

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND PUBLIC POLICIES: THE CASE OF IMMIGRATION IN BELGIUM

*synthesis of the book “Recherche et politiques publiques: le cas de l’immigration en Belgique”;
research project and major findings*

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Introduction

In a context in which migration issues are often thought of in terms of security and social problems, the task of social and political scientists is very delicate and complex as they are asked to produce objective knowledge on a highly politicised set of issues. In that context, the issue of the linkage between academia and decision-making has become topical.

The aim of this research, funded by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (formerly SSTC), is to evaluate the impact of research on migration on public policies. Three major questions have been raised:

- To what extent has policy-design in the field of migration rested on the results of scientific research? In other words, have policy-makers been inspired by research in the area of migration to elaborate public policies (agenda setting and policy formulation)?
- What has been the role of researchers in the implementation of policies in the field of migration (policy-implementation)?
- How to improve reciprocal knowledge utilisation between academia, policy-makers and stakeholders? In other words, how to improve the interactions between these three worlds in order to improve the quality of research, the quality of public policies and more generally to stimulate social change towards more well-being?

Note on the Methodology

In order to contribute to a structured exploration of the facilitators and barriers to knowledge utilisation, the project has followed the framework of inquiry suggested by UNESCO. This framework does not only help to identify both supply and demand factors of KU. It also assigns a central meaning to political context and the characteristics of the issue arena, the latter of which is subject to polarization in the suggested case. The table below (Annex 1) summarises the key research questions, components, and methods that have been used for hypothesis construction and testing.

We selected two domains in order to answer the three central questions of this research with as much accuracy and relevance as possible. These two domains are: education and labour market (more specifically, ethnic discrimination on the labour market). Our gathering of all research projects in the field of immigration in Belgium confirms that these two domains were the object of the greatest number of studies over the 1989-2002 period. The analysis of these two domains allows highlighting the differences between Flanders and Wallonia, not only in terms of the overall approach to migration, but also in the policies devised and implemented in the two regions.

We detail hereafter the investigation methods implemented for the present research project.

1. Constitution of a database

A database gathering all research projects on immigration and integration of people of foreign origin completed under the authority of university institutions between 1989 and 2002 has been built. The variables included in this database are:

- the title of the research project; the institution(s); the scientists in charge of the research and the researchers;
- the discipline(s) of the research ;
- the topic(s) studied;
- the funding institution(s) and the amount of funding;
- the period when the research was completed;
- the type of publication (books, articles, administrative reports).

The aim of constituting such a database was to offer an overall view of the research projects that have been undertaken in Belgium and thereby make a series of “photographs” by confronting these variables with each other. The links between these variables are expressed in the form of figures, percentages and tables so as to better visualise the results of the analysis.

2. Comparative analysis of research and public policies in the two domains

Research and policy-related texts in the domains of education and labour market have been analysed using an analysis grid built from a sample of about twenty research reports. For each of these reports, the main facts and problems underscored, the major explanatory frameworks used and solutions put forward have been highlighted. Once the analysis grid built, all research projects and policy-related texts in the two domains were analysed using that grid. The aim of so doing was to compare the respective visions in scientific reports and in policy-related texts, in order to highlight potential similarities or differences in terms of the definition and interpretation of issues, as well as in terms of proposed solutions. This comparative analysis of research and policy-related texts also aims at examining how the approaches to the issues of education and employment evolved with time. The work hypotheses for the case studies were designed on the grounds of this comparative analysis .

3. Case studies

Through the case-studies devoted to the International Labour Organisation study on ethnic discrimination on the labour market and to the education of pupils of foreign origin in Flanders and Wallonia, we have tried to answer the question of *which kinds of research, and in which conditions, stand a better chance to influence political decision-making and agenda setting*. For this purpose, a series of semi-directive interviews with researchers, politicians, research initiators and evaluators, as well as members of the “third community” (associations, trade unions, etc.), etc. were carried out. These interviews were conducted using an “interview guide” that was drawn up using the UNESCO (MOST) framework. At the level of analysis of the data collected, researchers also used the conceptual and theoretical elements developed in the theoretical chapter of this research report.

4. Focus-group discussion on the issue of categorisation in the field of ethnic and migration studies

The researchers in charge of this project took part in a focus-group discussion on categorisation in ethnic and migration studies. The aim of this discussion was to reflect on the categories these researchers use in categorising target populations. In other words, these researchers have tried to reflect on their own practices of scientific analysis. Following Bourdieu, they have put their own scientific classification practices under critical scrutiny. They have raised the issue of whether the analytical concepts and categories they use and produce could have a certain autonomy from those used in the political field and through common sense. The fruits of this discussion have been integrated with the scientific literature on the topic.

