# WHAT CAN A CITY DO FOR ITS IMMIGRANTS?
# THE STRATEGIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN FRANCE

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**ABSTRACT**

As the proportion of immigrants among the inhabitants of today's cities is growing, they have to find and form new bonds and social relations once established in their new place of residence. Their integration into the majority society can be significantly facilitated by policies implemented in their favour by local governments. This paper evaluates and compares the practices in two different French regions: in the capital of Paris and in the towns of the rural region of Basse-Normandie. The research has shown that the attitude of town halls in the cities studied is significantly influenced by the size of the immigrant population, how long it has been in the city and its composition, as well as by the political persuasion of the city leaders. The most striking difference between national level policy and that implemented in daily practice was found in the city of Paris. In the region of Basse-Normandie there was also a statistically significant correlation between the helpful attitude of the city government to the immigrants and the activity of immigrants themselves, as shown by the number of local non-profit organizations founded by immigrants. The French experience can serve as a lesson and an inspiration for cities in other parts of world.

**Keywords:** integration of immigrants, local integration policy, France, Basse-Normandie, Paris

## 1. Introduction

France is one of the European countries with the longest tradition of receiving immigrants and was long considered a model in terms of their integration (Freeman 1994; Pison 2010). The national government is always responsible for migration policy at the borders, but all migration ends up as a local government issue – and it is local councils that end up dealing with it (Travers 2015, in Casciani 2015). Which tools and measures do local authorities really use when supporting the integration of immigrants into mainstream society? The answer to this question will be looked at in this article, based on the analysis of the experience in two French regions: metropolitan Paris and the rural region of Basse-Normandie. These two regions are as distinct as possible in both the total number of immigrants living there (and their percentage in the total population of the region) and their socio-geographic characteristics.

## 2. The diversity of approaches to the concept of integration and the importance of the local dimension

The term *integration* is used by various researchers to describe both the process of integration itself and its results, even on different levels (individual-group-state).

*At the level of the state*, three main classical models can be distinguished. They differ in the conditions and possibilities which they give to the immigrants in the "new" country and in the im/possibility for them of being fully accepted in the society. *The Multicultural model* gives immigrants full rights and promotes their cultural differentness, which is considered to be valuable (Sweden, Canada). In the *differential exclusion model* (Germany, Austria) the immigrants are very quickly integrated into one or two domains of everyday life (most commonly in the labour market), but they are denied access to other ones (most usually to citizenship). *Assimilation*, applied in France, gives all rights to immigrants very quickly, but in exchange it is expected that they will give up their cultural distinctiveness and that they will in some degree "forget" where they come from. However, only few countries nowadays apply one of the above listed models in its pure form: states most commonly use a combination of the various approaches in different domains. This approximation of attitudes to immigrants gave birth to a model called *civic integration*, used in fact by the majority of western countries today (Baršová, Barša 2005; Lachmanová 2006).

*At the level of individuals*, integration is at the same time the *process* of integrating individuals (or groups) into the majority society, as well as the subsequent *outcome*. Integration as *process* means incorporating newcomers into an already existing society that has a certain structure. Heckmann and Schnapper (2003) defined four basic dimensions of the process of social integration: *structural* (gain of rights and access to memberships, roles

**Tab. 1** Main characteristics of the assimilationist model on the local level according to Alexander (2007).

| Local policy | | Assimilationist |
|---|---|---|
| Local authority attitudes toward labour migrants | | Migrants permanent, but their otherness is temporary |
| Policy type and aims | | Facilitate individual integration by assimilation into host society |
| Measures | | Universalist (non-ethnic criteria); formal anti-discrimination mechanisms |
| *Policy domain* | *Issue area* | *Attitude of local government* |
| Legal-political | Civic status | Facilitate naturalization |
| | Consultative structures | Reject, or mixed (non-ethnic) advisory councils |
| | Migrant associations | Co-opt or exclude migrant associations; delegation to migrant associations is implicit |
| Socio-economic | Social services (health, welfare, etc.) | Equal access to all services (ignore ethnic-based needs) |
| | Labour market | Anti-discrimination policy; equal access to vocational training |
| | Schools | Spatially dispersed; support for teaching the language of the majority society |
| | Policing | Depends on areas; migrants can join |
| Cultural-religious | Religious institutions/public practices | Institutions (e.g. mosques, religious school) and religious practices are not supported |
| | Public awareness | Campaigns against racism and discrimination |
| Spatial | Housing | Equal access to social housing; marginalization of discrimination based on ethnic criteria in access to housing |
| | Urban development | Ethnic enclaves are seen as a problem – the policy of their abolition; policies of gentrification |
| | Symbolic use of space | Against clear and physical representation of differences (e.g. a mosque yes, but without a minaret) |

Source: Alexander 2007, pp. 40–45.

and positions in the key institutions of the host society), *cultural, interactive* (personal participation of immigrants in relationships in the host society) and *identification* (the sense of belonging to the majority). This *process* is necessarily two-sided: for immigrants, it means learning about the new culture, the acquisition of rights and duties and gaining access to positions in society and to social status; while for the host society it means opening up institutions and ensuring equal opportunities for migrants. Seeing integration as the *resulting state* usually relies on the idea of immigrants occupying similar positions in the society as the members of the majority society. This makes possible to measure the success of particular integration policies, by comparing the values of selected indicators between the majority and immigrant populations.

