

Title—Immigration and Membership Politics in Western Europe
Author—Sarah Wallace Goodman
Year—2014

Categories: Migration, Politics, Europe, Citizenship

Place: Western Europe

Time: 1950-2010

Argument Synopsis:

Goodman's book considers what types of state policies exist to facilitate the civic integration of newcomers, within the region of Western Europe. She provides a systematic analysis of the various immigration policies that were implemented by the EU-15 in response to varying political and social contexts. Her main contention is the civic integration policies are created as part of different policy strategies to address different problems of membership, defined by inherited citizenship policy and political preference of the party in power that seeks to change or fortify these approaches. In order to conduct her analysis, Goodman utilizes empirical analysis as well as in-depth case studies. In particular, she features three comparative case studies that consider pairs of countries: Austria and Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands and France. These case studies draw on the **Civic Integration Policy Index (CIVIX)**, which is complemented by qualitative insights from each country. CIVIX is based on policies adopted as three different stages for immigrants: entry, settlement/permanent residence, and citizenship. These comparative case studies highlight the diversity of these policies across the region, as well as the variations in their intentions and outcomes.

She argues that state efforts should be understood in terms of strengthening togetherness in increasingly ethnically and religiously diverse democracies. Her policy analysis is grounded in an acknowledgement of the salience of citizenship as a state instrument for producing cohesiveness in liberal democracies. Goodman is a political scientist, leading her to focus on the state and its efforts. She specifically analyzes policy-making in the fields concerned with controlling immigration, managing settlement processes, and regulating the naturalization of new citizens. Her argument about state identity rests on the assumption that national identity is based on sameness and togetherness must therefore be fostered through different means.

Previous research in this subject tends to focus on the convergence of civic integration policies in Western Europe, but Goodman chooses to focus on the causes of variation among civic integration policies. She establishes important ways to systematically compare civic integration policies in Western Europe using the CIVIX. The case studies serve to demonstrate the interaction between context and government orientation. Her research is focused on the civic turn in policies, which refers to the increase in policies such as language and societal knowledge tests to obtain citizenship and other criteria including cultural dimensions.

Key Themes and Concepts:

- State efforts should be understood in terms of strengthening togetherness in increasingly ethnically and religiously diverse societies
- Civic integration policies are created as part of different policy strategies to address different problems of membership
- Membership politics are defined by inherited citizenship policy and extant political preferences of the party in power that seeks to change or fortify these approaches