Outline of the Research

The first part of the report starts by introducing the theoretical grounds upon which this research has been carried out. Chapter one is devoted to a review of the scholarly literature in the field of “knowledge utilisation”. The second chapter gives an overview of John Kingdon’s agenda setting theory. This theory has been somewhat complemented by stressing aspects such as the political context, both in its national and international dimensions. Peter Hall’s cognitive approach of public policies and his concept of “policy paradigm” are also stressed in this chapter, as they are important approaches mobilised in this research. Part two of the report deals with research and public policies in the field of immigration in Belgium. In chapter one, the stakes and predicaments of the constitution of a field of ethnic and migration studies in Belgium are highlighted and an overview of scientific research on integration and immigration in Belgium from 1989 to 2002 is presented. Chapters two and three deal respectively with education and employment with regard to immigrants and people of foreign origin. In each of these two chapters one finds, on the one hand, a comparative analysis of research and public policies and on the other hand, case-studies relating to these two domains. Chapter four then examines the complex issue of categorisation in social sciences in the field of ethnic relations and immigration and its implications in the public field. The main findings are brought together in the final chapter of this report and the authors put forward political recommendations.

First Part: Theoretical Approaches to Knowledge Utilisation and the Analysis of Public Policies

Chapter 1: Knowledge Utilisation: Towards an Integrated Model of Interactions Between Science, Policy, and Society (Marleen Brans and Tinne Van der Straeten, KUL-ISPO)

From the last quarter of the 20th Century on, scientific ‘truth’ has been competing with other ‘truths’ in a policy process of argumentation and persuasion. The relation between science and policy became to be regarded as problematic and became itself a research subject. Gradually, and related to the resonance of the governance debate, analyses started involving the role of third actors. Moreover, in the more recent policy practices on national, European, and international levels, we witness, apart from the renewed attention for evidence-based policy-making, the recognition of participatory approaches. In these, the interaction regarding KU no longer evolves between two communities, but between the communities of researchers, policy-makers, and societal actors.

Regarding the definition of both knowledge and its use, we have chosen to start from ‘information’ and ‘the use of information’ as general categories, and also from a distinction between the content of information and the format in which it presented. Knowledge as a term can then be replaced by scientific research as one type of information competing with other types, such as data and analyses. Moreover, the use of information, and hence research is best approached as a process. There is a multiplicity of positive and negative uses of research results in the policy process, which may or may not have a direct impact on policy decisions: i.e. warning or highlighting of problems on the agenda; contribution to the definition of problems, setting of goals, and exploration of policy options; legitimisation or de-legitimisation of policy decisions, evaluation of policy implementation, etc.

The use of research in policy-making is not easily understood as a result of interactions between the two communities of researchers and policy-makers only. An appropriate analysis and understanding of the condition of research utilisation requires a departure from the two communities metaphor and an inclusion of third actors in the conceptualisation of interactions. Yet, since the number and nature of societal actors, as well as the nature of policy-making is sector specific, only empirical-historical studies, as presented in the case studies, can enlighten us as to what combination of variables explains the use of research in policy-making.

Chapter 2: Influence of the Political Context on Knowledge Utilisation: “policy streams”, “policy windows” and “policy paradigms” (Ilke Adam, ULB-GERME)

Knowledge utilisation literature examines how social sciences are used (or abused) by political decision-makers and identifies the factors that influence the utilisation of social science knowledge. Although political elements are important to understand the utilisation of social sciences in the formation of public policies, knowledge utilisation literature has accorded little attention to these factors, as Carol Weiss has stressed. This chapter aims at filling in this gap by complementing the tools from knowledge utilisation literature with the agenda setting theory of John Kingdon (1984) and with a cognitive approach to public policies, namely the concept of “policy paradigm” of Peter Hall (1993).

John Kingdon sees the agenda setting process as one wherein solutions search for problems and the outcomes are a function of the mix of problems, participants and resources. The agenda process may therefore be conceived, John Kingdon argues, as composed of three separate and distinct streams: problems, policies and politics. There are three mechanisms that serve to bring problems to the attention of policy-makers: indicators, events and feedback. Social scientists can in this way contribute to putting a problem on the agenda by constituting an indicator that measures the scale or the change of a problem, or by giving feedback on political programmes by means of evaluation studies. The *policy stream* is the stream of solutions proposed by the policy community. A long period of softening-up is needed for the political community to become receptive to a new idea,. The results of social sciences research and recommendations made by scientists, before being accepted by the political community or public opinion, may serve this process of softening up. Elements of the *political stream* can have a very strong impact on the agenda. It is these elements that are given too little attention in knowledge utilisation literature.

