

INTEGRATION OF FOREIGNERS WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: NATIONAL STATES AND CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract

Constituting nation-states in Europe carried along several ambiguities about the status of people who belong to another ethnicity. Nowadays, when referring to democratic EU member states, the ethnic definition remains a fundamental indicator of the administrative and political rights of its inhabitants. Most of these countries are governed and ruled by right-wing governments, therefore we find duality in defining their citizens. Linking between the state and nationals is reciprocal in many segments, but there is a mutual imbalance between nationals within involvement in politics and decision-making, although some foreigners already have been equipped with the citizenship act of the state where they work. This finding is a clear indication of a violation of freedoms and human rights, even human dignity as an undeniable right guaranteed by all international conventions.

Keywords: integration, nation-state, citizenship.

1. Foreigners residing in a nation-state

The nation-state has long been treated in the paradigmatic frames of the practical legitimacy of citizens, although the identification between the nation and the state is not always correct. A citizen is defined as a member of a nation, as an individual who simultaneously belongs to an "organization based on legal status" and an "ethnic and cultural affiliation". This double coding, according to Habermas, in the formation of the citizen of a nation-state has been applicable in almost all cases of the constitution of states. This definition of states and its citizens turned citizens into national citizens. The strong support from the national administration, the education system, the military service, etc., enabled the preservation of the national identity and very easy identification of foreigners, both outside the state and within its borders.

The foreigner is a citizen of another country, but there are many cases when the foreigner can also be the person who possesses the citizenship, while he is kept away from the political state, being subject to discrimination, due to its indeterminacy and loyalty to the state. These citizens without power, live separated from others, their voice is not equal with the voice of other members of the state.

In order to protect national integrity and identity, nation-states apply various mechanisms, sometimes even violence. The movement/migration of people from one country to other countries/states, in order to ensure a better life, has been always accompanied with many problems, both for the people and for the countries preferred by the migrants. Among the most important issues, which require long-term solutions, is the integration process of these people.

The problem of integration mostly affects European nation states. These have indeed developed into democratic states, but have never been able to free themselves from national consciousness. Without the driving force of nationalism Bavaria and the Rhineland, Bretons and Occitans, Scots and Welshmen (Welsh people), Sicilians and Calabrians, Catalans and Andalusians would hardly have merged into the citizens of a

democratic nation. For this reason, the oldest nation-states react much more sensitively to the problems of integration from immigrant societies such as the USA or Australia.¹

The integration of foreigners has been shown as a very slow process, even after obtaining citizenship, except in cases where the number of foreigners is very small and does not pose a risk to any state segment. The status of these individuals as permanent residents has² represented issues not sufficiently clarified for the nation-states of Europe. These individuals are not considered as absolute foreigners, and on the other hand, they cannot even approach citizens in terms of political decisions. In this regard, it is worth mentioning the case of "friend" workers, whose status is conditioned by the employment agreement, which agreement does not allow them to obtain a more favorable status. Being counted as friends, they do not have the right of permanent migration to that country. The moral and political issue is actualized when it is noticed that these people have worked in that country for years, have also taken their families/children, and still have no other status than that of "friend". These situations are very evident, especially the case with the second generation of foreign workers in Germany and other European countries. Even if it is about the integration of foreign families that are for employment purposes, or for families from the time of former colonies, so the same situation is repeated. There can be no integration without expanding the personal horizon of individuals, and without the desire and willingness to overcome various challenges in terms of cognitive acquisitions. In the European countries, the encounter between the religion of foreigners and the vitality of local religions is also expressed, which creates a new resonance. Thus, young immigrants represent a stimulus for both believers and non-believers, showing a competing reality of faith, especially if we refer to the opposition between Christian societies and democratic movements at the end of the 20th century. There are two perspectives about the influence of religion on change processes, they can be presented as a conservative force or as an innovative force. The first one is based on the belief that many forms of religious belief and practice have prevented the change, emphasizing the need to preserve values and rituals, while in the other case, religious beliefs have played a mobilizing role in driving pressures for social change.

