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Integrating Muslim Migrants with a Gender Perspective? An Analysis of Integration Policies in the City of Brussels

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Abstract
This paper conducts a Critical Frame Analysis (CFA) of integration policies of the different institutional levels present in Brussels, from a gender perspective. The research' hypothesis shows that gender, when taken into consideration, becomes a useful tool to defend one's integration narrative and agenda on managing religious diversity in an increasing multicultural context. Brussels is an interesting case study when we talk about governance of integration policies due to the different levels of authority present on its territory and the many discourses intersecting when it comes to managing religious and ethnic diversity. The complex institutional division of power in the European Union and Belgian capital provides us with a challenging picture of how religious diversity should be dealt with and women of Muslim origins often become the target of policies aiming to bridge different cultural groups together. The data obtained with the CFA reveals a strong economic and securitarian framework in the text of EU documents on the matter of integration of Third Country Nationals, with little reference to its gender dimension. The two language communities (Flemish and French) with competence in the field of migrants integration in Belgium, however, seem to still approach religious diversity respectively through a multicultural and universalist lens. Can we talk about Multilevel Governance of migrants' integration in Brussels? How do different integration narrative within the same territory perceive gender mainstreaming and in what way do they speak about women's agency or empowerment? What role does gender play in the narrative of policy makers regarding integration of TCN and primarily Muslim communities?

Key-words: *Integration, Gender, Muslim Women, Brussel, European Commission*

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Introduction

The Muslim community in Belgium is an established one, formed of believers of different national origins, primarily Turkish and Moroccan. The Islamic community has been settling in Belgium since the 1960s and 1970s due to the granting of working visas to people coming from the Maghreb region and Turkey. Belgium counts a Muslim community of 500,000 members, about 17-25 % of the total population (Dassetto 2011, 352). This large presence of Muslims on Belgian soil is the response to the 1964 bilateral migration agreement between on one hand Belgium and the countries of Maghreb, such as Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, and Turkey on the other hand. As a response to these agreements a first migration flow of unskilled workers arrived to Belgium to fill latent positions in the various industrial and mining industries, often replacing Italian migrants, of the then booming Western European economy. Interestingly, the Belgian policies on migration show, as proved in a study by sociologist Martens (1973, 238), that Belgian authorities were interested in the demographic advantages brought by migration flows in a country with a decreasing natality index and an increasing elderly population. Policies were therefore largely favourable of Family Reunification as low skilled workers were not simply seen as a resource for the market in a moment of high demand for human capital, but also as a repopulation strategy which required, in addition to migration agreements, structural integration.

The large influx of migrants from Turkey and Maghreb lead to the first generation of Muslim migrants in Belgium and gave birth to what is now one of the most largely studied Islamic community in Western Europe.

This movement of people of Muslim faith from the Maghreb region and Turkey to Belgium, and other European countries for that matter, came to an abrupt end in 1974 when Belgium closed its borders to the migratory flow and posed serious restrictions on the access to family reunification procedures. Furthermore, 1974 was also the year in which Islam became an officially recognized religion in Belgium and these two prime policy changes indicated that the migrant community was now not only seen as a temporary issue but rather a permanent ethnic and religious minority whose cultural, social and economic integration into the receiving society needed to be properly addressed. In the following decade further issues rose in regard to the Muslim presence in the country. Migrants of Muslim origin started to be considered as a cultural threat and the right-wing parties became more aggressive and restrictive of migrants' rights (Cesari 2014, 228).

This study focuses on the Belgian capital due to its interesting governance of integration policies. The integration of migrant communities in Belgium,

and particularly in Brussels, is a complex case study due to the many actors playing a role in the process of policy framing and policy implementation. Belgium is a Federal state, composed of three territorial regions, Wallonia, Flanders and Brussels Capital Region, and three linguistic communities, the Francophone, the Flemish and the German. The separation of competences in Belgium has led integration to be assigned to the authority of linguistic communities (Billiet et al. 1978; Schrover, 2010), as it was considered a policy field belonging to the sphere of culture. In the area of Brussel Capital Region, however, there are two linguistic communities with competence on integration policies in the same territory, the French Community Commission (COCOF) and the Flemish Community Commission (VGC). Brussel, furthermore, is home to the European Union (EU) institutions which have on their side developed non-binding guidelines for the Integration of Third Country Nationals (TNC). In addition, when talking about integration policies we are already taking into consideration a number of different policy fields, from education to employment, healthcare, housing, childcare and so on. Some of the most structural aspect of integration falls, therefore, under the competences of the Regions and, in this case study, of the Brussels Capital Region.

The complex structure of integration policies in Brussel, as showed above, makes us think that we are presented with a case of Multi-Level Governance (MLG). Before analysing it as such, however, we must take a minute to discuss what multilevel governance is and when a phenomenon can be read through the MLG lens.

According to Simona Piattoni (2010), in order to see if a policy making process is 'an Instance of Multi-Level Governance' one should first ask the following questions. First of all, we need to see if there are different levels of Government simultaneously involved in the policy making process in the policy field considered. Secondly, we need to check if there is a strong involvement and agency of non-governmental actors, such as Civil Society actors or sub-national institution. Thirdly, there must be a break of existing policy making hierarchies, a series of blurred lines regarding the competences of actors in a specific policy making field.