John Kingdon’s agenda setting theory, despite its being very exhaustive, doesn’t respond to the question of multi-level governance, i.e. the important influence of the international level on the national political agenda setting process. In this sense, a decision taken at the European level by means of a directive, can, on its own, open, what we will shall call a “*supranational window*”.

Secondly, although John Kingdon explains that policy propositions must be compatible with the dominant values of members of the policy community to have a chance to survive, he does not explain how these “dominant values” can change and how alternatives previously unachievable at the political level (because of their incompatibility with the dominant values) can later gain in popularity and be implemented. This can be best explained by Peter Hall’s

“policy paradigm” that can be situated in the “cognitive approach” to public policies that puts emphasis on the role of ideas, values and representations conditioning the formation of public policies. The cognitive approach to public policies, and particularly the policy paradigm concept of Peter Hall allows us to contextualise the role of information and ideas emanating from social science research in the construction of public policies. These theories and concepts, as well as other elements drawn from the scientific literature on knowledge utilisation, have been used in the present study.

Second Part : Research and Public Policies in the Field of Immigration in Belgium

Chapter 1 : Global Approach of Research in the Field of Immigration in Belgium

1. The Field of Ethnic and Migration Studies in Belgium (Marco Martiniello, ULg-CEDEM)

This chapter aims at laying the grounds for a sociology of the sociology of migration and ethnic relations. It sheds lights on the problems and difficulties facing the constitution of this particular field of knowledge. The paper establishes a qualitative assessment of social science research in the field in Belgium and offers a number of reflections that may ultimately explain its current state.

After highlighting some of the characteristics of the field of ethnic and migration studies in Belgium, several obstacles to the constitution of a sociology of migration and ethnic relations are put forward. These include:

- the absence of any epistemological break. On the whole, one must reckon with this first major difficulty in order to account for the relative theoretical stagnation of the field. Insofar as it has tended to answer more or less directly a social demand, the sociology of migration has been constrained to internalise the problematised and dramatised perception of the common-sense, which is itself largely determined by a concern for social order.
- the social, economic, and political constraints in which social scientists have to function. Indeed, the social demands referred to are often echoed back by decision-makers and politicians. Sociological research in Belgium is largely controlled by political authorities, which have, for a number of years cut the budgets and drastically reduced the possibilities of autonomous funding within Universities. As far as social sciences and the study of migration is concerned, from the end of the 1980s on, new research programmes have been launched at the Belgian federal level, which extensively deal with migration. At the levels of Regions and Communities, research in migration and ethnic relations has been more much heavily funded in Flanders than in Wallonia.
- the highly contentious and politically sensitive nature of migration-related issues has had among its consequences that elected politicians holding executive offices are often particularly careful in selecting the research projects that may be directly useful in terms of policy-making. In addition to this, the scarcity of funding sources and the ‘contractualisation’ of research do not easily accommodate researchers’ theoretical concerns.

Despite the above-mentioned difficulties, the persevering works of a number of individual researchers in various disciplines has clearly proved the existence of a relevant Belgian production on migration and ethnic relations.

The second main problem confronting migration and ethnic studies derives from the introduction, without sufficient care, of conceptual and theoretical elements, such as “ethnicity” or “underclass”, imported from the United States. Such notions ought to be deconstructed and reconstructed in order to be adapted satisfactorily to a new context. Therefore, by introducing them uncritically in Europe, theoretical difficulties have also been unwittingly imported. This factor may in itself account for the uneasy development of a European sociology of migration and ethnic relations.

The third difficulty is related to what may be called the imperialism of economicist and utilitarianist paradigms in the social sciences. More or less sophisticated problematics derived from the ‘cost-benefit analysis’ in economics have overspread the sociology of migration and ethnic relations.

It is indisputable that recent societal evolution have challenged the classical theoretical frameworks of sociology. Most researchers feel the necessity of renewing the intellectual categories developed during the last three decades in order to reach a better understanding of the increasingly more rapid and complex social evolution. In both Dutch-Speaking and French-Speaking Belgium, the editing of collective works has impressively multiplied in the last few years. In the specific case of sociology, it still remains imperative, however, to get rid of the current state of intellectual emergency and the excessive empiricism that we have witnessed over the last two decades by giving more centrality to the work of theoretical elaboration. The objective of this theoretical innovation is precisely to give birth to new intellectual categories that are lacking today.

A fundamental issue at stake is to convince decision-makers that short-term social problems may not be solved without daring to invest in theoretical works for the long-run.

