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The Europeanization Of Social Science Research: The Relation Between Policy Research And Migration Policies In Italy In The Late 1990s Early 2000s

Marco BOSCHELE*

*Kocaeli University, İzmit, TÜRKİYE

E mail: m.boschele@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

The inclusion of social science research in the decision making process has raised questions about the validity of scientific knowledge, in terms of its objectivity and of its legitimizing function in political decisions. In contrast, the emergence of new ways to understand contemporary societies, with the central role of information and knowledge and a new model of science and technology, has revived the role of social science research. The inclusion of the social sciences and humanities in the ERA (European Research Area) is an attempt to achieve a greater degree of economic, social and political integration. This paper seeks to determine to what extent funding in the social sciences at EU level has had an impact on policy research at national level. It explores the implication that a latent European social science may have at national level. To investigate these issues, the paper examines migration policies in Italy, whether there has been an increased role of the social sciences in the policy-making process.

Key words: social science research, policy research, science and politics, knowledge society, immigration policies, Italy, EU.



Sosyal Bilimler Arařtırmalarının Avrupalılařması: 1990'ların Sonu Ve 2000'lerin Bařında İtalya'da Siyaset Arařtırması Ve G Politikaları Arasındaki İliřki

z

Sosyal bilimlerdeki arařtırmaların karar alma srelerine dahil olması, bilimsel bilgilerin geerlilięi ile ilgili bir ok sorunu ortaya ıkardı. Enformasyon, bilgi, ve teknolojiye yeni modellerin aędař toplumlarda merkezi bir nem kazanması, sosyal bilimlerdeki arařtırmalarının roln deęiřtirdi. Avrupa Arařtırma Alanı'na sosyal bilimlerin ve insani bilimlerin katılması, daha genř bir biimde ekonomik, sosyal ve politik btnleřmenin bařarılma giriřimiydi. Bu yazının amacı, Avrupa Birlięi dzeyinde sosyal bilimlerdeki fonların ulusal dzeyde yapılan politika arařtırmalarındaki etkisini ortaya ıkarmaktır. Ayrıca, bu yazı Avrupa'ya ait gizil bir sosyal bilimlerin olup olmadıęını arařtırmaktadır. Bu konuları arařtırmak iin bu yazı, İtalya'daki g politikalarını incelemekte, karar alma srelerinde sosyal bilimlerin rolnn etkisini bulmaya alıřmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sosyal Bilimler Arařtırması, Politika Arařtırması, Bilim Ve Politika, Bilgi Toplumu, G Politikaları, İtalya, AB.



Introduction

There are contrasting views concerning the relevance of *policy research*¹. Some of these views criticize the belief that *research evidence* can provide objective answers to policy questions, since evidence is not objective but related to the social context. Moreover, politics and the art of *muddling through*² undermine the attempt to introduce research evidence. On the other hand, social science researchers are aware of the limitation of *descriptive* and *prescriptive* knowledge and its impact, and research rarely provide definitive answers in solving social problems (Nutley 2003:3,4). This means that research has to be considered for *what it is* and that it can contribute in some ways to understand social behaviour.

Issues, within policy research, are not only about the research enquiry, but also about the mode of research funding, research organization and its utilization. Nutley *et al* argue that the use of research is not considered only directly to make decisions, but also in the form of discourse (ideas, theories and concepts) to influence ‘thinking around policy problems’ or where research is used to support political arguments (2007:15). One reason to assess social science research is that of evaluating if the policy-making is using social science research to support or challenge decision-making. Therefore, research can affect not only decisional choices, but also it can also affect the formation of *discourses* and increase the level of public and professional discourse and debate.

Given the scope and the theoretical issues of policy research, the paper explores the twofold implications of policy research, at academic and non-academic level, pointing out two main issues. The first is that science and the social sciences, in their period of crisis, in terms of their organization and institutionalisation (Wallerstein, Wagner) and of their objective validity (Kuhn, Popper), are employed to aid the policy making process at EU and at national level. The second issue is that social science traditions³ may differ from the approach of the Commission thus disagreeing with the idea of a European social science.⁴

It can be argued that, in line with the integrating character of the EU and its institutions, the inclusion of the social sciences and the humanities in the ERA (European Research Area) is an attempt to achieve a greater degree of economic, social and political integration. Moreover, it is envisaged that the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities should also generate *knowledge* that can be applied in a non-commercial, societal setting. The EU is therefore proposing the revival of the social sciences, in the process of policy-making, with

¹ Policy research is scientific research, which has non-university groups as its main intended audience. Such research attempts to apply social scientific findings to the solution of problems identified by a client (Gordon Marshal 1998).

² Charles Lindblom in ‘The Science of Muddling Through’ (1959), made a distinction between a rational approach and the struggle of policy makers to get through bureaucracy.

