that, for instance, the accordance of citizenship rights increases political participation of migrants, a meritocratic approach increases access to the labor market, language classes increase cognitive assimilation, and favorable attitudes decrease prejudice and discrimination.

Hypothesis 10: The degree of assimilation depends on migration and welfare policies and on public attitudes. Therefore, assimilation should be greatest in Sweden and lowest in Germany.

Table 6.9 below gives the average scores of first and second generation immigrants in Germany, Sweden, and the UK on the index of assimilation. Confirming the expectation of hypothesis 10, the degree of assimilation is lowest in Germany and highest in Sweden, with only marginal differences between Sweden and the UK. It is notable, however, that the first and second generation do not differ that much in terms of assimilation. Apparently, the country is the decisive factor. Additionally, attitudes of the population are a measure of reciprocal acceptance of migrants by the host society and should directly influence the reciprocal component of assimilation measured as feelings of discrimination more than any other dimension of assimilation. Scores for discrimination are given in table 6.9. Due to the prevalence of hostile attitudes in the UK, feelings of discrimination are higher there (than in Germany or Sweden) and hypothesis 10 is confirmed.

Table 6.9: Country-Specific Averages of Assimilation and Discrimination

Country	Assimilation		Discrimination	
	1 st gen.	2 nd gen.	1 st gen.	2 nd gen.
Germany	6.5	6.2	0.24	0.23
Sweden	5.1	5.0	0.21	0.18
UK	5.4	5.0	0.30	0.40

Overall, the comparison of countries with regard to socioeconomic and participatory performance of migrants shows that welfare and migration regimes do influence the attitudes of the population, the degree of assimilation, and therefore the performance of migrants. Table 6.10 summarizes the results for the performance of different countries. It seems that for the general level of welfare and for public attitudes on migration, the most important distinction is that between the social democratic welfare regime of Sweden with its inclusion of immigrants in public services, and the conservative and liberal welfare regimes on the other hand. In terms of differences in performance of migrants and natives and the degree of assimilation and inclusion of migrants, the dividing line is between Sweden and the UK on

the one, and Germany on the other hand. The decisive factors here are Germany's employment-related welfare regime, and its ethnic-, droit de sang-based migration policies and lack of multiculturalism policies. The mixed performance of the UK can possibly be attributed to its colonial migration history and resulting tensions between inclusion of migrants based on cultural and political heritage and racial and ethnic segregation.

Table 6.10: Performance of Single Countries

	High performance	Low Performance
General level of welfare	Sweden	Germany, UK
Difference migrants / natives	Sweden, UK	Germany
Public attitudes	Sweden	Germany, UK
Assimilation - overall	Sweden, UK	Germany
- discrimination	Sweden, Germany	UK

6.5 Summary – What Determines the Performance of Migrants?

In the previous subchapters, I have found that generally, immigrants in Germany, Sweden, and the UK are worse off than the native population in terms of welfare and participation. Moreover, performance depends on the degree to which migrants are assimilated to the respective culture, which again depends on individual and institutional features. However, all of the associations found were country-specific. This raises the question of what actually determines the performance of migrants – the country of residence because of its migration and welfare policies, the generation and degree of assimilation, or individual achievement?

After exploratory bivariate analyses, multivariate regression analyses of conditions at the workplace as an indicator of material welfare were carried out for each country separately to find the most relevant explanatory variables for the situation of migrants.³⁸ The results are reported in table 6.11. First, a note of caution has to be made regarding the quite high, but non-significant effects of some variables in Sweden and the large proportion of explained variation. This is due to the relatively low number of less than 100 cases retained in the analysis due to listwise deletion. Therefore, the results for Sweden will be disregarded.

Both in the UK and Germany, education is the main determinant of performance of migrants regarding conditions at the workplace, followed by the migration status in terms of being second generation and therefore born in the country. In addition, residence in cities has detrimental effects in both countries. In Germany, additionally, the individual, but non-achievement criteria of age and origin matter as well, confirming expectations made based

³⁸ It goes without saying that the country dummies were consequently not included.

upon the ethnicity based migration ideology in the country. Moreover, in Germany, these individual variables explain almost 40 per cent of the variation in the dependent variable, while only 16 per cent are explained in the UK.