2. Overview of Belgian Scientific Research on Immigration and Integration (1989-2002) (KUL-ISPO, ULB-GERME and ULg -CEDEM)

A database containing an inventory of all Belgian academic (or academically supported) research into immigration and integration of migrants or foreign origin citizens during the period 1989-2002 has been constructed. During this period, a total of 420 research projects were undertaken in Belgium, of which 239 took place on the Dutch-speaking side (57%) and 181 took place on French-speaking side (43%). A network analysis of co-operation structures shows that there is an extensive collaboration across universities and disciplines at Flemish and French-speaking sides alike. There are also joint projects which cut across the language divide. As far as financing is concerned, these cross-linguistic researches are – probably not so surprisingly - mainly financed by federal funds.

The inventory enables us to look into what issues were the most popular issues for research during the 1989-2002 period. On both the Flemish and French-speaking sides, education and labour market participation are clearly in the lead as research topics. Together, they account for 35% of all research on the Flemish side and for 32% of the research on the French-speaking side.

In the following chapters, the policies and research in the fields of education and labour participation of ethnic minorities are investigated, both through a comparative analysis of the existing scientific literature and policy-related texts and through case studies in the two domains. Chapter two deals with education with regard to children of immigrant origin and chapter three with labour participation of ethnic minorities.

Chapter 2: Policy and Research with Regard to Education of Immigrant Origin Children: Analysis of the Literature and Case studies

1. Flemish Policy and Research with Regard to Education of Immigrant Origin Children

(Tinne Van der Straeten, Dirk Jacobs and Marleen Brans, KULeuven)

In the early 1990s, the Flemish government tried to develop a coherent integration policy for immigrant (origin) citizens, the so-called 'immigrant policy'. Soon thereafter, it also developed a genuine educational policy for children of immigrant (origin) citizens. This policy has four components: educational priority policy (the special subsidising of schools with a lot of foreign origin children), intercultural education (teaching children to positively confront diversity), newcomer programs for non-native speakers and – yet, to a lesser degree – education in language and culture of origin. These four main elements remained the backbone of educational policy for immigrant (origin) citizens for years to come and they survived the transition from an 'immigrant policy' to a 'minorities policy' in the mid-1990s. Interestingly, the educational priority policy led to a very precise operationalisation of 'target pupils' in which immigrant origin children and youngsters are in fact being traced. Schools with large numbers of such pupils are extra subsidised. As such, ethnic registration was already a fact of life in the field of education in Flanders in the early 1990s, while similar monitoring remained impossible in other domains. In the operationalisation of 'target pupils' measures – which boils down to ethnic registration – the scientific community played a considerable role.

With a new decree on equal educational opportunities at the dawn of the new millennium, this specific operationalisation was, however, abandoned once again. There is no longer a direct measuring of ethno-cultural background of pupils. Instead, general indicators of a disadvantaged position play a central role in the educational priority policy. These changes are allegedly made as a result of scientific advice – but are clearly contested by a number of known academics in the field. A side effect of the new policy approach is that it will become increasingly difficult for researchers and policy makers to make valid judgements on the position of pupils from ethno-cultural minorities in the educational field.

Overall, there has been a lot of research undertaken in the field of education of immigrant (origin) citizens, and a fair amount has been used in policy development. In general terms we can say that there has been a fruitful relationship between educational policy towards immigrant (origin) citizens on the one hand and scientific research on the other hand, on issues as signalling of problems, policy support, practical advice with regard to evaluation. Research, which is mainly instrumental, is often commissioned by policy-makers in order to develop tools that can be used in implementing policy and judging the implementation. We equally find other examples of usage such as legitimisation or utilisation in processes of political argumentation.

Two types of interface typify the interactions between the communities of researchers and policy-makers. First of all, we find that in the transmission of research findings – especially in the early 1990s – an individual research broker, who is consecutively active as a researcher and a policy-maker, plays an important role. A second special kind of interface that has facilitated the transmission of particular research findings is the institutional construction of centres of expertise within universities (Steunpunt NT2 and Steunpunt ICO). Quite a few of these studies produced within the two centres of expertise and within other broader research programmes have had, it seems, immediate impact and have led to concrete changes in the modus operandi of a number of schools.

The construction of centres of expertise has led to stability and continuity. Furthermore, it seems that the institutional embedding and the direct link between government and researchers is a better guarantee for research results to be taken into account than when one is dealing with 'independent' research.

The close ties between research, day-to-day practice and policy also have their shadow sides. At times, researchers are forced to keep their results within a small circle when commissioners prefer particular results to remain hidden from the public eye. Access to research results is often denied to third parties. The normative consequences are that transparency and accountability of governance and public debate are being frustrated. In addition, concerned groups will have little – if any – opportunity to participate in the policy-making process. In the past, research has been highly focussed on rather specific issues related to categorical educational policy in Flanders, while little research effort has been put into monitoring the overall situation and development of immigrant (origin) youngsters in the field of education.