³ According to Peter Wagner (2004:10-15), the idea of national social sciences originates in the romantic reaction to the Enlightenment. One can argue that knowledge rests in language and the latter defines the nation. Also for this topic, see Donald Levine (1995).

⁴ In this regard, Martin and Frost (1996)⁴ argue that there are numerous perspectives, which disagree on epistemology, methodology, political ideology and theory, adding that the severity of these intellectual differences makes it difficult to review the result of research impeding advances in knowledge.



the scope of coordinating the promotion of cross collaboration over the space of the EU and in the immediate vicinity.

This paper seeks to determine to what extent funding, in the social sciences at EU level, has had an impact on policy research at national level. It explores the implication that a latent *European social science* may have at national level. To investigate this issue, the paper considers the field of migration where there has been an increase for the role of the social sciences. Changes in the dynamics of migration have called for more involvement of *transnational research* with the intent to go beyond the traditional studies based on the *nationalist approach*. As a case study, Italy will be considered to determine if EU research policy has contributed or is likely to contribute to the formulation of immigration policies thus conflicting with the national settings and if EU funded research contributes to the formulation of a *discourse* in the sphere of immigration.

As a case study Italy is employed to ascertain to which extent research in the field of migration is *Europeanized*, therefore, eroding the *sovereignty* of the nation state⁵. This is also based on the assumption that scientific knowledge contributes to legitimise political decisions. If this is the case, then the empowering of the social sciences through funding is an attempt towards the creation of an *intellectual matter*⁶ to complement a political space, which results, given the novelty of the endeavour, will manifest later in the future.

This raises questions about issues related to the philosophy of the social sciences and the broad question about the validity of scientific knowledge. If scientific knowledge has a legitimising element what can be the consequences at national level, particularly if knowledge is produced in the field of migration? Is the EU approach in the sphere of migration reflecting a particular tradition? In the specific Italian case study, will a body of scientific knowledge conceived at EU level affect the tradition at national level?

In order to address these questions, this paper will first look at the relation between the social sciences and the state, and the issues related to the philosophy of the social science about the validity of scientific knowledge. Secondly, it will look at the increased role of scientific knowledge with the EU within the context of the “knowledge society and the use of research in the sphere of migration. Thirdly, it will look at the Italian case and how the Italian research on immigration has changed to a more Europeanized approach but the politicisation of immigration policies over research.

The relationship between the social sciences and politics: epistemological issues

⁵ The issue of sovereignty here is important in two related contexts. First sovereignty is related to knowledge according to the assumption that there may be a problem with the relationship between science and the state. Secondly it is related to the concept of migration and where non-citizens entering and staying in the member states of the Union.

⁶ Etienne Balibar speaks of a “new citizenship in Europe, in the sense of an intellectual matter that needs to be worked in order to give body to a true ‘European public space’”. (2004:101) *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship?*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.



The nature of the relation between knowledge and politics can be traced back to antiquity, if we consider the role that political philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle or later Machiavelli had in relation to their rulers. Historical accounts of such relation point out that the *modern social sciences* and *modern political institutions* developed simultaneously as Western societies developed from traditional organizations to modern ones. In the USA, with the emergence in the 1950s of the *policy sciences* of Yale Law School (the *town and gown*), the use of scientific knowledge in politics became explicit and oriented.

The policy sciences, nevertheless, have been criticised for their failure to become what the American political scientist and communication theorist Harold Lasswell (1902-1978) and his followers envisaged. Criticisms have been mainly related to the epistemological basis of the policy sciences namely the empirical methodology. These epistemological related problems fall within the *philosophy of the social sciences* debates and the critique of positive science, which evaluates the empirical method.

Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn⁷ both agreed on the limits of pure empirical approaches of positivism. They questioned the validity of scientific knowledge and its implications for the social sciences. Namely, Popper was concerned with the positivism of Marx, Freud and Hegel. On the other hand, Kuhn pointed out that scientific change did not have a logical dialectic. Both views have had great implications on the critique of positivism and particularly in the predictive character of scientific knowledge. However, Popper's neo-positivism was nevertheless considered as a mild criticism of positivism and a defender of the scientific establishment. Kuhn on the other hand was seen as a source to revitalise America pragmatism (Fuller 2002:35).

Traditionally the understanding of the knowledge/policy interface is characterised by the search into the link between knowledge on the one side and politics on the other such as in the rational choice approach. Popper and Kuhn provide different interpretations of the validity of scientific knowledge and consequently different understanding of the relationship between knowledge and politics. Within policy analysis, different approaches have been formulated to determine where knowledge meets politics (Autes 2007; Jones 2009). For instance, the linear model or rational model where knowledge is considered neutral and useful to improve the policy process can be seen in the developments of Popper. On the other hand, Kuhn's ideas are more explicit in the *politics legitimation model* where the policy process is dominated by power and knowledge, which support existing structures.