2. The power of the authority of tradition within the framework of European integrations

The development of science and secularism strongly influence cultural factors which greatly affect social change. The authority of tradition prevents the acceptance of new habits of the environment, while the way of life increasingly requires a rational basis. This means that culture and tradition must be protected, but, if necessary, changed in accordance with the fact that they can be justified on the basis of convincing arguments and evidence. When it comes to projects of common interest, the reason should not be based on previous preferences, for example: building a school or hospital that would serve the well-being of all. "It is not just the changes in the way we think that have influenced the processes of change in the modern world, but also has changed the content of ideas. The ideals of self-improvement, freedom, equality and democratic participation are very great creations of the last two or three centuries. Such ideals have served to mobilize broad processes of social and political change, including revolutions."³

These views may not be so much related with tradition, but rather suggest the continuous revision of ways of life with the goal of human improvement.

The merging or changing of customs and traditions can often foster subjective belief in ethical closeness or hostility between friendly or opposing communities. However, not every belief in ethical proximity is based on similarity of traditions or customs. But despite the great changes in customs, such a belief can arise and develop community-shaping powers when they are prompted by the memory of an actual migration, whether colonization or individual migration. This persistent memory of old and childhood customs continues as a

¹ Marrë nga: Habermas, J., (2011), *Ah, Evropë*, Asdreni, Shkup, f.95-96 (libër i përkthyer)

² Gidens, A., (2002), *Sociologjia*, Tiranë, f.618 (libër i përkthyer)

³ Gidens, A., (2002), *Sociologjia*, Tiranë, f.618 (libër i përkthyer)

source of patriotic feelings among immigrants, even when they have adapted so well to the new environment, so that returning to the homeland would be intolerable (for example, the case of many German- Americans).⁴ The strengthening of the sense of double belonging, if we can call it like that, is stronger among the first generation of immigrants, while it fades to a great extent among the members of the second generation, namely to people who were born in that country.

If we refer to Habermas' conversation, regarding acculturation policy, that assumes: "All that should be expected from immigrants is the desire to accept the political culture of the new homeland, not including the obligation to renounce the form of cultural life from their mother country,"⁵ then it is concluded that the process of acculturation must it counts as something common to both parties, and not only to foreigners. From this point of view, the citizens of nation-states themselves would be counted as foreigners at the European level, as well as immigrants in Europe. They will find it indispensable to adapt to new situations, by regulating differently the relations between the citizen/local and the foreigner, between political affiliation and political identity.

The nation-state's attempt to preserve integrity and identity from the threat of immigration is possible if individuals and cultures wish to maintain distinctive character. In this case, the increase in the number of foreigners would affect the preservation of the political system even though the foreigners may not be politically represented.

Are citizenship and nationality inseparable?

Modern citizenship, in the most frequent cases, is based on close ties with nationality, namely, it is preconceived on the basis of common national connections. In the present circumstances, the nation-state is not capable of providing the cultural basis of all individuals within its territory. Occurring in this situation, there seems to be a clash between two concepts regarding the future of the nation-state. The first one tries to reform the relationship between nationality and citizenship, defending the equality of both, while the second one tries to abandon this principle. The relationship between the citizen and the state is mutual: the state guarantees the citizen its rights, while demanding from it the fulfillment of obligations, in particular those of protection.

Citizenship for a person, for a family or for a group, is the fact of being a member of a state in which they wish to participate actively. The notion of citizenship represents the legal relationship between the citizen and the state. In legal terms, citizenship is the state of a natural person (called a citizen) in which the laws of a state fully recognize civil and political rights. Citizenship can be seen as a status of the citizen, but also as a legal relationship between the citizen and the state. Individuals who do not have the nationality of one state are foreigners if they have that of another state, and are statelessness if they have no citizenship. Citizenship should not be confused with nationality, because nationality is a multidimensional concept, related to the belonging of a person, or a group of individuals, to a certain, cultural or political nation.