2. Policy and Research in the field of Education with Regard to Education of Immigrant Origin Children in French-Speaking Belgium (Eric Florence, ULg-CEDEM)

In French-speaking Belgium, few systematic public policies aimed specifically at the schooling of pupils of foreign origin have been designed, since most policy measures are global ones aimed at disadvantaged pupils. Such policies, contrary to those in Dutch-speaking Belgium, are characterised by the usage of categories defined in socio-economic terms, not by using ethnic or ascriptive categories. Contrary to the situation in Flanders, there are few research projects devoted specifically to the schooling of pupils of foreign origin and no long-term research programmes in this field have been implemented.

The comparison of research and public policies in the field of education with regard to pupils of foreign origin in French-speaking Belgium shows that similar arguments are being mobilised both in scientific reports and in policy-related texts as to how to account for the difficulties in the schooling these pupils. This is the case, for example, of the importance of the school-family relationship or of the weight of the social background of pupils and their families. In this sense, one may see here an illustration of the "enlightening function" of social sciences on the structuration of knowledge within the public sphere.

We have highlighted, however, that concepts such as "intercultural education" or explanatory frameworks such as (institutional) discriminatory practices, which are rather prominent in scientific reports, are seldom mobilised in policy-related texts in French-speaking Belgium. Our comparative analysis shows that, while issues of school segregation are discussed in policy-related texts and parliamentary debates, it seems that the ethnic discrimination dimension, and not solely socio-economic dimension of such topics, is largely played down. No research has ever been commissioned on the topic of discriminatory practices by school institutions in terms of admission and orientation towards the different sectors, despite the fact that such research projects have been repeatedly called for, both by several scholars and by the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism (Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme).

We also found that while the concept of intercultural education or intercultural approach has been widely circulated since the 1980's, not only in scientific writing, but also at the European level, it was only endorsed at the political level in 2000 in the decree defining the training of future school masters and basic secondary school teachers.

In the first section of our case study, the influence of the universalist model of integration as an element of explanation of the slow adoption of the concept of intercultural education at the political level is confirmed. Perhaps more importantly, however, we found that this element needs to be integrated with several other dimensions, such as the specificity of the education system in French-speaking Belgium, the biographical profile of the policy-makers, and the political context. We have also argued that the structuration of a more or less formalised long-term collaboration between academics, third community and political actors may be important in the process of "visibilisation" of concepts developed and enacted through such collaboration.

We have also argued that some scientific notions may be given greater weight by being connected to several more legitimate and less polemic categories. This is the case, we have argued, of the notion of intercultural education that is more and more integrated within the broader concept of "diversity education" sponsored by the European Commission. Hence the association between "diversity education" and "citizenship", which is a key concept in French-speaking Belgium political discourse, was also facilitated.

In the second part of our case study, we argue that one important way in which the universalist conception of integration influences the non-recognition of discriminatory practices is partly through the constitution of "legitimate objects of research". We argue that the general resistance in French-speaking Belgium to use categories linked to ethnicity, and to therefore "act without naming" may have implications at the level of the legitimacy of the constitution of a field of studies related to the schooling of pupils of foreign origin, and more specifically to the study of ethnic discrimination in school institutions.

Through our fieldwork, we have identified three main factors that account for the scarcity of research on this topic: a) resistance, both at the political and at the school levels, to investigate issues related to immigration, as such studies are suspected to possibly reify illegitimate ethnic differences; b) the data relating to the ethnic origin of pupils is

simply non-existent and the whole apparatus of data collection is still lacking and does not allow for tracking the school trajectories of pupils in the long-run; c) finally, it seems the issue of inter-school segregation and practices of orientation of publics toward the different schooling sectors questions the educational system in its functioning and some of its very defining features (i.e. the freedom of choice of schools by parents, the concomitant selection of publics by schools, etc.).

Chapter 3: Labour Market Participation of Immigrant Origin Citizens: Policy, Research and Case studies on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Study on Ethnic Discrimination on the Labour Market in Belgium

1. The Employment of Ethnic Minorities: Research and Policies in Brussels and at the Belgian Federal Level and the Impact of the ILO study on Policies at the Federal Level and at the Level of the Brussels Region (Ilke Adam, ULB-GERME)

The fact that foreigners occupy an inferior position on the labour market was generally recognised in 1989, both in research as well as on the political level. But when we look at how this situation is explained, we find differences between researchers and decision-makers, but also within these groups. Moreover, the explanation has evolved with time. We could qualify this evolution as a shift of the policy paradigm, as defined by Peter Hall (1993). While from the 1970s on, explanations in terms of structural changes on the labour market, as well as in terms of inadequacies of the immigrant groups were common, an interpretation in terms of discriminatory practices by employers increasingly appeared in research in the 1990s.