Although, the choice of cognitive and normative frame is preferred, in the study of the policy process, the rational paradigm is considered the starting point for understanding efforts to strengthen the link between knowledge and policy. Importance is given, however, to the role of ideas, representations and general principles over changes in society and state action, and it is argued, particularly by post-structuralists, that there is not a clear distinction between producers and users of knowledge. The task of the social sciences to improve the policy making process with the policy sciences, found criticism in the critique of positivism as well

⁷Kuhn and Popper are considered by Lakatos, Popper's follower, respectively the 'authoritarian and libertarian poles' of science policy (Fuller 2003:11).



as with the division of the disciplines blamed for fragmenting the problems according to the nature of the discipline.

Indeed, the analysis of the policy process has moved from the rational choice model to different approaches, which consider the policy-making a complex process where knowledge does not have a direct impact. Different interpretations of this relation point out that knowledge can have a neutral role. One of the problems with this approach is that there may be competition of different interpretation coming from different areas of knowledge and political choice is influenced by outside knowledge. Moreover, political decisions may influence the development of a particular form of knowledge used to develop policies. This is the case of the funding of programmes where it is determined which kind of research will be funded.

The ‘knowledge society’ and the expanded role of the social sciences at EU level

At EU level, the idea to include the social sciences in the policy-making mechanism became concrete with the creation of the *European Research Area* (ERA) and the issuing of the *White Paper on Governance* in 2001. These were measures to tackle low economic growth and unemployment and to boost European innovation with the aid of science and technology. The intent was to lift the EU, as an economic area, to the level of US and Japan in terms of competitiveness and innovation matching scientific performance with technological and industrial results, known as the *European paradox*.⁸ The *Community Method* was introduced to improve research and the *Framework Programme* (FP) was employed to promote greater science and technology collaboration and coordination. New understandings of society, as the result of the growing importance of *information* and the production and usage of *knowledge* in the 1990s, influenced the Commission approach⁹.

Relevant, within this context, are the theories which attempt to understand the transformations within contemporary societies which begun in the 1960s and 1970s. Some argued for the emergence of new ways to understand contemporary societies with the central role of *information* and *knowledge* in society (Castells 2000; Sörlin and Vessuri 2007; Webster 2007; Fuller 2002; Lash 2002). The seminal work of Müldür and Caracostas, *Society the Endless Frontier* (1998), often considered as the blueprint for the FP6, picked up these theoretical changes and set the basis for the role of science and technology for the improvement of society. Many social scientists have recognised US, Japan, Britain and Germany as *information societies* and thus the EU urging for adjustment to the global information society.

Müldür and Caracostas pointed out that research, innovation and skills were no longer ends in themselves but there to reach social needs and work together with socio economic institutions. They added that these interactions were dynamic and research on them was part of the process of innovation activities. The main idea was to bring together the various actors which

⁸ The inability of European Countries to translate scientific innovation into economic progress.

⁹ In the 1990s the European Commission started major policy initiatives such as the *Green Paper on Innovation*, the *White Paper on Education and Training* and proposals for the 5th Framework Programme for Community action in research and technology development. This approach, also called the *systematic approach*, rests on the role of research and innovation to serve the needs of society.



contributed to societal change within shared objective of common interests. The context of this change was a change in innovation and the creation of a *learning society* (Müldür and Caracostas 1998:137) with the assumption that growth was related to technological change and development driven by perceived needs¹⁰.

Part of their work looked at public research and innovation policies in OECD countries since the WWII and divided it into three phases. The first phase looked at policies build upon defence and science and concluded that during the WWII research was carried out for military purposes and this was also the case for the period of the Cold War¹¹. The second phase was characterised by the combination of industry and technology. The end of the economic boom which ended with the oil crisis of the early 1970s, the industrial rise of Japan and the rise of communication and technology, which changed industrial norms and the approach towards innovation, characterised this change in public research. This period also marked the beginning of designed research and development programmes and in the 1980s with economic liberalism it was adopted the approach of strategic industries to be funded by the commercial sector and direct and indirect state aid (Müldür and Caracostas 1998:18-19)¹².

The third phase was characterised by the relationship between society and innovation and emphasised the quality of life and sustainable development. It begun in the mid 1990s and it was characterised by five fundamental factors. First, there was the disappearance of the communist bloc and the political pressure to invest in the military sector; second, the emergence of a trend to invest in research and development; third, the globalization of the economy; fourth, the rising of structural unemployment and concerns for the environment, the quality of life, health and retirement programmes; and fifth, the impoverishment of states, public mistrust towards science and its consequence (Müldür and Caracostas 1998:21).

Müldür and Caracostas, citing Michael Gibbons' Mode 2¹³ of knowledge production, acknowledged that a new model of science and technology in society was emerging favouring problem oriented research, aimed at resolving social and market problems. This favoured models involving different players, an interdisciplinary approach, questioning of the objectives and result of partnership, which comes and goes. This interactive and systematic approach to innovation was gaining more grounds in academic and political circles because research was in crisis and the decision makers were seeking new justifications and avenues of government action in a context of budget cuts.