Table 6.11: Multiple Regression Analysis of Conditions at the Workplace, by Country

	Germany		Sweden		United Kingdom	
	<i>b</i> -weights ³⁹	β -weights ⁴⁰	<i>b</i> -weights	β -weights	<i>b</i> -weights	β -weights
Intercept	-1.434		3.958		2.893*	
2 nd generation	1.257***	0.221***	1.914	0.243	0.797*	0.176*
Education	.281***	0.374***	0.084	0.102	0.221***	0.351***
Age	0.037**	0.165**	0.047	0.219	-0.006	-0.029
City residence	-0.832*	-0.146*	1.615	0.221	-1.259*	-0.191*
Asian origin	-0.929**	-0.156**	-1.275	-0.147	0.134	0.029
Assimilation	-0.062	-0.063	-0.254	-0.208	-0.010	-0.010
Multiple R²	0.39		0.32		0.16	

* coefficient is significant at the 0.05 level.

** coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level.

*** coefficient is significant at the 0.001 level.

So far, it could be shown that there are both effects of individual variables on working conditions and differences between countries, indicating effects of migration and welfare policies. The results obtained so far are now combined into a final model taking into account both individual, inter-generational and cross-national variables. As age and Asian origin were only found to matter in Germany, interactions between residence in Germany and these two variables are included in the model as well. Including variables into the model in a blockwise fashion makes a comparison of the relative importance of different kinds of variables, such as macrolevel country differences, quite easy. Results are shown in table 6.12.

An initial comparison of the models reveals that differences between countries alone explain almost a third of the variance of conditions at the workplace for migrants (as opposed to the 22 per cent that were obtained with the native population included). The inter-generational differences added in model 2 explain less than five per cent of the variation, although possible different effects in the single countries are taken into account. An additional eight per cent of variation is explained by the individual ascriptive criteria included in model 3, such as origin, and about the same amount by education in model 4, measuring individual achievement. In this context, it is astonishing that a single variable explains almost as much as the five variables included in the third model. Assimilation, which then included in the final model, does not explain much additional variation. Therefore, international differences on the macro level are by far the most important determinants of conditions at the workplace,

³⁹ Standardized regression coefficients.

⁴⁰ Unstandardized regression coefficients.

explaining almost twice as much as the individual variables.

Table 6.12: Multiple Regression Analysis of Conditions at the Workplace, all Countries^a

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Country Effects					
Germany	-0.556***	-0.588***	-0.666***	-0.718***	-0.689***
UK	0.005	0.012	0.010	-0.130	-0.127
Generational Effects					
2 nd generation		0.333	0.294	0.282	0.271
2 nd gen * Germany		-0.052	-0.018	-0.047	-0.050
2 nd gen.* UK		-0.166	-0.145	-0.112	-0.109
Individual: Ascriptive					
City residence			-0.138***	-0.139***	-0.127***
Age			-0.009	0.012	0.004
Age*Germany			0.175	0.258	0.244
Asian origin			-0.047	0.020	0.033
Asian * Germany			-0.177**	-0.142*	-0.149*
Individual: Achievement					
Education				0.328***	0.321***
Assimilation					
Assimilation					-0.049
R-Squared	0.314	0.361	0.439	0.514	0.516
Adjusted R-Squared	0.311	0.353	0.425	0.501	0.502
F-Value	95.834	46.767	32.013	39.378	36.242

^a standardized regression weights are reported.

* coefficient is significant at the 0.05 level.

** coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level.

*** coefficient is significant at the 0.001 level.

An inspection of the final model reveals that the most substantial direct effect on the working conditions is that of living in Germany, followed by education and belonging to the second generation. The latter coefficient is not significant, however. Other significant effects include residence in cities and the interaction effect of being of Asian origin in Germany, and, possibly, the age effect in Germany. Surprisingly, assimilation does not seem to matter that much when it is controlled for other factors in the multivariate model⁴¹. This, in addition to the non-significant effect of belonging to the second generation, strongly speaks against the straight-line approach and partly refutes the results obtained in chapter 6.2 regarding hypothesis 5 about the association between welfare and assimilation. Rather, it seems that material welfare, at least with respect to working conditions, does not depend on assimilation, but on other factors, first and foremost, the social context in terms of policies and institutions. Of the more than 50 per cent of explained variation obtained in the last regression model, a large part can be attributed to differences between countries – this is shown both in the large direct effects of the country variables in the individual model and in the fact obtained in the

⁴¹ Admittedly, however, this is not true for all indicators of welfare and participation. For some of them, assimilation does make a difference.

previous analysis above that more than 20 percent of variation in workplace conditions are explained by the two country dummies alone. Two dimensions of individual variables seem to matter as well: First, there is the achievement-based criterion of education. Migrants, as the native population, tend to perform better when they are better educated. Secondly, ascriptive criteria like ethnicity or country of origin seem to make a difference as well, indicating substantial discrimination of some groups of migrants.