In the beginning of the 1990s, this type of explanation was still seldom found at the political level. This changes in the second half of the 1990s, and more particularly after 1997. What can account for this change of explanatory paradigm? The publication of the International Labour Organisation research (hereafter ILO-research) on ethnic discrimination on the labour market has certainly played a role. Nevertheless, other factors also seem to explain the emergence of this new explanatory paradigm. Now that discrimination seemed to have been accepted as one of the explanations for their position on the labour market, the debate on solutions to resolve the problem was opened.

Different types of public measures can be elaborated to combat discrimination, depending on the way the problem and its explanation are defined. The acceptance of affirmative action policies implies the acceptance of the target group as a specific group for whom specific actions have to be implemented to improve their situation. It is exactly this acceptance as a specific group that is problematic in the French-speaking part of the country as well as for trade unions. If we look at the public policies put forward by researchers and policy-makers (in Brussels and at federal level), it is more their Flemish or French-speaking identity that explains the type of policy they propose than their being researchers or policy-makers. In the beginning of the 1990s, only Flemish researchers proposed affirmative action policies. At the federal level it is essentially an anti-discrimination legislation that has been privileged as a policy to fight discrimination. It was only after the publication of the ILO-study on ethnic discrimination that a “growing awareness-policy” was established in the Brussels Region and at the federal level, besides an improvement of the anti-discrimination legislation.

Every time ethnic discrimination on the labour market is discussed, it seems that the ILO-research, more than other studies, succeeded in being heard, read and served as a reference at the political level. It seems that the ILO-research had an impact on the agenda setting, rather than on the ultimate process of decision-making. We argue that several factors help explain why this research had such an impact. These factors include: the characteristics of the study, notably of its initiator (the ILO), the nature of the results (the percentage of discrimination at hiring, which constituted an indicator of the problem) and the methods used to obtain these rates (testing). The way the study was disseminated is another factor that largely contributed to its influence on the political level. The valorisation activity was contractually attributed to what John Kingdon calls “policy-entrepreneurs”: the ILO at the international level and the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism.

In addition to these factors linked to the characteristics of the study and its dissemination, the national and international political context as well as the economic context were favourable for the reception of the results. The publication arrived at a moment when the discrimination paradigm was added to the integration paradigm. At the international level, different actors had been active in the fight against discrimination since the beginning of the 1990s and European directives formed a supranational political window constraining member-states to put the subject on the agenda. Besides, the formation of new governments on the federal level and in the Brussels Region constituted a political window that contributed to allow a reappearance of this subject on the agenda.

2. The Employment of Ethnic Minorities: Research and Policies and the Impact of the ILO study on Policies in Wallonia (Pascal Balancier ULg- SPIRAL)

The main problems reported in most research carried out in Wallonia for the 1989-2002 period are that the professional insertion on the labour market of ethnic minorities is more problematic compared to national citizens and that participation in the social, cultural and political life remains the best pledge for a successful professional insertion.

In the studies covered in our analysis, it is often argued that people of foreign origin suffer from a problem of deficit, related to the visibility of their ethnic origin or the reproduction of the socio-professional insertion model of their parents. The comparative analysis of research and public policies, as well as legal texts on labour participation of ethnic minorities, has not born clear fruits on the links between research and policies. The principal assumption formulated here is that of the "mainstreaming" as an explanatory factor of the diffusion of priorities in the absence of clear and direct bonds with targeted research. In Wallonia, both the results of the investigation into the influence of the ILO study and into the agenda setting and decision-making processes remain unclear. Admittedly, there have been post-ILO study initiatives, but the conceptual and intellectual bonds with this study are difficult to establish. In the Walloon Region, the actors aware of the problems primarily evoke a process of diffusion comparable to a "mainstreaming (of diversity)" strategy. Besides, this strategy is explicitly formulated by the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Struggle Against Racism.

3. The Employment of Ethnic Minorities: Research and Policies and the Impact of the ILO study on Policies in Flanders (Dirk Jacobs, Tinne Van der Straeten, Marleen Brans and Marc Swyngedouw, KULeuven)

Although good intentions have been a constant, there has de facto hardly been any policy specifically aimed at radically improving the situation of immigrant origin citizens on the labour market. A first specific policy was set up in 1998 with the so-called VESOC-agreement 'Tewerkstelling van migranten'. This agreement and associated plans were installed as a result of the shocking results of a study undertaken by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in which it is proven there is a massive problem of ethnic discrimination in access to the labour market. This particular study and its impact are specifically looked into as a case study in this research to shed light on the relation between research and policy. A few years after its inception, the VESOC-agreement was altered into a more general diversity policy for different disadvantaged groups.