For the reasons discussed above, the case of integration policies in Brussels seems to fit the description and can therefore be analysed through the theoretical framework of Multi-level Governance. According to Scholten (2013), on the other hand, a multilevel governance scenario of policy making requires a coordinated effort between the different levels of government and therefore a joint narrative. As we will later see in the analysis of the discourses regarding integration of migrants, advanced by the different institutional actors, this description would already be contradictory with the

idea that the case of integration policies in Brussels may be analysed through a MLG framework. It may be instead a distinct form of decoupled relation between levels of government. In this case the contradictory discourses at different policy making levels may even make the policy effort less effective (Jørgensen 2012; Poppelaars and Scholten 2008).

Integration policies, as this paper will largely discuss in the following sections, have followed different paths in the many governmental levels of the country. The complex federal structure of the Belgian state and the competence of the linguistic communities in the matter of migrants' integration has entangled the scenario of diversity management in each Region and Community in Belgium, but primarily in the Region of Brussels-Capital where the Flemish and the Francophone communities hold shared competence in the matter of integration of migrants. This peculiar form of governance of integration has impacted the way in which different integration programmes in Brussels speak about the vast diversity present on their territory. From a more multiculturalist view still applied by the Flemish Community to a universalist-like narrative of '*mixité*' often found in the discourse of the Francophone side, the integration programmes and NGOs financed by the two administrative sectors seem to clearly define integration differently. In addition, while having no true competence in the field of integration, the European Union also discusses integration of Third Country Nationals within the territory of Brussel Capital Region. This research interestingly notices how this discourse, made by a supranational entity, differs greatly from the discourses made by the local regional and communitarian institutions.

Furthermore, the way in which Muslim women are portrayed in the various discourses, the European, the Flemish and the Francophone, makes us reflect on the way in which gendering integration narrative can be a tool to shape the public opinion on the possible threat, or benefit, presented by religious diversity on Belgian soil. While the policy texts for integration of both linguistic communities seem to be primarily gender neutral, this research has applied the same method of analysis used to unpack the policy documents, Critical Frame Analysis (CFA), to the interviews conducted with policy makers, of both the Flemish and Francophone side, and programme providers of integration initiatives sponsored by the two institutions in Brussels. Doing so I was able to better understand the way in which integration of Muslim women is framed by each governmental institution acting on the territory of Brussels and to see how, the gender discourse, helps to strengthen each actor's integration narrative.

1. The European Union Policy Guidelines in a Nutshell

Compared to the level of European involvement in creating a united framework for member states concerning migration policies and asylum, the level of involvement of the European Union in matters of integration has been very vague and limited. Integration of third country nationals is, in fact, not in the mandate of the European institutions and it remains a particularly debated issue due to each member states' specific national integration history and approaches to diversity. Scholars have however noticed a slight process of Europeanization of integration policies, accompanied by a local turn in multiple European capitals and bigger urban centres.

This process of Europeanization of integration policies has been explained with three different but juxtaposing arguments. The first argument suggests that after having expanded its mandate on matters of migration and asylum, the European Union incorporated questions of integration just as an extension of their competence on securitizing borders and managing migration. A second argument, strictly related to the first, looks at the ways in which EU institutions manipulated the frames of reference in order to bridge cooperation among various actors on topics, which were highly controversial. In this specific case, the European Commission, the European Parliament and NGOs are considered as 'skilled actors' who played a major role in changing the thematic frames associated with integration policies in order to expand the community cooperation on these matters. The last argument, still re-conductible to the other two, suggests that not only the 'challengers', or actors which initiated change, are responsible for the extension of the EU mandate to integration, but that Member States as well found a beneficial outcome in allowing supranational powers to intervene on issues regarding integration measures. This was mainly due to the Member States' lack of certainty regarding best practices in the field of integration and due to the European Union's history of efficient regulation of common problems (Rosenow 2008).

The European Union Directives, which are of binding nature, have somehow decreased the level of autonomy MS used to enjoy in the field of integration of migrant communities. There are four specific EU Directives, which have increased the EU mandate in the field of integration, even if in certain cases without addressing integration or migrants specifically. These are the two Directive of 2003; the Directive on the Status of Non-EU Nationals Who Are Long-Term Residents, which provides a framework for policies toward third-country nationals in the EU, and the earlier-mentioned Directive on the Right to Family Reunification, which provides a framework for admittance of family migrants to the EU. The other two directives are the ones previously

mentioned about the equality grounds, both the 2000's Directive on Race Equality and the Employment Equality Framework Directive, which prohibit member states to discriminate on various inequality grounds.

While these are binding measures adopted by the European Union to expand its legal mandate in the field of integration, there are other non-binding documents, which still push the EU agenda in this direction. In 2003 the European Commission drafted a first opinion document on integration policies, the Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment. Here the Commission provides a first definition of integration as a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society, which provides for full participation of the immigrant. Here integration is seen as multidimensional process concerning an economic, social, political, cultural and legal aspect. In 2004, the 11 Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy (CBP) were published as the outcome of the Conference of Specialized Ministers responsible for integration issues. The CBP delineate a framework of immigrant integration, which is supposed to function as a guideline for MS in the development of their own integration strategies. The target group focuses only on third country nationals and not on EU citizens from western countries, which has caused some criticism in those MS who received a meaningful immigration flow from Bulgaria and Romania.

