Multicultural Switzerland and the Challenge of Immigration

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Contents

> Introduction
> Switzerland‘s multicultural heritage
> Development and dimensions of immigration
> The politics of immigration
> Switzerland from an emigration to an immigration country
> Immigration and the challenge of multicultural conflict
Introduction

- Switzerland: historically a “model” of political and multicultural integration
- Last 50 years: strong immigration, engendering social, economic and political conflict
- Immigration: part of the problems that today divide Swiss society and politics
- Challenge for Switzerland I: can immigration be controlled?
- Challenge for Switzerland II: “Core culture” and the question of integration
The multicultural heritage I: 1848: A federal constitution for 25 cantons

- Nation-building “bottom up”: weak central government, most competencies rest with the cantons
- Multicultural nation: different religions, four languages, different history of the cantons (Constitution: the Federation consists “of the peoples of the cantons”)
- Separation between religion and state
- Federalism
The multicultural heritage II: Political power sharing

> Proportional representation of linguistic groups and political parties in the national institutions

> Electoral system: proportionality rule

> Direct democracy

> Effects:

  — Permanent “Grand coalition” of Government

  — Cooperation between four governmental parties, conflict solution by negotiation and compromise

  — Protection of minorities and social integration through “Consensus democracy” (Arend Lijphart)
Dimensions of Immigration I: Foreign population in Switzerland 1900-2007
Dimensions of Immigration II: Immigrants by nationality
Dimensions of immigration III: Comparison of 16 European countries: percent of foreign population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxemburg</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for 2004/2007
Dimensions of immigration IV
Naturalisation, per 100 inhabitants

Quellen: BFS, EUROSTAT, nationale Statistische Ämter
The politics of immigration I: 1960-80

> Reasons for high immigration after World War II

> Characteristics of the first period:
  — “Guest workers”; immigration without integration
  — “Cheap workforce”: low qualification
  — The winners neglect social costs

> The opponents
  — Their interests and arguments
  — Outsiders of the grand coalition
  — Heterogeneous; organising in parties called “xenophobic”
  — Popular initiatives against immigration mobilise but fail

> (Ineffective) attempts of the government for global restrictions
The politics of immigration II: 1980-95: The opposition becomes strong

> Refugees: a new and controversial issue
  — Sri Lanka, ex-Yugoslavia....
  — From a few hundred to 40'000 asylum seekers per year

> The rise of the “Swiss People’s Party”
  — 1992: SPP’s success against the EEA-Treaty
  — The new SPP: against Europeanisation, the welfare state and immigration
  — The (populist) conservative Right of the SPP becoming the strongest political party

> Issues of growing polarisation
  — Immigration in general (social stress, population growth, ecology)
  — Refugees (immigration, integration, stress of welfare system)
  — Integration, especially of immigrants from non-European countries
The politics of immigration III: 1995-
The globalisation of migration

> Refugees and asylum seekers: despite some restrictions, controls of immigration fail

> European politics: liberalisation of immigration
  — 2000 and 2005: The Swiss people accept bilateral treaties of the government with the EU
  — Part of the treaties: free movement of labour with the 27 EU members

> Polarised political situation today:
  — Immigration stronger than ever (70-100’000 persons per year), about 15’000 asylum seekers, a good part of them from African countries.
  — Centre parties: satisfied with liberalisation, restrictions for refugees
  — Left/Greens: better integration
  — Conservative right: against refugees, against free movement of labour
Political analysis I
The protest of the people

> Swiss voters: victims of propaganda, xenophobic, or rational?