¹⁰ Edith Cresson, member of the Prodi Commission, responsible for *Research Innovation and Education* (1999), pointed out the need for governments to invest more in technology research and development in order to have a major impact on the *society of knowledge*. She also pointed out that the Union should direct the 'European scientific and technological area' to the improvement of the economy and society and suggested the work of Müldür and Caracostas as the guidelines to achieve this goal.

¹¹ They argued that this approach was shaped in the USA by Vannevar Bush who proposed a policy based on the use of public funds into basic research and higher education for the American economy and military strategies.

¹² In this period, the government is also more a partner to industry than a client of research and development as in the first phase goal.

¹³ Michael Gibbons et al (1994) to differentiate between the traditional system of knowledge production Mode 1 and a new way of knowledge production Mode 2, and the transformation of research priorities, the commercialization of research and the accountability of science.



In this context, the role of the social sciences, apart from the tradition of investigating and interpreting social phenomenon, is that of problem solving and that of being part of the scientific field of the natural sciences. The role of the social sciences in this context through FP6 and FP7 helped to coordinate the social scientists contributing to the formation of a European public policy. In both FPs research in the social sciences were divided into thematic fields which allocated funds for different purposes within the competence of the social sciences. In FP6 Priority 7, “Citizens and Governance in a knowledge based society” and in FP7 area of Cooperation, Theme 8: Socio Economic Sciences and Humanities funds were allocated for immigration and citizenship related issues. Given the importance of this subject area in the light of recent developments in immigration flows particular importance was given to the role of research for better understanding this phenomenon.

EU level immigration policies and the role of research

Migration policies at EU level gained importance with the creation of the Union Treaty of 1992 and subsequently with other treaties, which gave more competences in the sphere of justice and security. At national level this reflected more attention of policy makers to issues related to increasing migration flows towards Europe and in particular to the increasing pressure in Southern Europe where due to political instability people leave their countries in search of economic opportunities. Approaches for the formulation of policies reflected the *transnationalist* stance although the issue of *securitization* prevailed also at EU level.

Migration policies were put back on the agenda in the Council of the European Union in 2005 following the incidents in Ceuta and Melilla.¹⁴ The Commission and the Council of Ministers agreed a series of measures based on control, such as visa and borders regulations. Previously, measures such as cooperation with countries of origin or preventive measures such as fight against poverty, human rights abuses and condemnation of authoritarian regimes were introduced in the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 and the Tampere Conclusions of 1999 but after September the 11th and a conservative change in the Council of Ministers these measures were not adopted (Bendel 2007:32,33). Instead, after the Hague Programme 2004-10, policies focused on security and control, under the label of *securitization*.

On the other hand, the focus on immigration research by the Commission was characterised by the establishment of the immigration policy at EU level and the increasing importance of the role of research in the sphere of migration. This was also related to the changes of the phenomenon itself, which can be partially associated to the process of globalization and the necessities of the knowledge economies for labour. For instance, the financial world, agricultural and industrial production and services supplies have developed a new order of labour across borders affecting trade, culture and knowledge. Thus, traditional research, prevalently in the national framework, has been regarded inadequate to understand such dynamics. Therefore, within the EU, with the FP6 and continuing with FP7, funding of projects sought to support new approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools to understand better how migratory flows were developing.

¹⁴ In October 2005 people from sub-Saharan countries tried to enter Europe through the small Spanish soil in the African Continent, and Moroccan and Spanish police open fired making many injuries and victims. “Under fire at Europe's border” This article appeared on p.22 of the Main section of the Observer on Sunday 2 October 2005.



The aim was that of bridging the gap between ‘deductive prediction’ and ‘what is to happen’, characteristic of the old methods of research in migration.¹⁵ Meaning that research and policy making were sufficiently interacting and that studies to understand migration rested on concepts which regarded migration as a natural consequence of economic and political inequalities (Faist 2004), and had concentrated on countries of destination rather than country of origins (Penninx 2006). To fill the previous shortcomings in migration research, it was pointed out that any approach to study and analyse the migration process should be multidisciplinary since migration research often involve different disciplines of the social sciences. In fact, the FP6 is one of the first attempts to address these issues and to deal with the fragmentation of national research.

Within this context, the migration research debate can be divided between the concepts of *nationalism* and *transnationalism* (Earnest 2008; Faist 2004; Schiller 2009). These are two approaches to interpret how immigrants are politically integrated. Nationalism gives more importance to domestic influence of state policies and the importance of nationality for the incorporation of opportunities for migrants. On the other hand, transnationalism gives more importance to global factors and the various levels of governance, and helps to understand economic, social and political relations across borders. This approach was preferred within the EU research paradigm, given the place of the nation state within the context of EU governance and citizenship.