Following the CBPs, the European Handbook on Integration was published in 2004. In 2005, the Common Agenda for Integration by the European Commission and The Hague Programme were formulated to promote implementation of the CBPs primarily via soft governance means like persuasion, networking, and exchange of best practices. In 2013 the Common Agenda for Integration was developed further into the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, which stresses the importance of socioeconomic participation and the relevance of the local level in its promotion.

It is important to underline the difference between the vertical and the horizontal process of Europeanization of the integration policy framework. On the one hand, the European Union promotes and institutionalization of European soft measures on the matter of migrant integration through policy forums and best practice exchange at the horizontal level among member states. On the other, the Commission becomes the source of policy recommendations and funding for both programme and research on the issues related to migrant integration and, through these measures, assures its self a privileged position in influencing national policymaking and attempts at aligning national strategies to European goals.

The Commission has adopted various strategies to institutionalize research infrastructures that lead to knowledge production in the area of migrant integration. By producing knowledge, the European Union becomes an active participant in the formulation of integration policies and frames the issue of Third Country National integration as an European priority rather than simply a national one. While prior research on the modus operandi of the European Commission showed that EU institutions drawn their legitimacy in various policy fields on the production of knowledge through experts. Meanwhile, a research conducted by Geddes and Scholten (2014) on the involvement of the European Union in research for integration policies shows that rather than applying a technocratic approach to the issue the EU is gathering knowledge production, and consequentially policy developments, with its own guidelines and objectives in this field. Knowledge production becomes therefore a political instrument to insert a new European voice in the debate regarding integration of third country nationals, which until recently was strictly in the sphere of competences of national models.

2. The Divide between the Flemish and Francophone Integration Policies

According to Jacobson and Adam (2014), the Flemish and Francophone community have always hold divergent views on the debates regarding both immigration, citizenship and integration measures. While migration and citizenship remained under the central state jurisdiction, the competence in integration policy passed to the language communities in the 1980s and, consequently, the two models of diversity management in the country took two very drastically divergent turns. In comparison with its neighbour European countries, which have been recognized to have developed their own specific national integration model (Brubaker 1992), Belgium remains a complex case scenario and it does not present its own model for integration of migrant communities but rather mixed models integrating concepts borrowed from France and Netherlands (Martiniello 1995; Adam 2013). Until the 2000s the Francophone and Flemish approach to integration of migrants could have been seen through the binary understanding of multicultural versus assimilationist policies (Martiniello and Rea 2004; Martiniello 1995; Rea and Jacobs 2005; Brans et. al 2004; Rea 1994). However, in the aftermath of the introduction of the Flemish community of mandatory integration courses for newly arrived migrants on the model of the Netherlands, this simple diversification of the two approaches became more complex (Adam 2011, 2013). Belgium therefore does not have a clear national integration

model but rather a centralized migration framework in which we can easily recognize the different debates and political positions taken by the Flemish and francophone parties and two decentralized independent integration systems in each linguistic community. Looking at the frames and tools used at a regional level to develop integration policies, we are able to shed some light on the way in which each linguistic community conceptualizes diversity. Consequently, diversity is perceived either as a threat from which society needs to be protected through securitarian policies or as an economic and social added value to the community at large.

For decades internal pressures in Belgium, namely the nationalist movements of the Flemish community and the attempt of the Francophone side to maintain unity, lead to the creation of the complex federation of Regions and Communities in which Belgium is currently divided (Deschouwer 2012). This internal fragmentation started as the desire on behalf of the Flemish community to gain cultural and linguistic autonomy in a state of dominant French culture but it quickly became a movement for political autonomy and independence (Deprez and Vos 1998). Eventually in the 70s this movement lead to the creation of six meso-level autonomies in Belgium, which gained competences in various political fields except for those remaining under the competence of the central state, such as taxation, migration, justice, finance and defence. The six meso-level authorities were granted autonomy in policies linked to regional issues when it came to the three regions and to cultural and social topics for the three communities. An interesting difference between the two main national identities of Belgium is that while the Flemish Region and Flemish community merged the same political institutions into one parliament, one government and one administration, the French community and Wallonia and Francophone Brussels have not yet decided on whether to privilege the regional institutions over the linguistic institutions or vice versa.

Concerning migration issues the competences are divided between the meso-levels and the central state in the sense that, while it is under the federal state jurisdiction to regulate entry, citizenship, removals and residence, it is in the mandate of the language communities to promote migrant integrations and achieve effective equality and non-discrimination.

However, despite this complex scenario and division in the field of integration competences, scholars have noticed that there continue to be two different media debates as well as discourses in the political arena in regard to diversity and migration, one Francophone and one Flemish. The Belgian Federation has been recognized by Deshouwer (2012), as a dual federation in which regional authorities have a clear competence over specific policy area and this allows them not only 'to do' but as well 'to decide' (Dhal 1961) without simply implementing decisions took at the federal level.