However, the process of integration of immigrants into the host society always has a strong local (and especially urban) dimension. From the historical point of view, it was big cities with strong economies that had the most experience with integrating diverse and culturally enriching populations (Borkert et al. 2007), thus serving as "machines of integration". Therefore, "the integration of immigrants takes place at the local level" (Bosswick, Heckmann 2006, p. 17). The city administrations may act "only" to implement national integration policy or, on the contrary, they may have considerable autonomy and independence in both finance and opinion (Borkert et al. 2007). The processes and the structures working in a place are, of course, heavily influenced by policy at higher levels, i.e. counties/regions, states or even by supranational

organizations such as European Union (OECD 2006). However, everyday practice in the implementation of laws and regulations at the local level always provides some space for municipalities' own reading. Everyday practice also includes other actors working in the locality, who add to local integration policy some of the aspects which the local government does not pay attention to. Most commonly, local authorities cooperate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which provide social and legal assistance to the immigrants, but this can also involve (for example) employers, trade unions or local labour offices. However, the attitudes and everyday practices of municipal councils and their administrations are the most important and they have a significant influence on the results of the process of integrating immigrants into the host society. The type of migration coming to a city defines the attitude of municipality to integration policy and determines whether integration is a key or marginal priority within the issues solved (Bosswick, Heckmann 2006).

Since integration is a two-way process, immigrants play an important role. Complete knowledge of all aspects of the local environment allows local leaders to easily identify specific problems that migrants may face. The powers of authorities give them the opportunity to undertake actions that will facilitate the life of immigrants (Drbohlav 2005), adjusted to the group concerned (refugees, economic migrants etc.) (OECD 2006). The interest of cities in creating a good and functional integration strategy is strongly motivated by the fact that if

the integration does not work, the city will pay a high price, for example in the form of spatially segregated areas (Borkert et al. 2007).

A classification of policies implemented by local authorities within the above state models of integration was carried out by Alexander (2007). To the three main models at the national level (see above) he added a fourth one, *making no policy*. He did not however consider the model of civic integration: he ranked the two main components of this model (i.e. courses in the language and everyday culture of the majority society) among the elements of the model of local multicultural policy. He then assigned – for each of these four models of local integration policies – the main types of non/action of local governments in four key areas: legal-political, socio-economic, cultural-religious and spatial. The main characteristics of the assimilation model at the local level can be seen in Tab. 1. This shows how the policies of local governments in France should work if acting according to national policy. Given the fact that this is one of the few theoretical perspectives (if not the only one) that assigns to the traditional national models of integration specific characteristic of supposed behaviour of local governments (and hence makes it possible to compare them), we used it as a theoretical basis for our research.

## 3. Methodology

All the above inspired our research, conducted between 2007 and 2011 (Seidlová 2012). The research questions which we sought to answer were as follows:

1) Is there any difference in the approach of local governments to immigrants, even if they are acting within the same national model of integration of immigrants? Does this difference depend in some way on the proportion of immigrants in the total population of the city and/or on the composition of the immigrant population?

2) If there is a difference in the approach to immigrants, does it also depend on the type of socio-geographic environment, e.g. will be there any difference between a town in a rural region and a big metropolis?

3) How much do the local councils really know "their" immigrants and their specific needs?

4) At what moment does the local government start to be aware of the need to participate actively in the process of integrating immigrants? When do they start to deal with the integration of immigrants? What tools and measures do they use?

The hypotheses to be tested were then formulated as follows:

*1) The way local councils implement national integration policy varies depending on the context in which they act: the higher the proportion of immigrants in the total population of their city, the greater is the awareness of the need to deal with immigrant integration.*

*2) The process of integration of immigrants achieves better results in those places where there is a higher concentration of immigrants.*

*3) Better knowledge of local conditions allows local governments to better formulate specific projects which aim to promote the integration of immigrants into the host society.*

*4) The tools and measures used by local governments in rural and metropolitan areas are quite similar; the only difference is the extent.*

With the following clarifications:

ad 1) awareness meant in the sense of the knowledge that something exists, and verified within semi-structured interviews and hence set on a three-level scale according to the understood need to deal with immigrants in the city/city district;

ad 3) the local officials have a better knowledge of local conditions than state officials would have.

In order to confirm their validity or non-validity, it was necessary to select two regions in the chosen country (i.e. France), which vary in *the proportion of immigrants in the total population of the region* and in *the proportion of immigrants in the region out of the total number of immigrants* in France. We looked for both extremes: for the regions with the lowest and the highest values of these shares, under the assumption that cities in such regions will also meet the desired dichotomy "*city in rural area – metropolis*". After analysing the available secondary data, the regions of Île-de-France and of Basse-Normandie appeared as most appropriate. The region of Île-de-France had to be narrowed to one city, so the choice of its capital, *Paris*, where in 1999 24.1% of all immigrants in the region lived was obvious (INSEE 2006). Almost half (41.0%) of immigrants in the region of Basse-Normandie lived in only seven cities: *Caen, Hérouville-Saint-Clair, Cherbourg-Octeville, Flers, Alençon, Argentan* and *Lisieux*. These seven cities and 14 friendly city districts out of the total 20 in Paris (see below) were further explored.