Within the changes in the dynamics of migration, also research sought new concepts to understand the changing phenomena. In Europe the concept of class dominated research on colonial and guest workers migration of 1970s was replaced by *multiculturalism*, *minorities* and *cultural pluralism*¹⁶ in the 1980s with the increased importance of immigrant incorporation. In the 1990s the concept of transnationalism¹⁷ offered a way to discuss international migration and incorporation.

The shift of immigration and asylum issues into EU competences coincides with the increased concerns for immigration issues in Europe and at the same time the increase of immigration research to try to understand these new dynamics. The signs of this equivalence are the inclusion of immigration and asylum into EU competences and at the same time the inclusion in FP6 of social science research also to cover immigration issues. The orientations of immigration research at EU level follow the transnational approach which tries to overcome the national based approach. However, by looking at EU legislation in the sphere of migration it is possible to determine that policies are largely dominated by security issues and measures directed to margin flows rather than dealing with the causes of migration as encouraged by

¹⁵ ‘Moving Europe: EU research on migration and policy needs’ European Commission 2009.

¹⁶ Hirschman, et al. 1999; Portes 1997 did include work on migration motivations, but the main focus was on issues of incorporation of immigrants into society (assimilation, pluralism etc.)

¹⁷ There are, nevertheless, two opposing views of transnationalism. David Held et al (1999) argue that on the one hand, transnationalism is a variant of ethnic community formation as a result of a failed attempt of incorporation in the immigration countries. This is not a new phenomenon and should not generate concern given the process of globalization with weakened national borders. On the other hand, there is the dramatic increasing border crossing exchanges since the 1970s when measured in quantitative ways.



the transnationalist approach. This shows that issues related to immigration remain closely secured by national governments since are related to matters closely concerned with sovereignty.

The Italian case: immigration policies and the role of social science research

Italy became an immigration country towards the end of the 1980s and its immigration policies reflected this change well into the 1990s. Although early legislations were formulated in the light of emergency, they changed the *figure of the foreigner*¹⁸, restricted entry and regularised large numbers of immigrants on the Italian territory. The introduction of the 1998 Turco-Napolitano¹⁹ Immigration Act signed a significant change in the formulation of policies since it supported legal immigration, opposed illegal entry and introduced integration measures, also formalizing the process for obtaining citizenship.

Zincone and Di Gregorio (2002:38) argue that the reason for the formulation of this act was the failure of the previous legislation. In fact, the Turco-Napolitano Act of 1998 introduced by a centre-left coalition was the first inclusive immigration bill, which treated immigration as a long-term phenomenon. Adopting a transnational approach it considered the country of origin also including measures for integration (Zincone 2010:24). The previous legislation, the Martelli Act (law n.39/90) was thought inadequate to tackling the issue of integration. Immigrants were considered useful only for the economy without taking into consideration the social and cultural needs of the new comers. Also, problems were found with the system of inflows at the borders and inside the country. The act was also made in the light of emergency in the sense that the phenomenon of immigration was growing and with it, problems related to illegality and social integration in the context of the Schengen Agreement. With the compliance of this international treaty, Italian borders became the borders of the Schengen Area and they became a concern of other European member states. According to Zincone and Di Gregorio (2002) there was pressure from European countries which considered Italy a relaxed country in terms of immigration control at the borders, for the formulation of the law.

In the preparation of the bill, it was taken into consideration the work of the Minister of Social Affairs Fernanda Contri who, in 1993, established a commission for the study of the juridical condition of foreigners in Italy. The commission was composed by experts and civil servants of the ministries and the result was a bill with 174 articles.

In the input phase of the bill important was the contribution of the advocacy coalition made of prevalently religious associations. Also non-religious groups had an important role such as trade unions. The main input outside the government, which was determined to put through the priority objectives, came from the immigrants' advocacy coalition composed by Catholic associations. The 'decentralised groups' forming the advocacy coalition managed to obtain the main health provisions including illegal immigrants. This also happened in the field of

¹⁸ The *Testo Unico di Polizia* (The Single Text of Police) of 1931 regarded the foreigner and not the immigrant. The foreigner was regarded in terms of public order and consequently to be closely monitored and not to reside permanently in the Italian state. This understanding of the foreigner dominated the sphere of security at least until 1986 and in the attitudes towards immigrants even after this date (Melica 1996:127).

¹⁹ Named after Livia Turco at the time minister of Social Affairs and Giotgio Napolitano Interior minister. Giorgio Napolitano at present is the President of the Italian Republic.



education at primary and secondary schools were head teachers sympathetic of the advocacy coalition accepted children of illegal immigrants and this became a practice which influenced the Education Ministry to issue 'permissive circulars' which became statute in 1998.

However, in the final drafting stage 'policy learning' was reduced, the role of expert was restricted and the bill was made non-amendable preventing the input from the advocacy coalition. The final draft was left to a sub-committee with the influence of the offices of the main ministries. It was assumed that the government wanted to get the law passed quickly in order to satisfy the European partners. In this stage of the drawing up of the draft law, ministry officials played a leading role²⁰.