When it comes to their approaches towards migrants and diversity management, the Francophone and Flemish sides of the country diverge not only in the integration methods but also in their opinions regarding federal regulation of migrants' entry and citizenship status. The francophone and Flemish party have always hold very different political opinions on the matter of migration, being the Flemish parties more reluctant to accept entry and more invested in checking for integration indicators before granting citizenship. The Francophone side of the country, on the other hand, has been less problematic in regard to acceptance of migrants and less restrictive to naturalization due to the belief that early naturalization promotes integration (Jacobs 1999; Rea 2000).

Despite the binary distinction between the restrictive Flemish opinion on immigration and the liberal Francophone approach at the Federal level, regional integration models do not mirror the national parties' discourses in the matter of diversity. While the Francophone regions tend to promote integration policies that are colour blind and foster the principles of *laicitè* and common citizenship, on the model of the French assimilationist-universalist approach, the Flanders and Flemish Brussels are more likely to incentivize diversity and multiculturalism. Wallonia and Francophone Brussels have been focusing on socio-economic integration and expect from migrants a full assimilation of the French-western culture. Multiculturalism is perceived as a form of societal fragmentation, which is in contrast with the principle of universality and equality.

The Flemish approach to integration, similarly to the one applied by the Netherlands since the 90s (Jacobs 2004), on the other hand has been recognized as a mixed model which combines integration courses for newly arrived migrants. Migrants have to learn the language and values of the Flemish community, with funding for multicultural programmes targeting the different migrant communities in the territories of Flemish Brussels and Flanders (Adam 2013; Loobuyck and Jacobs 2010).

The Flemish integration law regulating this community's policy approach is the 2013 'integration and civic integration law' which is the sum of the former 2009 integration law and 2008 civic integration law. This new legal framework regulates the integration trajectories, which migrants have to follow and which, in case of non-compliance, lead to financial repercussions. These trajectories consists in language courses as well as civic integration classes in which migrants are thought Flemish norms, values as well as the Flemish culture. These trajectories are mainly directed at newly arrived migrants but could sometimes be required to older migrants depending on their welfare, employment and housing status. The punishment, in the case of non-compliance with these integration trajectories, cannot focus on the

restriction of the citizenship status or residence as nationality and residence fall under the competences of the federal government. Despite the inclusion of the assimilationist civic integration trajectory in its integration approach, the Flemish community strongly persists in supporting Multiculturalist programmes without openly use the term 'multiculturalism' itself.

Summary of actors' competences and narratives on the matter of integration

Actor	**Competences with focus on migrants**	**Competence on Integration policy making**	**Integration Narrative**
Federal State	Competence in entry, citizenship, removals and residence	With special law of the 8th of August 1980 competence of integration was granted to the linguistic communities	At the federal level there are multiple narratives, the Flemish side in parliamentary debates tends to be more securitarian than the Francophone side
Wallonia Region	Competences in territorial issues, such as housing and employment	Was granted authority to legislate on integration from the French Community under their guidelines	Colour-blind and less open to address diversity management through ad hoc, multicultural policies
Flemish Region	Competences in territorial issues, such as housing and employment	Direct competence on integration in the Region is of the Flemish Community (VG)	(Same as of Flemish Community Commission)
Brussel Capital Region	Competences in territorial issues, such as housing and employment	In the Brussel Capital Region the responsibility of integration policy is left to the two community commissions present on the territory, the COCOF and the VGC	Competence of both the VGC and the representation of the COCOF in Brussel. VGC promoting primarily multicultural policies and colour-blind policies by the COCOF
Flemish Linguistic Community	Direct integration competences	Maintains central decision-making power on integration policies and has agencies in Flemish Region and Flemish side of Brussel	More multicultural at the local level while securitarian in parliamentary debates
Francophone Linguistic community	Direct Integration Competences	Has given authority for integration matters to Wallonia region and COCOF	Moderate discourses at the parliamentary level but strictly colour-blind at the local level

The Francophone Community, on the other hand, has two slightly different approaches to integration in Wallonia and in Brussels. While in Wallonia there has been a slight opening towards cultural diversity even if the colour-blind, neighbour driven anti-discrimination method remains predominant, the Commission Communautaire Francaise (COCOF) in Brussels follows the French universalist model in integration policies and continues to deny funding to migrants organizations or programmes promoting ethnic or religious identities, as they may lead to fractures in society (Jacobs 2004).

The French Community has recently introduced a non-compulsory civic integration trajectory (BAPA) which offers migrants both language courses and civic classes.

The two different approaches to integration and diversity management in the Flemish Community and Francophone Community of Belgium a disparity in the rights and accommodations given to migrant communities. The simple institutionalization of Islam is an example. While children in Flanders and schools in the Flemish Brussels are allowed to take vacations on Islamic holidays, Muslim children in Wallonia and Francophone Brussels' schools cannot. Another exemplary case is the way in which migrant organizations in Brussels are forced to look at the VGC (Flemish Commission in Brussels) to gain funds for their activities. Grass roots organizations of migrants are, in fact less likely to gain finances from the Francophone Commission.

