



GSSR SUMMER SCHOOL 2021

**"Exploring the impediments to non-EU
immigrant's integration in Europe:
Assessment of migrant integration policy towards
Maghrebi immigrants in France and Sweden."**

HAMID AIT EL CAID

2nd Year PhD student,

*Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science,
Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary*



Research question

- General question: what hinders the integration of non-EU immigrants in Europe?
- Specific question: why is Sweden's policy with migrant integration is more efficient/effective than the policy pursued by France ?



Research Relevance



- **Theoretical relevance:** integration as a “two-way” process needs further re-conceptualization by including native citizens in the process of migrant integration.
- **Methodological relevance :** the research attempts to reach out to immigrants in data collection, which were less the target for research on public opinion in Europe, until at least the past 5 years.
- **Policy relevance :** The thesis seeks to advice policy makers at the levels of EU and national European governments to the importance of linking their migrant integration programs with social cohesion.

Theoretical framework

- ▶ The concept of Migrant integration first appeared with **classic assimilation** theory which was associated with incorporation of migrants into mainstream American society since the early twentieth century. (**Milton Gordon's theory**)
- ▶ The theory assumed that assimilation was a necessary part of the process of upward socioeconomic mobility for immigrant groups (e.g., Warner and Srole 1945)
- ▶ The theory of assimilation received critiques by contemporary scholars and experts such as Bloemraad, Korteweg and Yurdakul (2008) claiming it a “one way” route to integration which puts burden on immigrants to adopt a culture that is not their native.
- ▶ Berry (1991) sees “integration” as a process by which non-dominant groups choose to pursue “freely” when “the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity”.
- ▶ Legrain (2006) argues that integration is a “two way” street, where immigrants need to have the will to assimilate to local ways; and natives must be willing to accept them.
- ▶ A third perspective on migrant integration emphasise that the “two way” process of integration should be re-conceptualised to avoid a distinction between ‘people who integrate’ and ‘people who do not integrate’, and thereby place insiders outside of the process. (Klarenbeek, 2020)



Research Hypothesis

- My hypothesis is centred around the idea that immigrants should take an integral part in **social cohesion** which is the core determinant of policy success towards integrating immigrants.

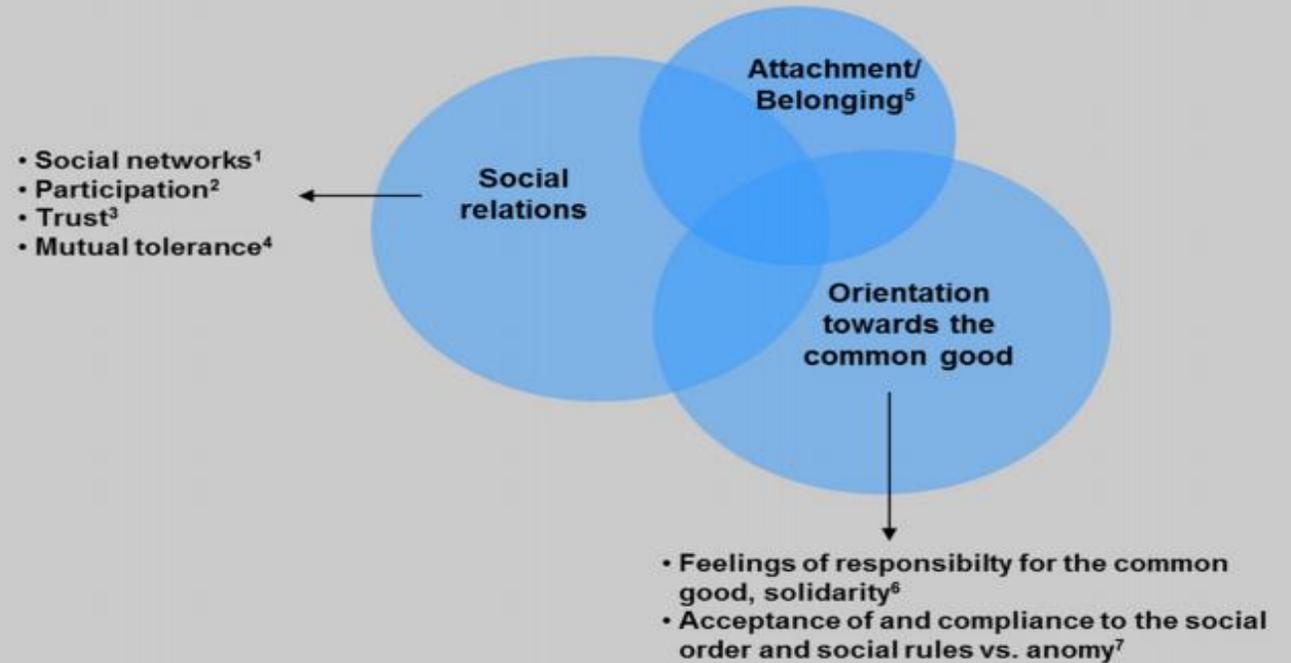
Domains	Nature of relations	
	Formal/attitudinal	Substantial/behavioural
Economic	Insertion/exclusion: a shared market capacity, particularly regarding the labour market	Equality/inequality: equality in chances and equality in conditions
Political	Legitimacy/illegitimacy: maintenance of public and private institutions which act as mediators	Participation/passivity: involvement in management of public affairs, third sector (in opposition to political disenchantment)
Sociocultural	Acceptance/rejection: pluralism in facts and also as a virtue i.e. tolerance in differences	Affiliation/isolation: share of common values, feeling of belonging to a same community