Research into the labour market position of immigrant origin citizens has mainly been of a signalling nature in the past. From the moment that there was a diversity policy that had equitable participation on the labour market as a goal, the demand for evaluation research and policy relevant research rapidly increased. One of the major problematic issues is that there is no clear definition and operationalisation of the notion of 'allochthones' (immigrant origin citizens) as a specific target group for policy in the domain of labour market participation. At present, there is no system of useful ethnic registration, apart from nationality.

1998 was a crucial year for the Flemish policy with regard to labour market participation of immigrant origin citizens. While the problem of unequal participation in the labour market had previously been predominantly seen as an issue caused by deficiencies amongst immigrant origin citizens, it was thereafter framed as being the responsibility of employers and their hiring policies. In the VESOC-agreement between the social partners and the Flemish government it was stated that one would no longer focus on the supply-side of the labour market in tackling the problem, but would equally develop efforts in facing the issue from the demand-side.

The novum was the result of talks that had been set up in the wake of announcing the findings of scientific research into discrimination at the time of job hiring. In the ILO-research it was shown through "testing" (simultaneous job applications of equally fit candidates of immigrant and of non-immigrant background) that there was quite a problem of discrimination on the labour market in Flanders, which had nothing to do with deficiencies of immigrant origin citizens themselves. Partly due to the strong rhetorical power and the dramatic nature of the methodology used, the ILO-research had a tremendous impact. In addition, as was stated for the Federal and Brussels Region levels, a third agent – the Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Fight against Racism made a special effort to ensure the valorisation of the results. The ILO-research had thus triggered a number of changes in the process of agenda setting. However, it no longer exerted a major influence in the development of the actual policy measures that resulted from this change.

The ILO research had a direct impact on agenda setting due to identification of the depth and causes of the problem. On the one hand, the variables that would be tackled by the policy were inherent in the causality of the problem definition. On the other hand, the ILO research proved to be a booster for existing research with a similar problem definition, which would later play a role in developing concrete policy measures.

In Flanders, the successful use of the ILO research can, in our opinion, be explained by two sets of variables. The first set of variables is related to the nature of the research itself, while the second set is related to lobbying- and convection activities by a third party. The imaginative research results with respect to the magnitude and cause of the problem led to a convergence in the problem and policy streams. Lacking any specific focusing events or changes in coalition in the political stream, it was mainly the brokerage of a third agent that was successful in pushing the policy-makers into action and creating a policy window.

Chapter 4: Categorisation and Social Science in the Field of Ethnic and Migration Studies (Eric Florence, ULg-CEDEM)

This chapter deals with scientific categorization in the field of ethnic and migration studies. A focus group discussion on ethnic categorisation was organised during this research project. The aim of this discussion between the scholars in charge of this research project was to question their own categorisation practices and their implications on the political and public spheres. This chapter brings together the main arguments of this discussion to the scientific literature on this topic.

The first section of the chapter highlights the importance of categorisation practices in the construction process of European nation-states. It focuses on the constitution of the categories of “immigrants” and “refugees” and stresses that such categories have been constructed in relation to the “national community” category. The core sections of the chapter deal with the difficult quest for scholars to produce and use scientific categories that are helpful for their tasks of analysis and objectification. At the same time, these categories ought to remain as autonomous as possible from state or national categories. Even though categorising does not necessarily equate enacting separations, one may presume that by mobilising categories and by associating them to some social problems, one somehow takes part in a classification struggle for the imposition of legitimate representations of the social world. The scholars who took part in the discussion have stressed the influence of national models of integration. This discussion also emphasised that ethnic and class dimensions always need to be articulated together.

As ethnic and migration issues are often dramatised and politicised, once in the public sphere, it is most important that scholars be able to question the way research proposals are framed and problematised by financing bodies. Drawing on the Dutch and French experiences in Criminology and “urban violence” studies, this chapter also highlights the dangers of expertise production that is perfectly formatted to political and media expectations and that is mainly aimed towards action. Scholars and researchers have, we argue, a particularly serious responsibility in questioning the historical conditions of emergence of categories and how such categories are associated to specific social problems.

In guise of conclusion, while the participants in the focus group discussion agreed that debates on the implications of ethnic categorisation is most important, we emphasise that it is the need to objectify processes of ethnicisation or racialisation of social relationships, which are so pervasive in contemporary society, that justify the utilisation of ethnic categories in scientific analyses. Debates on the relevance and implications of ethnic categorisation in social science should not prevent scholars from objectifying a whole set of phenomena related to segregation, exclusion and discrimination. The under-financing of research on ethnic relations and immigration is also highlighted.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Overall, this research has confirmed the indirect and general influence that social sciences have at the level of circulation of concepts and theories that participate in the structuration of knowledge in the public sphere.

This research shows that a great variety of social actors are involved in the circulation processes of scientific information in the public sphere.