Besides the analysis of secondary data and participative observation, semi-structured interviews were used to gather information. We interviewed 39 representatives of cities/city districts and representatives of NGOs on 22 questions, divided into three main areas: *The relationship to national immigration policy, the migration situation in the municipality* and *the role of municipal government in the integration of immigrants*. The composition of respondents was as follows: 15 representatives of NGOs (8 with national scope, 7 local to Basse-Normandie); 15 representatives of districts of Paris and of the city of Paris (only 14 persons in 14 districts out of 20 agreed to be interviewed: in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th districts, and 1 person from the Paris Town Hall); 9 representatives of the seven studied cities in Basse-Normandie, i.e. Caen, Hérouville-Saint-Clair, Cherbourg-Octeville, Flers,

Alençon, Argentan and Lisieux (in Hérouville-Saint-Clair and in Flers the main representative of the city invited one of their colleagues to join us). The representatives of municipalities (cities/city districts) were elected officials, most commonly deputy mayors, and were responsible for the integration of immigrants, social cohesion etc. (the title and responsibilities of the role varied from town to town and this became one of the factors which we studied).

The attitude and the un/friendliness (or un/helpfulness or un/quality) towards immigrants of each of the town halls studied – as well as the comparison between them – was then evaluated using our own methodology (Seidlová 2012). This comparison consisted of five steps, including links to other data (i.e. not only the data acquired from semi-structured interviews):

*Firstly* we described the immigrant population of each city/city district using secondary data sources. The first ranking was hence created: the city/city district with the highest proportion of immigrants ranked first.

*Secondly* we evaluated the factors that could potentially affect the form of local integration policy, with the choice of these factors based on existing theories and concepts of migration and migration policy. The institutional theory, looking for the influence which institutions and their leaders could have on the continuity of international migration and (in brief) stating at the same time that once institutions established it is impossible to stop migration (Massey et al. 1993), was the most inspiring, added to the considerable powers of French mayors towards the immigrants (see below). Only the following data were available in comparable quality for all the cities/city districts studied:

1) Political affiliation of mayors and their possible migrant origin. The political affiliation, i.e. if a mayor belongs to right-wing or left-wing party, was chosen even if due to the voting system in France (based on a huge list of candidates) political affiliation itself does not usually play such a significant role on the local level. However, we can still presume that elected left-wing mayors will be more welcoming and friendly to immigrants than their right-wing counterparts. We took the *Socialist Party* as the left-wing party; the *Union for a Popular Movement* and the *National Centre of Independents and Peasants* as right-wing parties, and the *Europe Ecology Greens* and *Democratic Movement* as more or less centre parties;

2) Possible migrant origin of others members of the city/city district council;

3) The areas that deputy mayors were responsible for;

4a) For Basse-Normandie: the existence of the city's own strategy addressing the issues of integration of immigrants; the presence and activities of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) of both national and local scope) and by whom they were founded (majority society – immigrants);

4b) For Paris: the presence of an advisory body composed of immigrants from third countries (i.e. non-members of EU) – despite the fact that there should be such body in every district, it has been set up only in a few.

The ranking for each of these factors (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4a, 4b) for the surveyed cities/city districts was then averaged, giving the second final ranking by other prerequisites for the implementation of "integration-friendly" policy.

*The third step* evaluated the data acquired from semi-structured interviews in terms of the policy tools used (number, nature). The nature of the tools and their un/friendliness (un/helpfulness) towards immigrants were judged according to Alexander's scale (2007): the most accommodating, immigrant friendly and helpful local integration policy is a multicultural one, assimilation is less responsive, discriminatory policy is less friendly and the last and least friendly is no policy (or *ad hoc* policy). This gave us the third ranking of the cities/city districts by their actual integration policy.

In the *fourth step*, the rankings of the cities/city districts were compared within the two researched regions using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

*Finally*, the results for Paris and Basse-Normandie region as a whole were compared.

## 4. Basic characteristics of studied territories

First of all, it must be pointed out that as our research was conducted between 2007 and 2011, the input data were those from the 1999 census, the most recent one available at the beginning of our research (INSEE 2011a). In French statistics, the most important division of inhabitants is according to their citizenship. A distinction is made between French citizens (French) and citizens of another state (foreigners). An immigrant is then a person born outside France with other than French citizenship and currently living in France. The difference and interference of terms used can be clearly seen from Fig. 1 below.