I conclude that it is mostly the social context of opportunities and barriers in forms of migration and welfare policies and adversarial attitudes leading to discrimination that determine the performance of migrants. Although assimilation might have an impact on the performance as well, this impact is mostly due to other factors, such as education.

7. Discussion of Empirical Results in Terms of Theoretical Approaches

The results obtained in the empirical analyses mostly speak in favor of the general thesis that was to be evaluated. The degree of welfare and participation of migrants *does* depend on the opportunity structure of society and to some extent on the degree of assimilation of individual immigrants. However, assimilation is not solely a matter of individual achievement, but again to a large extent determined by opportunities and restrictions of society in terms of migration and welfare policies and attitudes of the public. Assimilation is therefore, although a promoter of it, not a necessary condition for welfare and participation. Unfortunately, it is not a sufficient condition either. In the following subchapters, the main results of the empirical analyses will be briefly reviewed and discussed with respect to the theoretical assumptions made in parts two and three.

7.1 The Situation of Migrants in Three European Countries

Following the theories presented in chapters 2 and 3, it was expected that migrants, on the average, would have less chances for welfare and participation than the native population of a country. Empirical evidence mostly confirmed this assumption. By and large, natives showed better performance on many indicators than either first- or second generation migrants. Although in some cases, migrants did perform as good as or even better than natives (in the case of income, for instance), this result is alarming, considering the fact that the immigrant groups were on the average younger and just as educated as natives and that often, both adult members of a household contribute to the household income. Because of this, and contrary to common expectations, migrants are generally less likely to rely on social transfers

or pensions. Therefore, migration is for the most part considered beneficial for the host society, although this usually does not reflect in public attitudes. The degree to which migrants get to participate and share the resources of the host society to a highly depends on the attitudes of the native population. Unfortunately, the empirical analyses show that large parts of the population have unfavorable, sometimes even hostile attitudes towards migrants.

It was also assumed that as time goes by, migrants would assimilate to the host culture and their chances of welfare and participation would improve. This was not always found to be the case, with the second generation sometimes performing worse than the first. Although generally, there is a trend towards more welfare and participation, the difference between the native population and second generation immigrants is still substantial. Therefore, the dividing line is between migrants and non-migrants and not between different generations. Moreover, the trend towards improvement over the generations and duration of residence does not apply to some dimensions depending on structural assimilation and migration policies. For instance, citizenship rights are not accorded to immigrants in some countries even though they have resided there for quite a while.

The expected differences between countries due to their different welfare and migration policies have been mostly confirmed. Overall, the situation of migrants is most favorable in the socio-economic welfare regime of Sweden. Due to restrictive migration politics relying on traditional, *ius sanguinis* ideology, and an employment-centered welfare regime, migrants are on the average worst off in Germany.

7.2 Assessment of the Trajectories of Assimilation

Assimilation is not a linear, straightforward process. It has separate components that proceed at a different speed. For instance, though migrants might be structurally or culturally assimilated, that does not prevent hostile reciprocal reactions of the majority culture. Milton M. Gordon and Hartmut Esser are confirmed in their non-deterministic conception of assimilation. Especially Gordon's assumption that assimilation does not necessarily always follow the same pattern and often stops at some point was confirmed. However, the sequential pattern of acculturation – or cultural assimilation - followed by integration and then assimilation proposed by Esser found no empirical support. Rather, it seemed that proximity or similarity to the host culture is decisive for the chances of migrants being integrated in the first place – with similarity understood not just in terms of knowledge of language, culture, and norms, but also identification with them and additionally other non-achievement criteria of similarity such as religion or ethnicity. The empirical fact that assimilation determines the

degree of welfare and participation (and therefore integration) mostly for those who first arrive in a country, contradicts the conception of a process of assimilation that migrants can actually influence. Put bluntly: those who are most similar to the host culture are integrated quickly, and the others are not and will not ever be integrated. Thus, Gordon is right in a way when he says that structural assimilation entails all other forms of assimilation. Ironically however, many can never achieve structural assimilation at all.

With respect to the straight-line versus segmented approach to assimilation, neither of them could be clearly refuted or confirmed. Some results indicated that the second generation of immigrants performed better than the first and that chances for welfare and participation increased with an individual's duration of residence in a country, supporting the straight-line theory. Others indicated that the second generation did not perform better, in some cases even worse than the first, and that the second generation itself was a very heterogeneous group, supporting the segmented assimilation theory. In any case, the main result in this context is that differences between immigrants and the native population prevail and continue to prevail.