The Commission for integration policies of immigrants (Commissione per le politiche di integrazione degli immigrati Art. 46) established by the Turco-Napolitano solicited a model of 'reasonable integration'. This meant the integrity of the person and of the *other*, and the pursuing of positive integration. The commission had the duty to provide annually the state of the art of the implementation of integration policies, to formulate proposals for action and to provide solutions to government quests about immigration policies, intercultural issues and against racism. The commission was formed of representatives from relevant ministries such as social affairs, interior, justice, health, education and of about ten experts qualified in the field of social, juridical and economic analysis nominated by a decree of the prime minister. The president of the commission was chosen from academic experts in the field.

The Commission posed a series of points. The facilitation to acquire citizenship for children from families settled in Italy. The choice to change the acquired identity or the original identity; the valorisation of the family and the school as principal agencies of integration. This can be achieved with the following reform actions. Acquisition of citizenship of children from foreign resident parents of which one born in Italy this to favour integration through citizenship of immigrants of third generation. The acquisition of citizenship for the child born in Italy if the parents are resident in Italy for at least five years and if they present a request for the acquisition of their child from the fifth year of age which coincide with the beginning of schooling.

The subsequent 2002 Bossi-Fini²¹ Reform of the law was characterised by repressive measures and was formulated by party leaders who wanted to accommodate electoral promises. It had stronger political influence as it was initiated by the parties and party figures from AN and Lega Nord²² who played a predominant role in drafting the bill. When the centre left came to power immigration policy was an electoral promise that had to be maintained. The centre right justified their position by maintaining that the previous bill had had negative feedback and problems with immigration flows and integration. The aim of the

²⁰ Giorgio Napolitano from whom the Act takes the name, a former MEP and member of the PCI (Italian Communist Party) and at the time Interior Minister brought his experience at EU level. The other individual contribution was that of Livia Turco, from which the Act also takes the name, who was a member of catholic associations as well as a feminist.

²¹ Named after Umberto Bossi leader of the Northern League and Reform minister at the time. Also Gianfranco Fini vice Premier and leader of the right wing party National Alliance.

²² National Alliance, a centre right wing party from a post-fascist party.

Northern League, a populist party representing prejudiced sentiments towards the Southern Italian region.



government was to introduce tougher measures to tackle illegal immigration and registered employment as the main means for integration.

In fact the first action taken was the abolition of the job seeker's residence permit proposing a 'unified contract of employment and residence'. Accordingly, immigrants would be allowed to enter only with a contract of employment and stay in country would be according to the length of the contract. This was articulated, according to the policy makers, to prevent door to door sellers and small drug sellers. Moreover, another disappointment was the sponsorship method which was not used by potential immigrants but by associations, mainly Chinese and Moroccan. This was in opposition to the fact that many small business, also in areas where the Lega was strong, relied on illegal workers and found themselves without their labour force.

With these tones the political parties of the centre right drafted the first stage of the reform and the role of the parties was present until the final drafting of the reform. The coordination of the reform was assigned to the Deputy Prime Minister Gianfranco Fini an exponent of AN, an ex-post-fascist party who with the Lega Nord largely influenced the reform. In the same government coalition the Catholics and some opponents of some aspects of the reform argued over the content of the reform and negotiations took place within the governing coalition. It is argued that also experts and representatives of the civil society were consulted but nothing like the approach of the previous reform. In fact the bill reflected two main positions, the functionalist and legalitarian, and attempts from the Catholics and part of AN to try to correct them with the solidarist approach.

Although the drafting and correction of the original draft were carried out by the centre-right government coalition, the advocacy coalition was indirectly able to influence the political process through personal relationships so like in the previous bill, Catholic associations influenced the reform. Some changes can be seen in the elimination of the residence period for family reunification and the crime of clandestine immigration was not included. These measures were also scrapped because of costs of trials and deportations but some measures already existed with the Turco-Napolitano, such as the escorting to the borders in some cases without the right of defence. The new bill extended this to all persistent offenders.

Zicone (2002) argues that the bill was not open to outsiders in the form of associations because it would have increased the discontent of the Italian public. Also, limited 'policy learning' produced by the comparison with other European methods, with the exception of border control, immigration still a domestic issue also with little consideration for the European dimension of regulation (Di Gregorio 2000).

Following the policy oriented approach in Northern European countries and also promoted at EU level, in Italy this approach has been developed relatively recently and it coincides with growing interest both in the policy making process and also in immigration issues and the inclusion of political scientists in the policy making process. The role of experts and academia of the Turco-Napolitano had not the same role in the Bossi-Fini which was controlled by the centre-right coalition party leaders. Immigration was criminalised and blamed the previous law for not controlling enough immigration flows. Integration based on registered employment before entering the country. Some solidarist principles were introduced by the same catholic coalition in the sphere of family reunification, health and education. The



formulation of the bill was closed to outsiders and did not adopt a policy learning approach. This means that at that moment electoral promises counted more than the contribution and participation of experts and academics.

