



European Cooperation in Sensitive Areas: The case of Migrant Integration

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates EU cooperation in the field of migrant integration. Closely tied to the notion of national identity and a core competence of the Nation State, migrant integration policy is a field where the Member States should have displayed an insurmountable degree of reluctance to act collectively at the EU level. In the early 2000s, the Member States nonetheless chose to place this highly sensitive issue on the European agenda and to take some common initiatives in this area. In light of these considerations, the dissertation aims to explain the introduction of cooperation in the field of integration and its nature—the soft mode of governance and the type of integration policy informing the cooperation. Inspired by the Strategic-Choice Approach and Liberal Intergovernmentalism, these different aspects are analyzed through a two-stage explanatory framework that focuses both on the national and EU level. The first stage considers the preferences formation process in the Member States—that is, their preferences for the cooperation and its specific features, with a particular focus on the cases of Sweden and the Netherlands. The second stage is concerned with the negotiation process between the Member States with respect to the substance and instruments of cooperation in this field. Specifically, the negotiations of two Council Conclusions, which took place in 2004 and 2011 respectively, are at the center of the analysis. The research demonstrates how policy divergence between national integration policies have acted as a driver for Member States to engage in cooperation at the EU level. It further documents how national politics not only influence the preferences of the Member States for the nature of the EU cooperation, but also explain the outcome of successive negotiations.



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Bio

Frédérique Roche holds a Master in Political Sciences from the University of Geneva (2006) and a Master in European Political and Administrative Studies from the College of Europe (2007). During the academic year 2008/2009, she taught a BA-level seminar on political participation at the department of Political Science and International Relations of the University of Geneva. After this brief teaching experience, Frédérique joined the PhD program at the EUI to undertake a research project on European cooperation in the field of migrant integration.