So, in *Paris* in 1999 there were 386,398 immigrants, who constituted 18.2% of all city residents. There were also 305,784 foreigners living there in the same year, making up 14.4% of all inhabitants (INSEE 2006). Among the city districts, foreigners represented more than 20% of inhabitants in districts 2 (21.5%) and 10 (21.2%), and districts 18 (19.1%), 3 (18.3%) and 19 (17.2%) also approached this level. At the other end of the scale, with percentages of around 10%, were districts no. 12 (9.8%), 15 (11.0%) and 5 (11.3%). So, the districts in the northern part of the city, on the right bank of the Seine (the "business" area of the city) had a larger proportion of foreigners in the total population as compared with districts in the southern part of the town, on the left bank of the Seine (the "intellectual" part of the city). Most immigrants in Paris came from Algeria (38,691 persons, i.e. 10.0% of all immigrants), Portugal (34,549 persons, i.e.
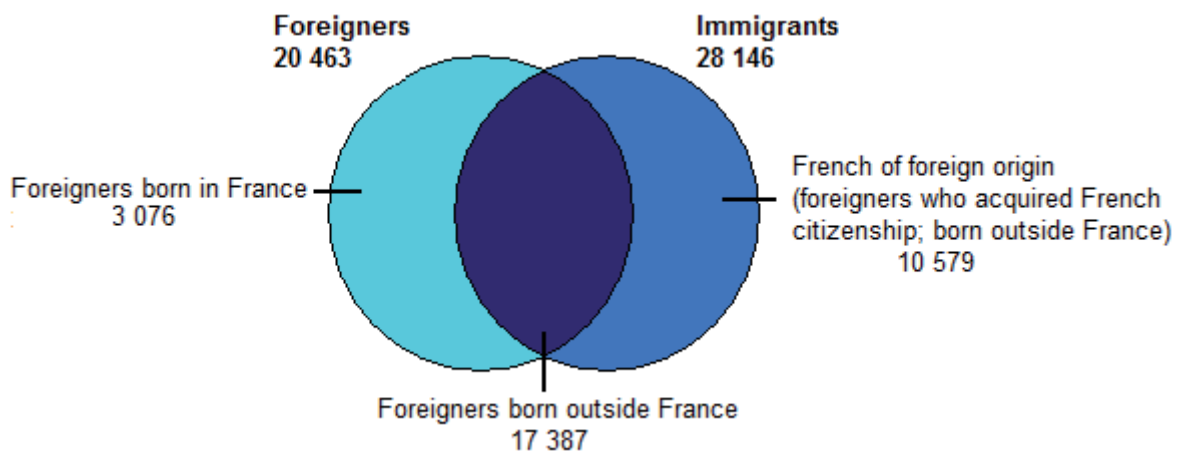
**Fig. 1** Immigrants and foreigners in the region of Basse-Normandie in 1999. Source: INSEE 2006

8.9%) and Morocco (31,598 persons, i.e. 8.2%), Tunisia (29,343 persons, i.e. 7.6%) and Spain (17,197 persons, i.e. 4.5%): thus 39.2% of all immigrants in the city originated from these five countries (INSEE 2004).

In *Basse-Normandie*, situated in the northwest of France, there were a total of 28,146 immigrants in 1999 (see Fig. 1), making up 1.98% of all inhabitants of the region. Immigrants who were also foreigners born abroad came to 17,387, making up 1.22% of all inhabitants of the region. More than half of the immigrants in the region lived in the department of Calvados (52.5%; i.e. 14,774 persons), the other half were distributed quite evenly between two other departments of the region (Orne: 26.9%, i.e. 7,579 persons; Manche: 20.6%, i.e. 5,793 persons). Almost half of all immigrants (41.0%) in the region of Basse-Normandie lived in 7 cities: Caen, Hérouville-Saint-Clair, Cherbourg-Octeville, Flers, Alençon, Argentan and Lisieux. The largest in terms of numbers was the immigrant population in Caen, the administrative centre of the region (4,727 persons, i.e. 16.8% of immigrants in the region), followed by Hérouville-Saint-Clair (1,892 persons, i.e. 6.7%) and Alençon (1,648 persons, i.e. 5.9%). The cities with the largest percentage of immigrants in the population of the whole city were Hérouville-Saint-Clair (7.9% of the total population), Flers (6.2%) and Alençon (5.7%). So based on the significant presence of immigrants in them, these cities were selected as those whose local integration policies we would study. Almost half (45.3%) of the immigrants in the region came from five countries: Morocco (10.0%), Portugal (9.6%), Turkey (8.9%), Great Britain (8.5%) and Algeria (8.3%) (Blazevic 2005; INSEE 2006; Seidlová 2010; Seidlová 2012).

So how is the diversity of the immigrant population in the two regions studied reflected in the practice of their local integration policy? Are there also other factors that affect this policy? And what used to be the role of local governments in relation to immigrants from the historical point of view? When did the local councils start to be involved in this issue?

## 5. The interest of municipalities in immigrants on their territory: from the regulations set by higher levels of administration to their own activity

While there are attempts to increase the role of regions and departments in the integration of immigrants (the first such programmes date back to the 1990s), the main tasks have always been allocated to the municipalities.

The role of municipalities (towns) in relation to immigrants was shaped from the very beginning of immigration to France by regulations passed down from higher levels of administration – by the laws on the entry and residence of foreigners in France. These laws transferred to the municipalities responsibilities associated with registration, record keeping and supervision of foreigners (Seidlová 2012). Since 1888 the municipalities have to hold a special register of foreign residents, which list their number, family situation and profession (Pottier 1999). As early as 1913 the Prefect of the Seine-et-Oise department stated that right, correct and complex implementation of immigration laws relies primarily on mayors. The sudden arrival of foreign workers and associated administrative tasks surprised mayors, who had to play multiple roles at one and the same time: firstly, they had to inform those who were giving work to foreigners about their rights and obligations. Secondly, the mayors also had to defend the interests of such employers to other institutions or to assist them if they wanted to keep the situation of foreign worker illegal. On the other hand, the mayors also had to inform foreigners about their rights. Then, as guardians of order, the mayors were also asked to supervise and control the foreigners, by submitting periodic reports on the number of foreigners living in the village (town) and their employment to the prefecture of the department. Residence permits, as well as work permits for a specific place and work, were issued by police authorities, but the municipalities have been significantly involved in the process of preparing applications since 1920. The mayor had to carry out a preliminary investigation of a foreigner

applying for a work/residence permit, assessing their francophone feelings, earnings, behaviour, morals and social contacts: this order corresponds precisely to the importance of the criteria considered. Among them, only the earnings were entirely objective, the others being fully dependent on the personal assessment of the mayor. The mayor then recommended (or not) (un)suitable candidates to the prefecture, which then awarded (or not) the desired permit. The prefecture also asked the mayors for their opinion if a foreigner was at risk of expulsion. In addition, the mayors had to deal with various applications from consuls requesting information about their nationals (Hubscher 2005).