Figure 1 : the two facets typology of social cohesion, according to Bernard (1999).

Figure 2 : The essentials of social cohesion, Schiefer, D., & Van der Noll, J. (2017)

Social Cohesion:

- Characteristic of a social entity
- Multidimensional
- Assessment at micro, meso, and macro level



¹Quantity and Quality of social relations and social networks.

²Political Participation (e.g., voters turnout) and sociocultural participation (civic engagement).

³Horizontal (between individuals), vertical (in institutions).

⁴Intergroup attitudes, social distance.

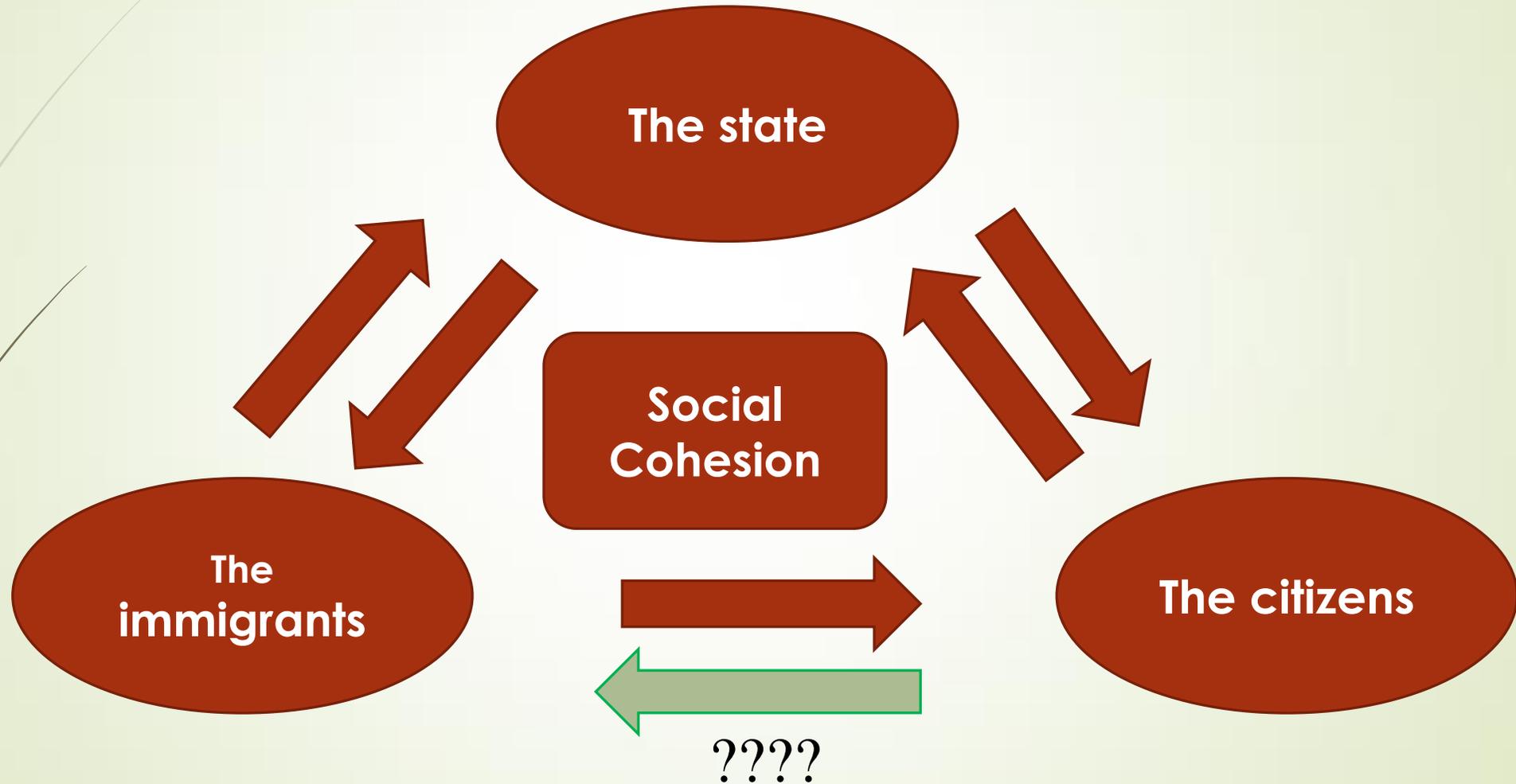
⁵Self-perception as an integral part of the group, perception of the social group as an important part of one's self/identity.

⁶Act for the needs and benefits of the group, while restraining one's own personal needs and goals.

⁷Acknowledgement of societal institutions and compliance to the 'rules of the game' of living together (as well as the rules for changing the social order) versus deviance and norm violation.