3. The Two Linguistic Communities and their Institutions in Brussels

Having discussed the integration models of Flemish and Francophone Brussels it is important to clarify the role of different institutions for integration in Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels Capital region. While the Flemish Community maintains a single policy and a central institution for matters related to integration, the French Community has delegated the Wallonia Region and the Commission Communautaire Francaise (COCOF) of Brussels to develop their own local policies regarding integration with a certain degree of independence. In the specific case of Brussels, the Belgian constitution clearly states that the linguistic communities are not responsible, in the matters under their mandate, of the people within the region but rather of their institutions and the work carried on by them (De Jonghe and Doutrepont 2012, 49). The COCOF was created in 1993 to develop and promote social policies that fall under the Francophone Community's competences, among which there is integration and first reception of migrants. Through a five-year funding mechanism called 'Service Cohesion

Social' and yearly funds for the promotion of integration programmes called 'Fonds d'Impulsion à la Politique des immigrés' (FIPI), the COCOF sponsors programmes often directed towards the alphabetization and employment orientation for migrants. Furthermore, the COCOF recently developed a civic integration course implemented by the Bureau d'Accueil pour Primo-Arrivants (BAPA). The Flemish Community Commission (VGC) is the representation of the Flemish Community (VG) in Brussels and it finances mostly networks of migrant organizations. The VG has also created an agency for the integration trajectory of newly arrived migrants in Brussels, called Agentshap Integratie en Inburgering which is part of the Flemish policy on integration and has a local office in Brussels called BON, which offers language and civic integration classes to new and non-newly arrived migrants. Concerning the integration of newly arrived migrants, the Flemish and the Francophone institutions offer optional trajectory courses in Brussels, while in Flanders the Aghentshap Integratie en Inburgering if compulsory for new arrivals. BAPA and Bon are both targeting primarily first-generation migrants and they offer similar integration courses divided between language classes and civic integration orientation. While the BAPA teaches French in the language classes the Bon teaches Dutch, the civic integration courses on the other hand offer similarly insights on the norms and values of Belgium, each underling the cultural specificities of their linguistic community.

In addition to integration trajectories for new arrivals both community commissions in Brussels have developed their own integration policy, which takes into account the various spheres of integration of people of migrant origins.

4. Critical Frame Analysis of Integration Policy Documents (EU, Flemish, Francophone)

Discursive Analysis of policy documents has become a very useful tool in policy analysis in recent years and has been applied by various scholars in different fields (see e.g. Bacchi 1999; Ferree et al. 2003; Fischer 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Lombardo et al. 2009). Critical Frame Analysis registers emblematic and yet scattered discourses present in policy documents and recollects them recognizing frame patterns in which said issues are presented as 'structured and meaningful problems, in which solutions are implicitly or explicitly included' (Verloo and Lombardo 2007). Frames Analysis can be defined through Fishers' words (2003,144) as the analysis of how 'public policies rest on frames that supply them with underlying

structures of beliefs perceptions and appreciation'. Frame analysis, initially applied outside the field of policy analysis by scholars such as Goffman (1974) and Snow et al. (1986), was then applied to policy studies.

In the Large Report of the Quing Project (Dumbos et al. 2009), which utilizes the approach of critical frame analysis to identify the recurrent frames of gender equality policies in various policy fields across EU countries, researchers separated the three different levels of frames as Issues frames, Document frames and Meta-frames.

This research proceeded in a similar way, analysing each statement of the policy documents of different actors, the French Community Commission in Brussels, the Flemish Community Commission and the EU Commission. Using a coding process derived by the sensitizing questions to deduct an issue frame, the document frame and finally the meta-frame applied by an actor discussing the issue of migrant integration from a gender perspective. The same process was then applied to the text of the interviews conducted with policy makers as well as civil society actors financed by the previously mentioned institutions.

4.1. EU Guidelines for the Integration of Third Country Nationals

Through the Critical Frame Analysis of the selected EU policy documents on integration, primarily of the EU commission, this section will unpack the narrative of the EU in regard to gender and integration of TCN. We questioned what kind of gender equality was portrayed in integration documents and in relation to which specific framing of the integration issue (humanitarian, securitarian, economic). Furthermore, we asked whether intersectionality appeared in the documents and, if it did, whether gender was associated to other grounds of discrimination in order to support a pre-conceived argument.

The first observation to make about the selected documents is that the gender dimension of integration is barely mentioned. Gender issues are highlighted solely in regard to the special situation of women and children, considered as more vulnerable categories of migrants, and the documents indicate to the assessment made by the Advisory Committee of Gender Equality without including any of the recommendations within the main policy texts on migrants' integration. This decision already highlights a certain predisposition to maintain the integration discourse gender neutral, which as we will see in this analysis, is the case for the large majority of the Commission's and Parliament's documents on the matter.

The analysis of the texts clearly presents some of the theories advanced by Goeman (2013) regarding the process of integration in the European Agenda and theories regarding the status of the gender equality architecture in the EU (Kantola, 2010).

As indicated by Goeman's theory regarding the three meta-frames applied to integration narratives by the EU, namely the securitarian, humanitarian, and economic frames, the selected documents clearly shift between each frame depending on the context. The economic frame is the most used throughout the texts as employment is often referred to as the prime objective and mechanism of integration. Migrants are described as a resource to achieve economic prosperity and low nativity rates in European member states are mentioned as a justification for the need of migrant's full integration into the receiving societies.