The principles set in the early days of immigration control in France are, in general, still valid today. Municipalities also have a significant role in the integration of immigrants: the specific tools used will be introduced in the next section of this article. So even today, for example, an applicant for family reunification has to meet a number of conditions (length of residence, income, accommodation etc.) in order to be allowed to bring in members of his or her family. The application is then examined by the prefect of the department for a period of six months. Within this time, many different parties are asked for their views on the application, including the mayor of the municipality where the immigrant already resides or wants to settle. The municipal officials verify the income of the applicant and investigate the foreigner's accommodation – if the foreigner doesn't agree with this, the accommodation is automatically evaluated as unsuitable. This assessment has to be objective – the mayor cannot issue an adverse opinion based for example on the view that there are already many foreigners living in the area. The prefect may also require the mayor's opinion on a foreigner's "adherence" to the basic values of the French Republic or on the level of a foreigner's integration into the majority society. If the mayor does not respond within two months, he is considered to have agreed to the application (GISTI 2008; SP 2011; Seidlová 2012).

## 6. Tools and measures used by local integration policies

The above mentioned study (Seidlová 2012) examined in detail the practice of 22 town halls from different cities/cities districts. To show these practices in detail would however be beyond the possible extent of this article. So the findings obtained were summarized and divided into three major groups, according to the target population. The tools and measures presented are the ones which are really and actively in use by local councils and their integration policies in the surveyed cities/cities districts in Paris and in the region of Basse-Normandie. Information about them was acquired during semi-structured interviews with city officials. The research confirmed the validity of the hypotheses defined above, i.e. that *the tools and measures used by local governments in rural and metropolitan areas are quite similar; the only difference is the extent.* The number of tools and measures used by a particular city/city district can be derived indirectly from the final ranking of the particular city/city district as concerns real and implemented policy (see below Tab. 2 and Tab. 3). However, in the list which follows, we identify cases when a particular tool is used only in Paris or only in the towns in the Basse-Normandie region.

The first group of tools and measures are those that *target primarily the immigrant population,* ranked from the most commonly used ones to those less used in the cities/city districts surveyed:

- *Public declaration of support for diversity* or, in other words, a statement by the city leaders about fostering an open and multicultural society. For example, the town of Hérouville-Saint-Clair in the region of Basse-Normandie openly declares its support for local multicultural policy in the words of the deputy mayor responsible for the integration of foreigners, Mr. Simeoni Kouéta-Noussithe: *"Hérouville is a window open to the world. Our differences should be our pride. Our diversity is the sign of tolerant and friendly city."* (Seidlová 2012, p. 177). This openness is then also translated into the number of activities that city does for its immigrants;
- *An Advisory Body of the City composed of representatives of immigrants from third countries* (i.e. non-EU countries) which allows immigrants to express their points of views, wishes and needs;
- *Promotion of the right of foreigners to vote in local elections* motivates foreigners to participate actively in public life;
- *Support for non-profit organizations (NGOs) which help immigrants*, whether financially or materially or in the form of help with the organisation of multicultural events. Only in the towns in the region Basse-Normandie were such NGOs concentrated in 1–2 places (houses) in the city, which facilitated the access of immigrants to this kind of services;
- *Courses*
  - *Language courses,* i.e. the French courses provided by town halls for free or for a symbolic fee (e.g. in Paris for 40 euros per school year) and held in the evening;
  - *Literacy courses* for immigrants who come either from a culture which uses a different alphabet or who are even completely illiterate;
  - *"Everyday life" courses*, informing immigrants about how institutions are functioning etc.;
- *Preparatory classes in schools for children of immigrants* in Flers in the region of Basse-Normandie: their main aim is to teach French to children of immigrants;
- *"Parenthood" for foreigners including interventions at the prefecture* is a specific tool provided by French legislation. It means that the elected members of

municipal councils can intervene at prefectures (police offices) in favour of a particular immigrant through letters, personal meetings or by accompanying him to the meetings at the prefecture – and this intervention is really effective in many cases;

- *Organization of ceremonies at the town hall to celebrate the acquisition of French citizenship* in order to stress the importance and gravity of the moment when an immigrant becomes a French citizen;
- *Advisory places targeting their activity at traditionally marginalized groups of immigrants*, i.e. at women (only in the region of Basse-Normandie) and at seniors (only in Paris):
  – Two *"Clue for women"* were functioning in the city of Cherbourg-Octeville as places where women could come and learn French or ask for a French speaking assistant to help them in dealing with everyday issues in the town (doctor, post office, school, etc.);
  – "*Social cafes*" are aimed at older migrants so that they can meet each other in a relaxed atmosphere, attend educational or cultural programs or solve their particular problems (access to social benefits, pension, etc.) with the help of a social worker who works in this cafe;
- *Banners with the requirements of various social movements that defend the rights of foreigners*, displayed on the building of the town hall or other public institutions, a new tradition since about 2005 (only in Paris);
- *A grant scheme "Developing partnerships between Paris and the South"* is a special tool of Paris City Hall used since 2006 and hence used only in Paris. It gives financial support to selected development projects that aim both to implement a development project in a country of the global South and to integrate the immigrants coming from outside of the EU and living in Paris;
- *Restoration of common residences for foreign workers* takes place only in Paris, where there are 45 collective hostels for foreign workers mostly built in the 1970s. Besides improving the technical state of buildings and the quality of housing, rooms for providing specialized services for immigrants (such as legal, social and medical assistance or courses of literacy or of French) are also built;
- *Using the possibility of the mayor's right to examine the bride and groom* in order to detect marriage fraud is an instrument that is really not favourable to immigrants, but since some town halls in Paris use it, it has to be included here (Seidlová 2012).