The assimilation process depends to a large part on the integrative capacity of society. This capacity again is a function of many things, such as macro-economic conditions in the country, but especially the institutions of the welfare state, the history and policies of migration and the political theory underlying it. Where there are negative and hostile attitudes on immigrants, such as the belief that immigrants tend to rely on social transfers and therefore erode the welfare state, these attitudes can have two effects. First, they manifest themselves in restrictive migration policies, and second, they prevent assimilation directly through latent and manifest patterns of discrimination. This again leads to a lower degree of assimilation and integration (with the resulting effect on the socioeconomic performance of migrants), which may again increase negative attitudes. Moreover, failure to be socially integrated despite of attempts at assimilation can lead to frustration and anomie on the part of migrants. Thus, a vicious circle of mutually reinforcing hostility may develop – in other words, this is an example for what Merton (1957: 421ff.) labeled self-fulfilling prophecy.

However, it could be shown in the empirical analysis that assimilation in every single respect is not necessary. In a favorable environment that encourages cultural pluralism, as it can be found in Sweden, for instance, migrants are not required to be “like” or “similar to” the majority culture (which is Esser's concept of assimilation). Thus, they are not required to make impossible efforts implied by this concept (such as becoming similar in terms of religious denomination), but can continue to adhere to their own values and culture, while being aided in the cognitive process of assimilation to know enough about the host society, its

norms and values, to be able to succeed in it.

Therefore, arguments can be made against the ideology of a homogeneous culture to be defended against immigrants, as it is often propagated in Germany, and the resulting policies. Restrictive migration policies are often contradictory and therefore not very productive. For instance, the same people who want to restrict access of immigrants to the labor market complain that immigrants rely too much on social transfers – this is true both for politicians (and the resulting policies) and for the attitudes prevailing in the general public. Naturally, long-grown political ideologies and political institutions cannot and will not change over night. Hopefully, maybe an equalization of migration politics in the context of the European Union will result in more relaxed and rational handling of the issue of migration instead of once again bringing up the walls of fortress Europe.

8. Conclusion – Future Prospects of Migration in Europe

It was my to assess the situation of migrants in three European countries with respect to assimilation processes, welfare, and participation, using individual attitudinal data in addition to contextual information on the host societies.

Even though assimilation to the host culture is not a sufficient condition for migrants to achieve economic and participatory success, it is not a necessary condition either. Rather, whether or not assimilation is necessary for welfare and participation depends on the institutional environment of the host country. This leaves room for cautious optimism: With political and social institutions fitted to the recent trends of migration, both the host countries and migrants themselves can benefit from migration. Thus, the comparatively rich European countries can profit from an influx even of poorer migrants without additional burdens on their systems of social security if and when they admit to the fact that they are not homogeneous societies that can protect themselves from seemingly hazardous migration by establishing physical or attitudinal borders between themselves and everything that seems “different”. Successful integration is a process involving both migrants and the host societies.

Of course, some problems remain. For one thing, there will be an ever-growing competition between the receiving countries over highly skilled and qualified immigrants. Not only does this raise concerns considering the future prospects of those needing to migrate without fulfilling meritocratic criteria, such as refugees. It can also lead to more cross-national tensions and growing inequalities between the richer and poorer nations. For instance, in spite of frequent complaints about the “brain drain” of German scientists to the Anglo-American nations, the effect that migration to Germany (or other Western European countries) has on

the countries of origin is hardly ever considered. Although these countries often bear social costs, as those of education, they do not profit from their investments.

Aside from these more general consideration, some prospects for research remain as well. One important question that could not be answered from the analyses of this study is why migrants tend to feel less subjective deprivations and are often more content and satisfied. Also, more comparative individual data is needed for such research – with the utmost challenge to include a large and representative enough sample of migrants and other minority groups in social surveys.

The analyses revealed theoretically challenging, puzzling contradictions and tensions between traditionalism and modernity. Most Western societies clearly define themselves as “modern” and some even accuse immigrants, especially when they do not originate from Europe or North America, of being traditional and therefore threatening Western culture (whatever that is supposed to mean). However, the migration and welfare policies of the very same countries are inherently traditional and pre-modern at the same time, relying on ascriptive criteria such as ethnicity. Instead of rational policies from which everyone can profit, this leads to emotional and heated debates about the defense of Western core culture.

Nonetheless, as this analysis has shown, whether or not they will meet the challenges of contemporary migration, is in the hands of the host societies themselves, and not necessarily in the hands of migrants.

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