3. Granting citizenship in nation-states and inclusion of foreigners in political life

The nation-state has always been able to prepare modalities for the reception of foreigners, while not changing its destiny and ideological ethnicity on belonging. This is confirmed by the Civil Code of the French Republic, a part of which deals with the granting of French citizenship. It states that a foreigner can acquire the status of a French citizen in three concrete ways: through marriage with a citizen of that country, through a long stay in

⁴ Weber, M., (2004), *Studime sociologjike*, Tiranë, f.128 (libër i përkthyer)

⁵ Habermas, J., (1998), *Faktizitat und Geltung*, Frankfurt, f.659

that country including legal work, and through military service.⁶ The first case represents the simplest way to acquire citizenship, because through blood ties, the foreigner and his followers easily become members of the nation. Other cases prove the importance of the contribution of foreigners on the material well-being of the nation, accomplished through work, and in particular service in the French military structures composed mainly of foreigners, known as the French Foreign Legion. These individuals, after completing military service or participating in certain military missions, are automatically granted with French citizenship. Unlike French citizenship, Austrian citizenship can be obtained through origin, by accordance and declaration. People who have stayed for a long time in Austria (in principle 10 years) can be granted Austrian citizenship under certain conditions (assurance of income to live on, knowledge of the German language, level B1, proper behavior according to the rules, etc.). Also, even after a legal stay in Austria of at least six years, Austrian citizenship can be acquired in cases such as e.g., for asylum seekers, citizens of the European Economic Area or for individuals who know the German language at the B2 level or individuals who can prove a stable personal integration. This means that European countries do not have a common regulation regarding citizenship. Of the 28 EU member states, Germany, Sweden and Austria do not recognize dual citizenship. Meanwhile, researchers of these issues say that this practice can be implemented by other countries as a measure to prevent immigration. In some European countries, citizenship comes at a price. Malta, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Bulgaria have approved the "Investment Program".

In Spain and Portugal this program is called "Golden Visa". The price of such a visa in Portugal is the purchase of a residence worth 500,000 euros. It is enough to stay in this country for seven days in the first year and 14 in the other years in order to receive a permanent residence permit within 5 years. After six years, investors can also request Portuguese citizenship, while after obtaining a Portuguese passport there are no rules on where they should keep their assets.⁷

In this way, is created a two-class refugee system: the rich classes are the ones who are accepted, while the poor classes are the ones who are left out. Both sides turn to Europe to start a better life and find more freedom. The rich classes don't get on the boat with the hundreds of other refugees left off the coast of Lampedusa. They travel in business class on a well-known airline to Malta, Lisbon, or Andalusia, because they are not poor. On the contrary: they are millionaires from countries outside the EU, who can move freely in Europe. In Europe, there have been always programs that enable the adjustment of status for foreign investors. Great Britain (while it was part of the Union) was one of the first countries to grant citizenship to rich people from third countries. Although the European Union does not have a formal form of state regulation, federation or confederation, it is an example of very good functioning on the basis of the agreement, namely the documents known as the Treaty of the European Union (or the Treaty of Lisbon), as well as the Treaty on the Functioning of the Union European. This union has gone through all the basic stages of regional cooperation and has now reached the highest level of organization, similar to that of a state's internal organization. This achievement sets it apart from other informal unions around the world, as it is characterized by the four well-known freedoms: free movement of people, goods, labor, and capital. Since 2012, has started a kind of competition between European countries for foreign investments in their market.⁸

To obtain EU citizenship as an important condition is the knowledge of language proficiency of the country, while other criteria vary. In some of the economically less developed countries, there is the possibility of investments or financial contributions to the nation as a condition for obtaining citizenship, as is the case with