The gender dimension of integration and the equality architecture of the EU are barely mentioned in most of the EU's official documents on the matter of integration of TCN. Despite few references, the need to achieve equal condition of employment between women and men and to pay special attention to the gender dimension of migration, the word 'women' is used very few times throughout the texts, just as the word 'gender' and the word 'female'. This element confirms the process of de-gendering in the EU policy documents (Jacquot, 2015).

Migrant women are seen as particularly important targets of integration measures, due to their contribution in the labour market and their role as mothers. This last claim is striking because it clearly exposes the two main frames through which the European Union looks at gendered migration, the economic frame and the securitarian one. It is a contradiction as it stresses both the importance of gender equality in the labour market, and, therefore, the need for women to gain economic independence and break free from cultural barriers that may keep them segregated in the domestic realm. At the same time, it stresses their roles as mothers and as prime educators of the new generation of Europeans with migrant backgrounds. This passage questions the interests of the European Commission, which rather than focusing on women's employment as a mean to achieve their economic independence and agency, appears as an attempt to strengthen the European market in order to achieve economic targets. If gender equality was truly the objective, migrant women and men would have both been the target of specific integration policies due to their parental status. The Commission risks to fall into self-contradiction if, on the one hand, it speaks of gender equality as an European value migrants should adopt in order to be fully integrated and on the other, it promotes double standards such as this one regarding un-shared parental responsibilities.

4.2. Flemish Community Commission's (VGC) Integration Policies

The policy documents on integration strategies for the triennial 2017-2020 of the VGC use characteristic discourses of cultural openness and identity recognition which differentiate it greatly from the correspondent document of the French Community Commission, COCOF. A recurring motto in the documents of the VGC is 'The majority is a minority. This city is what binds us'. This phrase is already emblematic of the way in which the Flemish community conceptualizes and frames the idea of cultural diversity and group identity. Being a minority in itself the Flemish Community in Belgium is very fond of the principle of cultural identity and preservation of differences. The line is representative of the view of the VGC on diversity management and integration. The following statement is important to further illustrate the commitment of the Flemish Community in Brussel to focus integration policies on ad hoc measures for immigrants: 'The integration policy, aimed at the specific disadvantaged group of people with a migrant background, is part of the broad diversity policy'.

Another passage of the document accounting to the multicultural openness of the policy framing process underlines the involvement of Ethnic and cultural representatives:

> Various stakeholders were involved throughout the process of this policy plan. The policy plan took shape from the official Integration working group. The strategic and operational framework were submitted to the Work- group on Integration in Brussels. The advisory board of Ethnic Cultural Minorities also formulated needs and proposals.

An important consideration which should be made before analysing further the documents is that they lack a clear gender dimension. The narrative is gender neutral when referring to migrant communities and ethnic groups in the city of Brussels and the intersectional condition of migrant women, their needs and differences compared to those of migrant men are nowhere discussed in the policy. Gender is only mentioned when discussing the components of the concept of diversity. When talking about setting a clear example of a diversity-embracing institution, the VCG cites equal gender treatment as well as equality between all diversity grounds. However, gender mainstreaming is not mentioned in the policy documents and gender sensitivity is not cited as one of the required indicators for the financing of a project.

The documents interestingly name a series of priorities. The second objective indicated in the Action Plan document is perhaps the most interesting for

this analysis. It aims at empowering migrant communities and specifically allows them to develop their 'talent' through a series of programmes and policies which will enhance their participation in all levels of social life. Within this objective the policy underlines a series of sub-goals, such as the involvement of people with migrant backgrounds in the social network of the Dutch speaking Brussels, the financing of ethnic and cultural clubs and associations and the civic integration trajectories for new and old migrants.

While the integration trajectories, or civic integration courses, and the promotion of migrants' participation in the community's life are goals underlined by the French Community Commission document 'Cohesion Social 2016-2020', the difference lies in the second section of this objective. The achievement of migrants' emancipation through the recognition and support of ethnic and cultural clubs is a clear multicultural policy. Funding ad hoc programmes and identity centred activities is a particularity of the Flemish Community Commission, differently from the French Community Commission. The VGC is more open to cultural diversity and ethnically focused organizations. As stated in the text, ground roots ethnical organizations can be a resource to migrant integration as they provide social capital and a first level of social participation. Furthermore, collaboration among various ethnical organizations recognized by the VGC is encouraged. In accordance to this policy, in fact, the VGC website on the page regarding integration and diversity, refers to a few networks of migrants organizations which are financed by the local Flemish integration institution.

The narrative and frames used in this policy documents, applying Goeman (2012) meta-frames on migration and integration, does not show a clear securitarian nor economic frame. Migrant's integration is not clearly referred to as a matter of security and preservation of morals / values of the host society. Integration is also not considered a question of employment for the general productivity level of the society. Employment and career orientations are mentioned in more than one objective, but never within the narrative of increasing the economic capacity of the Belgian capital region. Rather, employment and other forms of trainings are seen as a way to achieve migrant's emancipation and full participation in the fabric of the host society.

The mentioning of civic integration measures in the text of the document could be interpreted as a securitarian narrative, as it introduces funding concept of western cultures and values, such as equality, liberty, democracy and human rights. However, the predominant frame of the text seems to remain a human rights-oriented frame as it focuses on providing a welcoming and safe environment to new arrivals and people belonging to an ethnical or religious minority.