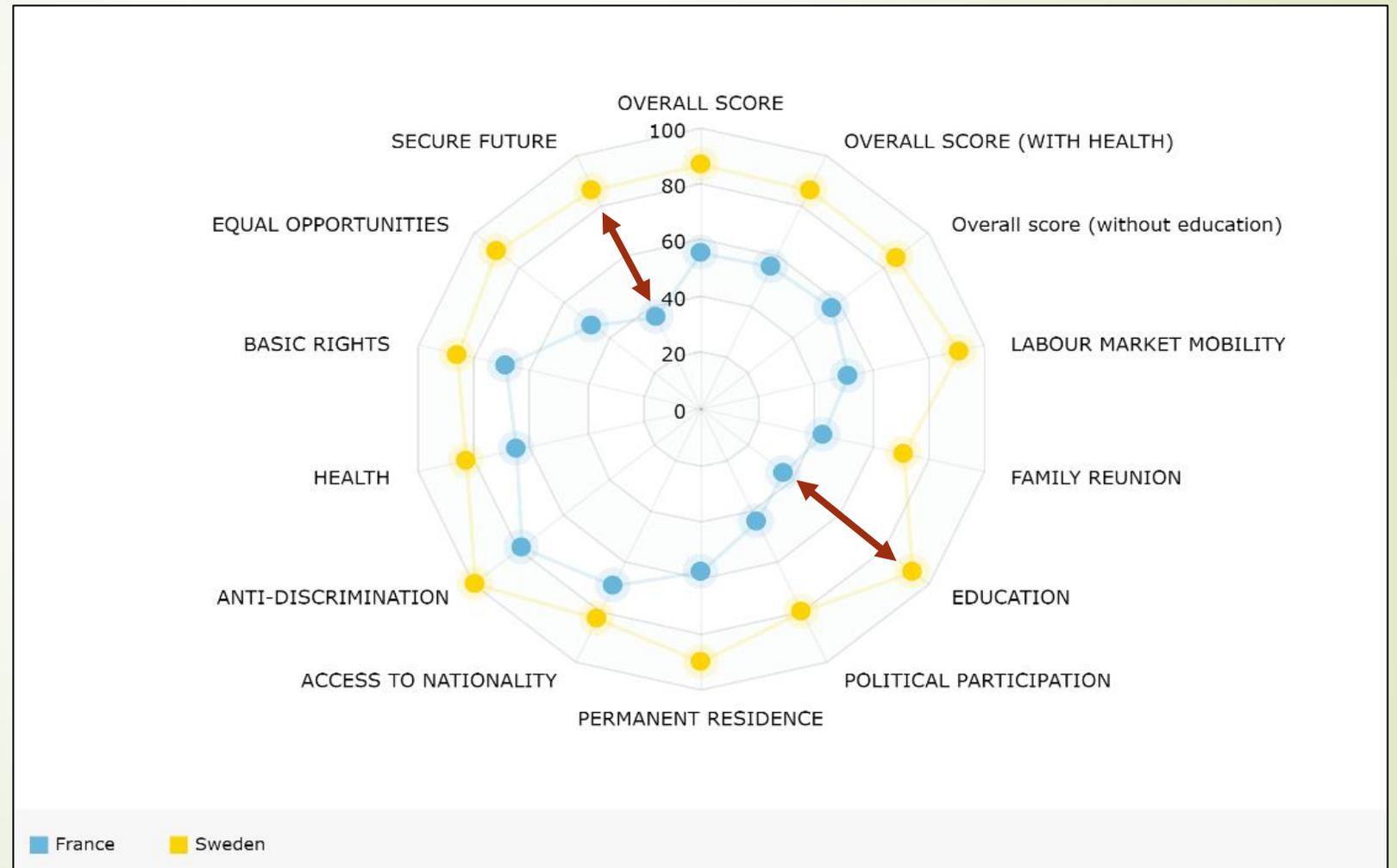
Fig. 2 The essentials of social cohesion

Why social cohesion matters ?



Case selection Rationale

Comparing migrant integration policies in France and Sweden in 2019. (*migrant integration policy index, 2020*)





Methods for data collection and analysis

- **Content analysis:** analysis of official documents in relation to government programs tailored for the integration of immigrants in areas of Education, housing, employment etc.
- **In-depth interviews:** with a sample of Maghrebi immigrants who live or lived in France and Sweden. The questions will be centred around their **perception (or experience)** with integration and social cohesion (based on Schiefer & Van der Noll's (2017) three essentials of social cohesion) Besides, parts of the questions will be based on their **evaluation** of the government actions towards their inclusion in socio-economic, cultural and political spheres.
- **Expert/stakeholder interviews:** with policy actors in charge of migration and integration affairs in France and Sweden. Their opinion regarding the **performance** of immigrants in integration will also be highlighted during the interviews.



Expected Ethical and Practical challenges

- **Communication problem (Not all interviewees speak English)**
 - **Convincing illegal (undocumented) immigrants for the interviews**
 - **Uncertainties (Covid-19, technical problems ..)**
 - **My self-image in question (objectivity matters ?)**
- 



Thank you all for your attention !



**Participation in the GSSR Summer School 2021
was facilitated by the funding from the Polish
National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA).
Project nr. PPI/PRO/2019/1/00043/U/00001.**