⁶ French citizenship is granted the by decree, on the proposal of the Minister of Defense, that any foreigner who has been engaged in the French army and who has been injured during his service as a participant in certain military operations. (Article 21-14-1 of the Civil Code). See at: Stiks, I., Une Citoyennete sans Cite, des cites sana citoyennete, fq.145-146, nē: Kolozova, K., (ed.), "Identities"- *Journal for Politics, Gender and Culture*, Vol.5/No.1/Winter 2006, Euro-Balkan Institute, Skopje

⁷ <http://www.dw.de/%C3%A7mimi-i-n%C3%ABshtet%C3%ABsive-evropiane/a-17812297>

⁸ http://europa.eu.int/youth/your_rights/index_eu_el.html

the Investment Program. In this case, it should be noted that high numbers are in question, therefore these ways are very rare.

European citizenship does not seem to originate from any major political change, nor from the expansion and deepening of democratic rights, but on the contrary, this act has been accompanied by both: the strengthening of external borders as well as internal political and social borders of the Union. Freedom of movement coupled with the elimination of internal borders for residents of EU member states, and the EU labelled as a police fortress for everyone else, represent the true face and tail of the same coin from the Maastricht Treaty. Settling up the national citizenship of the member countries as a condition automatically excludes many foreigners who are not residents of the Union, putting them at a disadvantage in relation to the citizens of the member countries. This also means a violation of human dignity, as defined by the General Declaration of Human Rights, voted on December 10, 1948, which in Article 1 begins with the paragraph: "All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights"⁹. Although this article is an integral part of almost all the constitutions of democratic countries, it still represents the basis for defining new elements regarding the hierarchy of the status of individuals in Europe. Citizens of member countries possess citizenship of the Union and live side by side with: citizens who are not citizens of the Union, who came from third countries, with foreigners without permanent residence, with refugees, asylum seekers and people without documents. If European citizenship were truly democratic, it would have to be based on the rights and freedoms of all its inhabitants, because then it would be more inclusive, more representative, more democratic and more legitimate. The current practice of the EU's operation tends to strengthen even more the connection between nationality, citizenship and sovereignty, with which foreigners are overlooked in the administrative and political aspect. Their fate to be or not to be residents of Europe is always in the hands of local politicians.

The elimination of Europe's internal borders showed that the preservation of human dignity is the main goal. The inhabitants of different countries of the member states of the Union did not move to the most developed countries and regions within the Union, although this phenomenon was quite expected and seemed very reasonable. There are no internal border controls between the countries of the Schengen area, except in the four non-EU countries: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

Ethnic communities, as minorities within different European regions, do not constitute a community, but only an initiative towards common ties, especially in the political sphere. In this way, together with members of other ethnic communities and the local population, they manage to create a political community, regardless of how artificially it may have been constructed. These people are usually brought together by a common origin, which encourages them to cultivate a subjective belief in their existence.

At the beginning of the XX-th century, in the scientific part dedicated to the authentic European spirit and the specific European identity, a complementary definition on Europe was accepted, that is, the prejudice on Christian Europe, which denied the presence of other religions as co-builders of the European identity, especially the presence of Islam¹⁰. The beginning of the XXI century is characterised by the affirmation of the truth about the powerful presence of the spiritual, moral, scientific and vital values of Islam in the formation of the European identity. This issue has been overlooked or even denied by the researchers whose object of study was European identity, therefore it should be perceived in the context of the continuous and intense influence of Islam. Even if European governments deny the values of non-Christian communities, it is the European population which best assess the tradition, values and general culture of people belonging to other communities. Recently, those cases have become a reality, members of minority communities become active participants in the political life of the countries where they have obtained citizenship. We find them as people's elected representatives, members of parliament or mayors of municipalities/cities.