The second group of tools, *targeted primarily at the majority society*, is not so large in number, but it is the most visible to all, as these tools support projects that increase the awareness of the majority about the diversity of cultures present in the town. These may be of three types:

- *Multicultural festivals* that show elements of other cultures to the city's inhabitants, most commonly through performances by traditional music groups or by tasting typical foods;
- *Lectures, conferences, exhibitions, theatre and film performances* showing the country of origin of immigrants, their life in France or the life of immigrants in general;
- *Specialized libraries*, where one can borrow books related to migration issues (Seidlová 2012).

Last but not least come the third group of tools and measures *targeting all city residents* and promoting social cohesion in the city. These tools help all disadvantaged groups of inhabitants or promote the active participation of citizens in public life (Seidlová 2012). Among the very concrete tools we can mention for example:

- *Promoting equal access to all rights and all the services provided by the City:* in the case of immigrants this means that in Paris, for example, all major information booklets (about access to social housing, about services for seniors, about services for children under the age of 6, etc.) are translated into the most commonly spoken languages of the immigrant community (Arabic, Spanish, Turkish, Russian and English);
- *An Advisory Body of the City/District Council intended for all inhabitants* of the city/city district;
- *Financial and material support for NGOs* that provide legal and social assistance for free to all citizens;
- *Retraining courses held in the evening* and aiming to boost the success of unemployed citizens on the labour market (only in Paris);
- *Teams for school success for children from disadvantaged backgrounds* work in Hérouville-Saint-Clair in the Basse-Normandie region and help all disadvantaged families dealing with problems in school attendance (tutoring), family relationships, culture and health;
- Formulation of the *city's own social cohesion policy*;
- *Partnerships and cooperation with cities abroad,* which can be more formal (just a signed partnership) or more friendly cooperation on projects providing real results;
- *A special section in the local magazine* which presents two successful people who grew up in the city, at least one of whom is always of immigrant origin (only in the Basse-Normandie region);
- *A competition for lawyers for the best speech defending human rights* held in Caen in the Basse-Normandie region since 1989 is not *a priori* a tool of local integration policies, but on the other hand it shows the long-term human-rights-friendly approach of the city hall (Seidlová 2012).

As we can see from the above set list of tools and measures used in all three categories, the cities/city districts surveyed used many different tools and measures that aim to facilitate the life of immigrants and their

**Tab. 2** Ranking of the districts of Paris according to the input assumptions about the nature of implemented local integration policy and by its actual form.

| District | The ranking of the district in Paris by the percentage of immigrants in the total population of the district | The ranking of the district in Paris by the number of immigrants | The ranking of the district in Paris by other prerequisites for the implementation of integration-friendly policy* | The ranking of the district in Paris by policy implemented in reality** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2nd district | 1 | 13 | 12 | 9 |
| 10th district | 2 | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| 18th district | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 3rd district | 4 | 12 | 11 | 5 |
| 19th district | 5 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| 11th district | 6 | 4 | 1 | 6 |
| 8th district | 7 | 11 | 14 | 11 |
| 16th district | 8 | 5 | 10 | 12 |
| 1st district | 9 | 14 | 7 | 14 |
| 17th district | 10 | 6 | 8 | 3 |
| 14th district | 11 | 9 | 3 | 8 |
| 13th district | 12 | 7 | 9 | 7 |
| 5th district | 13 | 10 | 13 | 10 |
| 15th district | 14 | 3 | 6 | 13 |

Source: own survey 2008, as in Seidlová 2012

NB: * according to the criteria: Political affiliation of the mayor (right/left-wing party); Number of members of the city district council – of them those of possible migrant origin (% of total); Deputy mayor in charge of integration of immigrants; Existence of an advisory body of the city district council composed of immigrants from non-EU countries. ** i.e. ranking according to the "degree of multiculturalism" of implemented policy.

integration into the major society. However, the level of activity of local councils and the level of their friendliness (helpfulness) towards immigrants was very different in the monitored group. So the question now is: on which factors does this difference depend?