Our case studies point to the relevance of an analysis that is not restrained to one factor or another in particular, but rather to one that aims at taking into account the role of different elements that help account for the influence of scientific information on the agenda setting process. These elements include:

- Political factors, such as changes within the administration, in the parliament or in national mood;
- The weight of the international context (especially at the level of the European Union) on national agenda setting. For instance, issues related to a concept such as *cultural diversity* or a question that is targeted by a European directive, such as the equality of treatment on the labour market, may have greater chances to be put on the agenda.
- The influence of history and ideology — the dominant conceptions of the nation — on the processes of policy-making and the implementation of policies in the field of immigration. Our research shows how pervasive the differentialist paradigm in Flemish-speaking Belgium and the universalist paradigm in French-speaking Belgium are. The influence of these paradigms is also noticeable in the nature of statistical data recorded and in the constitution of legitimate objects of research in both parts of the country.
- The role of structures or social actors such as policy entrepreneurs that can ease the interface between scientific, political and “third community” spheres. It raises the issue of the institutional arrangements that can help social science results feed into the policy-making process. If such institutional arrangements can facilitate the links between social science research and the policy-making process, they can sometimes also bring about problems such as a lack of transparency, as happens when scholars are required not to make public the results of their research or when excessively policy-driven agendas for research projects are being defined.

Overall, our research shows that there does not exist any systematic effort on the part of the authorities to monitor the participation of ethnic minorities in the different spheres of society. At present, except those data on nationality, no systematic data exists that would allow for taking the ethnic origin of people into account. It is therefore difficult, or

impossible in some instances, to judge how the situation of ethnic minorities is developing and to assess the effectiveness of policy measures aiming at equality of opportunities.

Our research also sheds light on the great precariousness of the situation of researchers in a general context of transformation of European universities characterised by increased competition within and among universities. Such a situation is further worsened by the fact that there seems to be more and more funding of short-term research projects. Such trends, we may assume, are likely to threaten the autonomy of scientific production.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations regarding research policy in social science in the field of immigration

- Long-term and integrated social science research programmes ought to be carried out at the international, European, national and regional levels.
- Research projects that combine theoretical and methodological rigour, as well as empirical wealth therefore ought to get top-priority funding, as they are most likely to generate a policy-relevant knowledge in the long-run.
- An extensive quantitative and qualitative survey on the position of immigrants and their offspring within all institutions and spheres of Belgian society ought to be carried out every 3 to 5 years.
- The valorisation of research most importantly requires the revalorisation of the researcher's status. It is most urgent to struggle against the increasing precariousness of the status of researchers.

2. Recommendations regarding the interactions between the scientific community, the political community and stakeholders.

- A methodology of partnership between the scientific community, the political community and the stakeholders is yet to be put forward. The roles and expectations of each community ought to be clarified.
- Following the Canadian experience, one ought to envisage the possibility of setting-up three centres of excellence in the field of migration, one for each region of the country. These centres would involve the scientific community, the political community and the stakeholders (third community).
- The exchange of information and data between the different communities should be improved as part of a reinforced co-operation.

Annex 1

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH COMPONENTS FOR OPERATIONALISATION	
<i>INDEPENDENT VARIABLES</i>		
<i>What are the characteristics of the research and the researchers who conduct it?</i>	Initiation of the study	-Identification of initiators, purpose for initiation -Formal proposal or request for proposal? -Funding agents?
	Review of study proposal	-Who judges? -Conflicts of judgments? -Criteria for approval?
	Researcher(s)	-Individual and institutional reputation? -Research experience? -Disciplinary affiliation?
	Conduct of the study	-Duration? -Capacity? -Stakeholders? -Theoretical and methodological frameworks? -Data-collection and analysis? -Nature of reports?
	Findings	-Content? -Direction? -Nature of proposed changes? -Financial and institutional consequences of implementation?
<i>What are the modes of dissemination or the linkage between researchers and the policy arena?</i>	Dissemination of results	-Nature of dissemination? -Stakeholder debate? -Third party dissemination: championing and media? -Networking?
<i>What are the characteristics of potential user groups?</i>	Prospective users	-Disciplinary background? -Familiarity with issue arena? -Position in policy formulation? -Reception of findings?
<i>What are the characteristics of the political domain that the research enters?</i>	Political context	-History? -Path-dependency of debate? -Nature of polarisation? -Lobbying? -Evidence of crisis?
<i>DEPENDENT VARIABLE</i>		
<i>What are the characteristics of knowledge utilisation?</i>	Utilisation	-Reconsideration of policy? -Implementation of changes? -Nature of changes? -Duration of implementation?
RESEARCH METHODS	-Analysis of documents, records, newspaper articles -Multiple interviews with initiators, researchers, reviewers, disseminators, prospective users	