⁹ 10 Habermas, J., (2013), *Kriza e Unionit Evropian në dritën e një konstitucionalizmi të së drejtës ndërkombëtare: Një ese mbi Kushtetutën Evropiane*, Asdreni, Shkup, F.13 (Libër i përkthyer)

¹⁰ Muhiq, F., (2013), *Identiteti islam i Europës*, Logos-A, Shkup, f.11, (libër i përkthyer)

4. Methodology

This study aims to verify the difference in the integration of foreigners within the borders of the European Union, namely the integration of Albanians, through a non-experimental methodology, treating the data from the official sources of INSTAT¹¹ and Eurostat¹². The time period in which this study is focused refers to the calendar years from 2017 to 2021, with the comparison of the values for the migration factors and the number of the population who have migrated within these years and the respective motives. The data analysis was carried out by distinguishing the total number of the Albanian population who migrated to the different countries of the European Union, as well as the requests for residence permits from foreigners in the Albanian state for certain reasons.

5. Results

Table 1 presents comparative data on migration, emigration and net migration of Albanians to the EU, according to the calendar year. These data show that in 2017 there were more Albanian immigrants (N=25003), compared to 2018 (23673), 2019 (20753), 2020 (7170) and 2021 (9195), this shows that in recent years, the number of Albanian immigrants has decreased significantly. Albanian immigrants, unlike in 2017 (39,905), in 2018 (38,703) their number has been reduced, this number continues to increase in 2019 (43,835), in 2020 (23,854) again, its double is reduced also in 2021 (42048) significantly increases the number of Albanian immigrants. These data show that the net migration¹³ in all cases is shown to have negative values for the Albanian country, starting from 2017 it obviously continues to grow in the same direction until 2021, these data are important in terms of statistical $p < 0.01$.

Table 1. Number of emigrants, immigrants and migration of Albanians in the EU by calendar year

Year	Migration	Emigration	Net Migration
2017	25 003	39 905	-14 902
2018	23 673	38 703	-15 030
2019	20 753	43 835	-23 082
2020	7 170	23 854	-16 684
2021	9 195	42 048	-32 853

The results presented in Table 2 show the analysis of the comparison of (surviving) births by maternal age group and calendar year of birth, from these results it is shown that the number of births at all ages has decreased from 2017 to 2021, inclusive the age group under 19 years old, which is categorised as the largest sample of births, as well as the age group 20-24 years old, 25-29 years old, 30-34 and 35-39 years old, while the number of births of mothers in the age groups decreases to a very large extent 40-44 years old, 45-49 years old and over 50 years old. From the relevant values it is shown that the Albanian State has a decrease in the number of births in all ages according to years and this decrease continues until 2021. These data have been analysed to compare them with the values of migration, emigration and net migration (see table 1), which speaks of the risk of decreasing the number of the Albanian population in the state of Albanians, from this risk

¹¹ Republika e Shqipërisë – Instituti i statistikave (www.instat.gov.al)

¹² Statistikat dhe të dhënat e cilësisë së lartë për Evropën (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>)

¹³ Net Migration is an indicator that refers to the total number of people entering the territory of a minus country with the total number of persons leaving the territory of the state, citizens and non-citizens.

also follows the loss of the workforce, the intellectual class and all the necessary staff of the state. The data for the relevant comparison were statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Table 2. Births (survived) by maternal age group and calendar year of birth

Year	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Age	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Up to 19 years	1729	6	1508	5.21	1427	5	1259	4.48	1097	4.03
20 - 24 year	8262	27	7299	25.23	6691	23	6183	22.02	5609	20.61
25 - 29 year	10981	36	10314	35.65	10070	35	9905	35.28	9392	34.52
30 - 34 year	6904	22.37	6812	23.54	7055	24.7	7229	25.75	7476	27.47
35 - 39 year	2494	8.08	2482	8.58	2779	9.73	2945	10.49	3042	11.18
40 - 44 year	426	1.38	444	1.53	492	1.72	470	1.67	511	1.88
45 - 49 year	32	0.1	41	0.14	41	0.14	45	0.16	41	0.15
Over 50 year	9	0	4	0.01	6	0	39	0.14	6	0.02
Unknown	32	0.1	30	0.1	0	0.04	0	0	37	0.14
In total	30869	100	28934	100	28561	100	28075	100	27211	100