EU Impact on Italian immigration research

Immigration research at EU level is for the most part funded in the FPs 6 and 7 and it has increased in importance as the dimension of immigration in Europe has increased drastically since the 1990s. The need to better understand this phenomenon is also related with the determination of the Commission to embrace the establishment of the knowledge- society. For this reason, in the view of the Commission, it became crucial, also following the German model, to value immigration and labour. In the FP6 Priority 7, “Citizens and Governance in a knowledge based society”, migration, immigration and multiculturalism were placed under the project category Networks of Excellence²³ and they were guided to adopt a comparative and multi-disciplinary approach, and of support for the policy-making process. Research was directed to study the place and condition of migrants and ethnic minorities and their ‘economic, political and cultural life (including religion) and the challenges of multiple cultures for the building of knowledge based societies with due attention to gender issues and to integration strategies’.²⁴ The purpose of these guidelines for research was to bring out the challenges that member states faced with the increasing phenomenon of immigration and how they deal with culture, welfare, racism, brain drain, asylum seekers and refugees, formal and informal labour market issues. The *transnationalist* approach to understand the dynamics of migration was prevalent and a close analysis of migration flows took into consideration the reason why people decide to leave their country and to forecast the dynamics of immigration in Europe with particular interest to the countries of origin.

The projects funded under FP6 and FP7²⁵ in which Italian universities and institutions took part, looked at different aspects of policies of ranging from issues related to *history of migration in Europe, language and education, undocumented workers, data on migration issues, diversity and inclusion, integration, political participation and naturalization, and gender related issues*. Overall, for the Italian context the results of the projects indicated new approaches to deal with the phenomenon of immigration in line with the ERA prerogatives they propose guidelines²⁶ for the different levels of policy makers.

²³ These projects are intended to support in-depth integration of research programmes and activities in a given thematic area. They promote the development of a variety of joint activities in the context of the thematic content of the Research Topic in question; these activities may extend significantly beyond the core research activities.

²⁴ FP6 Specific Programme “Integrating and Strengthening the European Research Area” Priority 7: Citizens and Governance in a knowledge based society’ Work Programme 2002 -2003 http://www.eurosfair.prd.fr/knowledgesociety/documents/pdf/g_wp_200202_en.pdf

²⁵ The total amount of fund of the project analysed amounts to €35.379 million.

²⁶ These are guidelines which suggest that projects should include policy guidelines for policy makers see ‘Implementation of the European Research Area in the Social and Human Sciences’, especially as regard of the coordinaton and opening-up of national programmes’ ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/citizens/docs/study_era_shs_03.pdf



CLIOHRES,²⁷ in the FP6, addressed migration in all its forms in their historical context. The aim was to show that European countries were in the past migration countries. Moreover, adopting a constructivist approach the aim was to show that existing concepts such as *national consciousness*, *history of ethnicity* and *religion* are artificially constructed and historians have a pivotal role within this process. Thus, emphasis was placed on the role of the national scientific community of the countries involved in the projects to define their research agenda and therefore the role of the historians in portraying an arbitrary view of the past. Amongst other themes such as states, legislation and institutions, the concept of citizenship was regarded as a notion, which can have different interpretation depending on the context that have changed over the time and that it acquired further meanings with the creation of EU citizenship. In the policy recommendations it was pointed out that, there was a ‘path dependency’ in the understanding of the concept of citizen and citizenship. In fact, views of citizenship were characterized by concepts such as political power, rights and duties, possibility of resistance and obedience to the law and internal and external boundaries of a political community.

FP6 funded a number of projects where it was emphasised the role of language in the sphere of identity and culture, and education was regarded as an important element for social inclusion also for migrant groups. In the context of the Lisbon Strategy 2000, language was considered as an important instrument for the political implementation of cultural diversity in the European knowledge based society. It was pointed out that in Italy the increasing number of immigrants meant also more pupils in public schools. In Italy due to a decree of the President of the Republic (349/99), also non-residents have full rights and duty to take part to Italian schools and in 2006 a ministerial memorandum provided ‘didactical orientation’ to encourage integration. One of the main results of these projects was that exclusion from education was shared by all the vulnerable groups including migrants. For this last group the main barriers recognised were prejudice and racism from mainstream society and the approach was that in order to overcome poverty and exclusion, education was considered as related to the development of the potentials of individuals. Another approach to the study of language was that of culture and its relation to multilingualism. In Italy, it was found that immigrant students bring multilingual ability to other students and may increase the interest of local students in their own language and that language policy was a necessary concept within the national level of investigation.