## 7. Factors influencing the helpfulness and friendliness of local integration policy

Due to the differences in the types of local governments compared (single cities in contrast to city districts), as already mentioned in the section on methodology, in each of surveyed regions slightly different factors that can affect the level of friendliness of local integration policy were examined. However, the results for the two examined regions may be concluded as follows:

As concerns the simple order (ranking) of the districts of *Paris* by the monitored indicators, the relationship between the percentage of immigrants in the total population of the district and the quality of implemented policy was fully confirmed only in one case (in district no. 11) and partially in two other districts (nos. 3 and 15) (i.e. the difference in ranking was "one" at a maximum). On the other hand, the relationship between the absolute number of immigrants living in the district and the non-friendliness of local integration policy was fully confirmed in six districts (numbers 18,

19, 8, 1, 13 and 5) and with a small deviation also in district no. 14, i.e. in a total of seven districts out of 14, so in exactly half of cases (see Tab. 2). The effect of other assumptions (i.e. of the political affiliation of mayor (right/left-wing party); the possible migrant origin of other members of the city/city district council; the deputy mayor in charge of integration of immigrants; the existence of an advisory body of the city district council composed of immigrants from non-EU countries) on the quality of implemented policy was not found at a significant level; playing a slightly bigger role only in the 10th and 16th districts. The mutual dependence between other assumptions for implementing a friendly policy and the number/percentage of immigrants in a given district was, however, entirely confirmed in the 5th district and partially in districts 2, 18, 3 and 19, i.e. in four cases in total.

Testing by Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, searching for correlations between the final ranking of a district according to the policy implemented in reality and all other rankings one by one showed a positive correlation in only one case at the chosen significance level (0.05): with the political affiliation of the mayor (right/left-wing party). The value of $r_{sp} = 0.7198$ was the only one of all detected values greater than the critical value of $r_{sp}$ for chosen significance level and number of monitored subjects, i.e. 0.5341 (Tvrdík 2008).

It can be therefore concluded that in the studied metropolis, i.e. Paris, where the percentage of immigrants

**Tab. 3** Ranking of cities in the region of Basse-Normandie according to the input assumptions about the nature of implemented local integration policy and by its actual form.

| Town | The ranking of the city in region by the percentage of immigrants in the total population of the city | The ranking of the city in region by other prerequisites for the implementation of integration-friendly policy* | The ranking of the city in region by policy implemented in reality** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hérouville-Saint-Clair | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Flers | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| (town) | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Caen | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Argentan | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| Lisieux | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Cherbourg-Octeville | 7 | 2 | 4 |

Source: own survey 2008, as in Seidlová 2012

NB: * according to the sum of rankings according to the criteria: Political affiliation of mayor (right/left-wing party); Possible migrant origin of mayor; Number of members of the city council of possible migrant origin (% of total); Deputy mayor in charge of integration of immigrants; NGOs with national scope – number of branches; NGOs with local scope in the fields of human or migrant rights or humanitarian aid – number; NGOs with local scope – founded by immigrants – number. ** i.e. according to the resulting classification according to Alexander, where ad hoc policy was considered to be the least friendly to immigrants and multicultural policy as the most helpful and friendly; then the cities were ordered by the number of tools and measures used.

in the population varied from 11.0% (district no. 5) to 21.5% (district no. 2) in the studied districts, the most important factor in implementing a specified policy is the political affiliation of the district's mayor (right/left-wing party) and the other factors considered do not play such a significant role as we expected.

In the case of cities in the *Basse-Normandie* region, the relationship between the percentage of immigrants in the total population and the quality of implemented policy was confirmed only in two cases: in Hérouville-Saint-Clair and in Lisieux. The cities of Caen and of Cherbourg-Octeville in fact implemented relatively "better" policies than those expected according to the percentage of immigrants in their total populations while, on the other hand, the towns of Flers, Alençon and Argentan implemented "worse" policies (see Tab. 3). These differences may be explained mostly by other considered factors, such as the political affiliation of mayors (right/left-wing party); the possible migrant origin of members of the city council; the presence and activities of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the fields of human or migrant rights or humanitarian aid; the promotion of culture of foreign communities and other factors.

Testing using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, to search for correlations between the final ranking of a city in the region of Basse-Normandie according to the policy implemented in reality and all other rankings one by one showed a positive correlation in two cases at the chosen significance level (0.05): with the number of immigrants living the city and with the number of NGOs with a local scope founded by immigrants. Only in these two cases was the value of $r_{sp} = 0.821$ of all detected values greater than the critical value of $r_{sp}$ for the chosen significance level and the number of monitored subjects, i.e. 0.745 (Tvrdík 2008).

It can therefore be concluded that in the rural region the activity and initiatives of immigrants themselves are the most important factors for the implementation of migrant-friendly policies, while the activity and initiatives of immigrants are likely to be greater when more immigrants live in the city. Dependence on other observed factors probably also exists, even if these other factors may not play such an important role as the two mentioned above; however, due to the small number of cities studied it was not possible to prove this statistically.

## 8. Conclusion

We have seen that not all surveyed cities and city districts use the tools and the measures that can help immigrants with their integration into the majority society to the same degree. In some cases we even found an inverse relationship between the percentage of immigrants in the total population of the studied city/city district and the number of tools used by local governments. This discrepancy was most striking when comparing the conurbation of Caen and Hérouville-Saint-Clair in the region of Basse-Normandie with the 1st district of Paris: the percentage of immigrants was 4.3% and 7.9% respectively compared to 13.7%, but among the studied cities, the cities of Caen and Hérouville-Saint-Clair were among the most active in the field of local integration policies, while the 1st district of Paris could even be described as hostile to immigrants (Seidlová 2012). The explanation for this contradiction can be found both in the activity of people from the local council, depending on their political affiliation to a right-wing or left-wing party (for Paris), and in the activity of the immigrants themselves (in the case of cities in the region of Basse-Normandie):

In the metropolitan area studied, i.e. in the city of Paris, the most important factor for the implementation of "immigrant-friendly" policy was the political affiliation of the mayor of a city district (left-wing party). Other considered factors – including a high percentage of immigrants in the population of the district, which ranged from 11.0% to 21.5% in our studied districts – did not play such a significant role as we had expected at the beginning of our research.