Table 3 presents the results of the motives of foreigners who applied for a residence permit in Albania from 2017 to 2021. The main motives analysed in this table are the motive of employment, family reunification, studies, humanitarian motives and different motives. The results show that the highest motives in all years from 2017 to 2021 are those of employment that are over 45%, family reunification motives include 23% increasing to 27% in 2020 and 24% in 2021, motives for study from 2017 that include 5.1% go to ruin until 2021 to 2.8%, humanitarian motives in 2017 had 18.% that in 2019 showed a decrease of 6.1 and the corresponding value returns in 2020 and 2021 , while the smallest motives are those of changes which from 2017 to 2021 show an increase of up to 3%. This comparison was also statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, which shows that the interest or motivation to study in the Albanian country goes to waste by referring to the residence permit requirements, it also verifies the fact that it is the incentive and "need" of young people in European countries.

Table 3. Foreigners with a residence permit in Albania from 2017 to 2021 according to the reason for the application.

Academic Year	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Values	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	12906	100	14162	100	13507	100	13609	100	14921	100
Work visa	6334	49.1	695	49.1	7432	55	6465	47.5	7124	47.7
Family reunion	2982	23.1	3303	23.3	3696	27.4	3334	24.5	3602	24.1
Study	656	5.1	633	4.5	750	5.5	277	2	413	2.8
Humanitarian	2381	18.4	2558	18	820	6.1	2679	19.7	2656	17.8
Others	553	4.3	718	5.1	809	6	854	6.3	1126	7.6

6. Conclusion

Contemporary Europe is in an absurd situation. European integration and political avoidance of people politically assessed as foreigners, represents a complementary process. The excluded suburbs of political participation are increasing and enlarged day by day. The outflow of this situation may be the establishment of the city/states for European citizenship and demolition of ghetto suburb walls i.e. their union with the City. This would be legally and politically feasible and acceptable, it would open the path towards a Europe of equals and considered as a "mother" by all its inhabitants.

Comparative data on migration, emigration and net migration of Albanians in the EU, according to the calendar year, show that in 2017 there were more Albanian immigrants, compared to 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, which means that in recent years significantly reduced the number of Albanian immigrants. The number of Albanian immigrants has been decreasing since 2017, but this number in 2021 has obviously increased. Net migration to the Albanian country starting from 2017 obviously continues with growth in the same direction until 2021. The number of births at all ages has decreased from 2017 to 2021, which is an indication that the Albanian state has a decrease in births at all ages according to years and this decrease continues until 2021. All this speaks of the risk that can follow the Albanian state in the loss of the workforce, the intellectual class and all the necessary state cadres.

As for the motives of foreigners who have applied for a residence permit in Albania, the results show that the highest motives in all years from 2017 to 2021 are those of work visa, motives of family reunion, study and humanitarian motives. This means that the interest or motivation for studying in the Albanian state goes down, referring to the residence permit requirements, it also verifies the fact that it is the incentive and "need" of young people's migration to European countries.

Considering of what we dealt in the theoretical aspect, as well as the data we gained in the practical aspect, we recommend:

The Albanian state should pay more attention to the development and strengthening of the entrepreneurial skills of young people through various forms of formal and informal education, in order to stimulate them to establish start-up businesses in order to influence the reduction of the number of Albanian immigrants.

To carry out campaigns for counselling and orientation of young people from an early age of primary education, enabling them to plan and build their future in Albania.

To provide conditions for quality education, in order that excellent students who will complete secondary education, continue their higher education in Albania and not run away to study abroad, from where they never return.

To offer study programs in English in higher education in order to motivate young people from abroad to study in the Albanian state.

To ensure better economic well-being, with sufficient salaries that would motivate young people to plan their future in the Albanian state, but would also stimulate marriage among them at the right age, as well as increase the birth rate.

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