The Flemish Community underlines the importance of proportionate participation and active citizenship in order to achieve an ideal multicultural and shared society. As presumed, the document does not cite the concept of multiculturalism, due to the political implications and the recent debate regarding its alleged collision with western values. However, the multicultural approach to integration, proper of the Flemish Community, is clearly present in the narrative of the document. While underlining the importance of learning the Dutch language, the value of civic integration programmes and the need of social cohesion achieved through networking and connections among different groups in society, the policy documents has a clear target for its integration programme, and it finances separate ethnical and religious clubs as well as organizations. Cultural specific needs are addresses and institutions are required to adapt to the diverse reality to which they need to offer social services. Multiculturalism may not be directly named as a policy approach but it is clearly still the central modus operandi of the VGC in terms of diversity management.

4.3. French Community Commission's (COCOF) Integration Policy

The policy documents regarding integration for the French Community Commission in Brussels for the five years period 2016-2020, compared to the above discussed VGC integration documents, present a number of ideological differences and additional frames. Similarly to the Flemish Community Commission's main policy document, the COCOF policy on integration specifies a series of priorities and objectives to which all financed programmes must refer to when submitting a proposal for financing. The four themes are each further subdivided in more specific objectives. The policy discourse of the French Community Commission is strongly colour-blind and not ethnically oriented. Language training and other forms of integration courses, such as civic integration, are described as a source of emancipation as well as a tool to promote coexistence between communities and a way to limit the ghettoization and isolation of groups. The documents also stress the concept of intercultural citizenship. This is the only integration goal that directly targets migrant communities, through the financing of legal and non-legal aid, as well as activities addressing specific cultural problematics, such as a forced marriages and genitalia mutilation. The last objective of the French Community Commission's integration policies is to develop a strategy called '*Vivre Ensable*', which is at the core of the concept of Social Cohesion. From a gender perspective the document already shows a few differences with the text of the previous Flemish policy

document. Women are mentioned more frequently, and the word gender is recurrent, however the gender dimension takes a clear securitarian shape as the particular condition of women and gender disparities seems to be mentioned in order to emphasize the belief that migrant communities are required to learn Belgian values, such as gender equality. The word '*femme*' is often used in the common expression '*l'egalitè femmes-hommes*', which translated means 'equality between women and men' and it is cited in the text of the document as one of the funding principles of good citizenship which activities and programmes funded by the COCOF need to implement. Regarding the gender dimension of this integration policy, however, it is important to notice how the French Community Commission clearly specifies that only programmes and activities which will lead and promote the concept of '*mixitè*', or the social cohesion between different groups in society, will be sponsored. The documents go further to state that programmes targeting solely women should be justified and must entail in their objectives that of achieving '*mixitè*' among societal groups. Citing the text of the document (translated from French):

> Certain Activities can, only exceptionally, address only women. However, the association will have to motivate their choice. The motivation will have to include a trajectory towards "*mixitè*". The activities only directed towards women will have to only be a mean to an end and not the goal in their own scope. The objective is the inclusion of "*mixitè*" in a non-conflictual climate and mutual acceptance. The contents of the activity are a responsibility of the operator. It is not acceptable and tolerable to support gender stereotypes. The equality between men and women and human rights have to be put above all other priorities!.

5. The Results of the CFA on the Interviews Conducted with Policy Makers and Programme Providers

From the Critical Frame Analysis conducted with the policy makers, of both the French community commission (COCOF) of the Flemish community commission (VGC), and with the respectively financed integration programmes of civil society we noticed a discrepancy between the discourses of policy makers and programme providers.

The narrative advanced by policy makers of the COCOF in the field of integration policies, when asked about the integration of migrant women (specifically women of Muslim origin), seemed to be centred on the concept of empowerment of women. This could be achieved through social activities

that required them to get in contact with people of other cultures in order to break the barrier that keeps them segregated within their own community.

The concept of '*mixitè*' was mentioned often during the interview to stress the importance to bring people together in order to create social cohesion, without differentiating between categories of people by race, gender, religion, class or nationality. Policy makers of the COCOF did emphasized that they would have soon addressed the requests of various NGOs to include, in the policy provision, programmes that work with only women in order to give them the space to speak freely and feel more at ease to discuss certain issues, such as sexuality, violence and childcare. This measure, however, was the response to a request advanced by feminist NGOs of top down origin working primarily on issues such as violence against women. Other requests, to include provisions that would allow the financing of activities for religious or cultural groups were instead not taken into consideration due to their conflict with the concept of *mixitè*. Another important topic advanced by the Francophone policy makers regarded the importance of women's education on the receiving culture, in order to show them not only their rights but also the costumes and life style of a western woman. The narrative of Muslim/migrant women that need to be liberated by western women remains one of the main pillars in the discourse applied by the COCOF when addressing integration of migrant women.

The CFA of the interviews conducted with the Flemish Community Commission, on the other hand, had very different results. The narrative applied by the VGC's policy makers focused more on the importance of intersectionality and on the need to educate social workers, in different fields (such as health care, employment and different state bureaucratic offices) to understand the complex forms of discrimination suffered by women belonging to discriminated national and religious minorities. The goal of this seemed to be that of increasing migrant women position in the labour market. Employment, in fact, seemed to be another very discussed issue when speaking about empowerment of Muslim women. The interviewed policy makers of the VGC stressed the importance of being economically emancipated to become full members of society and to promote social cohesion.