On the other hand, in the rural region of Basse-Normandie, the most important factors for the implementation of "immigrant-friendly" policy were the activity and the initiatives of immigrants themselves. At the same time, these activities and initiatives are likely to be higher if there is a greater number of immigrants living in the city. Other observed factors could also interfere in the nature of adopted policy, but they probably do not play such an important role as the two factors mentioned above, even if – due to the small number of studied cities – we cannot prove this statistically (Seidlová 2012).

The results of this analysis of the attitude of French cities towards immigrants, studying cities with both high and low percentages of immigrants in the total population, can be used as inspiration for concrete and specific tools of local integration policies in cities and towns in other countries of world. Even if the current composition of the immigrant population in each country is the result of that country's specific migration history, the basic principles of successful integration of immigrants into the majority society remain the same.

The specific tools and measures that are implemented should therefore respect the situation in the concrete city, town or region. Furthermore, they should also reflect the fact that local governments are not the only players in the field of integration of immigrants in an area, as the successful implementation of a chosen strategy is always the result of cooperation between a number of parties. The involvement of NGOs working with immigrants – founded by members of the majority society or by immigrants themselves – seems to be the absolute minimum. More appropriate is cooperation with other practitioners and representatives of local/regional offices of all possible state institutions when creating or implementing the chosen local integration policy. It is also desirable to include in this strategy from the outset the mechanisms through which feedback on the applied measures and tools will be collected from foreigners living in that place. This feedback is the only tool which makes it possible to see if the adopted strategy is working well and if not, to allow flexible changes according to the suggestions of immigrants.

Generally speaking, we should recommend that city administrations think in advance when drawing up a local plan about the possible arrival of large numbers of immigrant workers in the city and prevent their possible concentration, doing this by an even distribution of possible places for hostels for foreign workers or for social housing throughout the city and its boroughs. If, for example, a new factory is due to open within the city and if it seems that likely there will not be enough local inhabitants to staff this factory, the arrival of foreigner workers is more than probable and the local council should not hesitate to cooperate with the new employer. The local council should also participate in providing the accommodation for immigrants as well as in setting up new places to provide specialized services for them. At the same time, it is also important to inform local residents about the new and emerging situation.

If there are immigrants already living in the city, it is essential to carry out a thorough analysis of them (number, origin, age distribution, etc.) before beginning to prepare or adopt any strategy and actions in their favour. If the city lacks the capacity to provide immigrant-specific services (like legal or social counselling, language courses, etc.), it is advisable to set up a mechanism that will support local NGOs in doing so (or to collaborate with a NGO of national scope and help it set up a new branch in the city). Translating leaflets about the services provided by the city and the website of the city into the most commonly spoken languages of communities living in the city then ensures that immigrants are better informed about everyday issues and prevents them using the services of questionable mediator agencies.

And last but not least, every city council should continue to bear in mind the needs of people from the majority population, in order to prevent their feeling that the council is so immersed in combating discrimination and promoting diversity issues that it forgets the needs of other disadvantaged populations of its city.

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**RESUMÉ**

### Co mohou města dělat pro imigranty? Strategie místních samospráv ve Francii

Mezi obyvateli současných měst mají čím dál větší podíl imigranti. V jejich začleňování do většinové společnosti jim přitom významným způsobem mohou pomoci politiky prováděné místními samosprávami. Byly vybrány dva regiony, které splňovaly požadavky jak z hlediska rozdílné velikosti podílu imigrantů na celkovém počtu obyvatel v nich žijících, tak z hlediska odlišnosti typu prostředí: velkoměsto Paříž (resp. 14 jejích obvodů) a sedm měst ve venkovském regionu Basse-Normandie (Caen, Hérouville-Saint--Clair, Cherbourg-Octeville, Flers, Alençon, Argentan a Lisieux). Ve vlastním výzkumu, realizovaném v letech 2007–2011, byly mimo sekundární analýzy dat a pramenů uplatněny mj. metody polostrukturovaných rozhovorů (se zástupci neziskových organizací a se zástupci obcí) a autorkou sestavený postup komparace lokálních integračních politik. Výzkum prokázal, že radnice zkoumaných měst/obvodů v praxi aplikují řadu opatření, která dle definice Alexandera (2007) spadají do modelu lokální multikulturní politiky. Postoj jednotlivých měst/obvodů k imigrantům byl výrazným způsobem ovlivňován nejen velikostí populace imigrantů, délkou jejího usazení ve městě a jejím složením (země původu, typ migrace apod.), ale také politickým přesvědčením vedení města. Dále se prokázalo, že samosprávy levicového smýšlení umí i v době panujících restriktivních zákonů přistupovat k imigrantům vstřícněji než samosprávy pravicové, což prakticky činily např. nevyužíváním všech možností, které jim tyto zákony dávají. V regionu Basse-Normandie se mimo závislosti prováděné politiky na celkovém počtu imigrantů žijících ve městě statisticky prokázala i závislost mezi vstřícností lokální politiky a iniciativou samotných imigrantů, vyjádřenou počtem místních neziskových organizací, které imigranti založili. Z pohledu konkrétních používaných nástrojů mohou být francouzské zkušenosti inspirativní i pro samosprávy v ostatních zemích světa.

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