Popular initiative forbids construction of minarets and is Accepted in 2009
Political analysis II: Reasons of protest
Immigration as part of globalisation

- For the Swiss: Globalisation = Europeanisation. Means liberalisation, privatisation, opening of the economy. Growing inequality, new hierarchisation
- Winners: export industries, (educated) people working in international services
- Losers: farmers, domestic craft, unskilled labour
- Deepening cleavages between labour and capital, between urban and rural
- Immigration adds to these conflict potentials
- Loss of autonomy of national policies especially felt in immigration policy
Political analysis III: Why conflict persists

> The pitfalls of the past:
> — The “Guest worker” concept: hiring and firing without integration
> — Underestimation of social costs of immigration
> — The illusion of “control” of immigration

> The pitfall of the present:
> — The main cause of global migration: Inequality of life chances between the First (capitalist) and the Third World (and reducing this inequality would require other policies than those of immigration…)}
Political analysis IV: Success of integration against all odds

> Switzerland: a “xenophobic” country?
> Integration: Far from perfect but a forerider in comparative perspective (employment, educational chances of second generation etc.)
> Reasons:
  — The multicultural heritage: multilinguism
  — Not federalism as such but the non-centralised polity and the autonomy of local authorities
  — Integration of Non-Europeans: a new problem. Solved by trial-and-error, exchange of local experience and evaluation
  — Strong role of civil society and its organisations
  — The shadow: unequal chances (for instance: naturalisation is easy at some places, very difficult in other places).
Political analysis V: From an emigration to an immigration country

> The instruments of classical immigration countries (Canada, US, Australia)
  — Effective national legislation regulating access and selection of immigrants
  — A (decentralised) set of integration policies

> The first condition is not given for Switzerland because
  — Free movement of labour with EU countries (consider proportion of population Switzerland-EU!)
  — Asylum-seekers: principle of “non-refoulement”
  — Control possible only for legal immigrants from non-European countries

> Swiss politics is constrained to improving integration!
Immigration and the challenge of multicultural conflict

> Immigration brings new dimensions of multiculturality- and multicultural conflict

> Only a matter of “lifestyle” (the saris of a Tamil, the headscarf of a Muslim woman)?

> How about arranged marriage, or a young Muslim forced to comply with a religious rule against his/her own will?

> The concept of “core culture” (Verena Tobler):
  — Core culture defines the set of essential institutions and binding social norms of production, social solidarity, security and education of a society
  — They differ fundamentally between industrial and pre-industrial societies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Industrial society</th>
<th>Pre-industrial society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Capitalist enterprise, technical skills of manpower</td>
<td>Subsistent family and/or clans, gender/age division of labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Global market, purchasing power</td>
<td>Family, traditional rules and local markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social solidarity</td>
<td>Welfare state, guaranteed by fiscal revenue</td>
<td>Family, according to social status and need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>State, qualifications for labour market</td>
<td>The Elder, introducing into traditional norms and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Strong monopoly of State (national law, enforced by justice, police, army)</td>
<td>Weak monopoly of State (local informal law, enforced for instance by “wise old” (justice) or young men (police)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Immigration and the challenge of multidisciplinary conflict II: Core cultures differ!

> The core culture of the industrial society consists of:
  — A constitutional order of democracy, fundamental rights, separation of religion and state
  — Public Welfare, protecting against individual risks of health, age, unemployment
  — A social contract (willingness to work for personal revenue and to contribute to public expenditure by taxation)

> Main differences of pre-industrial societies are or can be:
  — Mere subsistence economy without fiscal revenue and weak factual influence of the state and its law
  — Most economic functions rest in the family, social solidarity organised within family or clan
  — No separation between religion and state
Consequences for the practice of integration

> Migrants coming from pre-industrial societal context are confronted with a difficult task: integrating into a core culture and a social contract which is entirely different from their own.

> Some of their practices, which are functional in their society (for instance arranged marriage or gender discrimination) are forbidden in the industrial society (where these practices are no longer functional).

> Migrants have to learn to participate actively in the core culture of their host society (language, labour skills, education, welfare in exchange of participation in the labour market).

> Assimilation in core culture, but utmost liberty of life style.

> Need for an active and coherent integration policy!
For those interested in Swiss institutions and politics

Wolf Linder, Swiss Democracy
Palgrave Macmillan 2010
Houndmills, Basingstroke
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and:
www.wolf-linder.ch
Thank you