The discourses of civil society seemed to mirror those of the respective community commissions from which they received their prime finances. However the civil society programmes providers we interviewed sometimes addresses the critical aspects of the superficial gender perspective of the official policy documents.

Civil society's integration programmes financed by the integration policy of the VGC seemed to focus on some of the same issues mentioned in the

interviews with policy makers when asked about integration of migrant women, specifically of Muslim origins. They addressed the importance to implement an intersectional approach in all activities and programs, as well as become themselves educators of intersectionality to other institutions, such as employment centres, hospitals and schools. One of the programmes financed by the VGC is, in fact, a centre of research on the issue of intersectionality (ELLA). During the interviews conducted with the federations of migrants' organizations people seemed to stress the importance to give women's agency by promoting bottom up initiatives and allowing them to have the required space to conduct cultural activities, indicated by migrant women themselves as empowering in the migratory process. Activities that promote social cohesion among groups are believed to be important by the VGC as well, so the federations do organize one event a month inviting people of all different migrant organizations together, but these are not the prime focus. A programme provider of one of these federations states:

> We believe that specific groups can improve the interculturality and they may have some needs to fulfil, but then they (different groups) work together. We see the Congolese women working with the Turkish women. Turkish women groups don't work only with Turkish women groups but that's when we come in, we bring groups together.

The same programme provider went on saying that:

> The ability to be part of these groups make the ladies stronger and helps them in their empowerment process. (…) Surely it forms their identity better and the goal of women's group is to empower them and make their identity stronger.

However, while the narrative of the programme providers on the Flemish side of Brussels do seem to resonate with that of the policy makers some critics rose to surface during the interviews. One Civil Society actor expressed her belief that the VGC's focus on the intersectional approach is simply rhetorical due to the recent reduction in the funding directed towards said activities and the diverging political discourses on migrant women coming from the Flemish government.

Lastly, the CFA of the interviews conducted with the staff of programmes financed by the COCOF also showed a connection with the discourses of the Francophone policy makers. The gender perspective of the policy was further clarified by the programme providers, as they explained their view on women's integration and how they believe migrant Muslim women can be best included in society. The discourse is assimilationist, similarly to that of the COCOF. One of the programme providers interviewed stated that the work conducted by her organization aimed at:

> Preventing discrimination and violence against women and to lead empowerment activities to help women with their emancipation, to fight for equality and possibilities.

Furthermore, various organizations stress the importance of 'permanent education' which would allow to 'educate' migrant women to concepts such as human rights and domestic violence. Programmes interviewed are merely top down, and even in the rare case of programmes that seem to target primarily Muslim women, the scope seems to be that of educate them of the rights and life style of Belgian people. Most programmes interviewed focused on the need to educate women so they would be aware of their rights in the new country as well as break out of the restrains of their cultural bubble. A lot of the programmes providers interviewed also referenced to domestic violence and the importance of bringing women together with people of different cultures to promote social cohesion. However, despite the homogeneity between the civil society discourse and the political narrative, one strong critic did rise during the interviews. Civil society programmes strongly opposed the idea to prevent women's only activities, as they believed them to be indispensable for women's safety and ability to speak up freely on domestic issues.

To conclude, when they were asked about their feeling towards the EU policy guidelines on the integration of migrants, policy makers answered that they are too vague to be actually taken into account. While the francophone policy makers stressed the economic focus of the EU guidelines, saying that was not in line with the COCOF understanding of integration, the VGC's representative I interviewed did praise the economic lens applied by the EU guidelines but also implied the superficial character of the text. The civil society programmes were not always aware, on the other hand, of the EU policy guideline and were often reported saying that their main program's funding came from local institutions and those were the guidelines they tended to follow more strictly.

Conclusions

Due to the strong dissonance between the discourses on integration applied by the EU, civil society, the federal, regional and local authorities in Brussels it is difficult to talk about a MLG system. The lack of a coordinated policy effort shows that, even if there are no longer hierarchies among different governmental levels, the integration of migrants is not yet a field of structured MLG. Is the gender dimension of integration policies a way of reaffirming the narrative of different actors involved in the policy framing and implementing

process? The answer seems to be 'yes'. As the research showed, gender focused activities financed by each actor involved in integration policies on the territory of Brussels seemed to be derived from a more general view on migrant's integration. In the case of the French Community Commission, while migration was seen through a securitarian lens, gender activities addressed primarily gender biased violence, FGM, forced marriages and education to women's rights. In the Flemish Community Commission's narrative, migration seemed to be framed through a multicultural lens and the type of gender programmes sponsored focused more on intersectionality and in promoting cultural activities as a form of empowerment. In the case of the EU financing, on the other hand, the civil society actors underlined that the support was very marginal and the requirements for the grant were barely gender focused.

To conclude it is important to stress that gender mainstreaming in integration policies is still very superficial. The narrative of migrants' integration acquires a gender perspective through the work and agenda of civil society programmes targeting migrant women specifically. This leaves the gender dimension of policy making in the field of integration a mere rhetoric exercise and when gender is presented in the text it usually helps to strengthen a general argument made in regard to integration of migrants as a whole.

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