In the sphere of diversity and inclusion, issues of exclusion were identified within employment, accessing education, private and public services and facilities. In the projects, migration was not understood in terms of push-pull factors and therefore it was recognised, by the social scientists involved in the project, the need to formulate new approaches to understand immigration and the integration of migrants. Firstly, it was analysed the function of language and discourse in Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Estonia, Spain, Italy and France. The report concludes that in countries such as France, Italy and Spain an immigrant was perceived as a threat and in the other countries more a general scepticism. Generally the use of ‘us’ and ‘them’ to refer to ‘national’ and ‘immigrant’ or ‘majority’ and ‘minority’

²⁷ CLIOHRES (Creating Links and Overviews for a New History Research Agenda), a Network of Excellence Introduced in the European Community's Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) with the objective of combating fragmentation in the European Research Area.



influences politicians' choices on how to deal with migration and cultural pluralism. Also the use of terms such as 'immigrant' or 'foreigner' was different in different countries. For example in France in the public discourse 'immigrant' remain with descendant of several generations while foreigners are considered those who are not naturalized French citizens. In Spain and Italy the term foreigner was associated with people from rich countries where immigrant with people from poor countries. In Spain and Italy the media focus on criminality when talking about immigrants in fact in Italy 50% of all news and articles about young immigrants focus on criminality.

The importance of integration was also analysed from the perspective of gender to enhance competitiveness in Europe, economic growth and social cohesion. In Italy, integration policies are present more at regional level with the help of voluntary organizations. These organizations are religious such as Caritas (Episcopal Italian Conference), Acli (Christians Workers Associations) and also secular such as trade unions and human rights NGOs had been active in the field of immigration which have replaced actions for the reception, support and integration. Migrant women hold an important position in the Italian labour market especially in the care sector and they do not benefit from any equal opportunity policies for women in general. The general policy recommendations included an evaluation of general policies about gender, migration and integration, separation of residence rights and employment rights, improvement for female opportunities (skills, qualifications, training), integration as a long term perspective, inclusion of social economic aspect of integration, reaching disadvantaged groups and the right to work for asylum seekers.

The concept of civic participation was also considered as a move towards integration and political engagement since with the arrival of different ethnic groups the composition of a country was challenged. Immigrants were considered potentially important for the development of a civically active European society. The concern was the decline of civic activism and the undermining effect of legitimation at EU level. Within this context, immigrants were considered an important resource for civic participation based on the assumption that transnational networks are also based on civic engagement. A concern was also for the political and legal restrictions and the different factor which may affect pattern of immigrant civic activism. In the finding it was maintained that immigrants find different integration prospects and opportunity which varies from the country they live, on the rights linked to their country of origin, their individual status and the right at local level. Participation regimes in all countries were separated from nationals, EU citizens and third country nationals and only full citizens enjoy full political and civil rights.

In the policy recommendations, it was pointed out three main areas. The first was that the institutions that fund research should also include immigrants as part of the researchers to make it truly transnational. The second was that organizations should check their training policies to favour the inclusion of immigrants. Thirdly, a public discourse on migration and integration issues to encourage engagement in public life in their country of settlement. This study also addressed the concern that ethnic diversity was connected to negative issues because of the 'horizontal approach' employed. Integration policies are not the only important tools but important is also the general discourse about immigration policies. Immigrants should also be consulted in the formulation of restriction policies to prevent illegal entrance and favour the return of foreign national with legal documents. The formulation of restrictive



policy may give rise to a negative discourse in the public which sees immigration as a threat and the lead to more restrictive policies. Also immigrant should be more included by eliminating unnecessary restrictions for naturalization. Where member states had voting rights at national level was appreciated by active immigrants.

Another important concern of the Commission and of national governments was data on different aspects of immigration in order to better understand this phenomenon. Some studies involved information exchange on migration flows and asylum in the EU, which in some cases were not considered and for this reason were not available. Other studies looked at the unknown dimension of 'irregular' immigrants and its control. They attempt to determine the national situation of migration, asylum, residence permit, citizenship and data collection of data suppliers and policy makers. In Italy the responsible authority was the Citizenship unit of Ministry of Interior in the 1992 law.

Within the field of statistical data, it was also considered important the data on integration and discrimination. Recommendations suggested that bodies such as Ministries INPS (Institute of National Social Security), INAIL (Institute of Insurance for Health and Safety at Work) collaborate with ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics) and make their data available periodically so that they could be used for the programming and analysis of social policies. Moreover, according to the recommendations, there should have been some coordination between bodies responsible for survey and ISTAT and there should be more communication in order to provide correct information to international bodies such as the EU regarding statistics about immigration and asylum seekers. The general more wide objective was to include administrative trend into the main survey and to include not only country of birth and current citizenship but also previous citizenship and the information of the country of birth and citizenship of parents in order to identify target population.

Conclusion

The main question of the paper was to determine the impact of EU policy research on the Italian policy research and ultimately in the policy making process. The attempt to give a relevant answer to this question presented another point significantly relevant. Broadly speaking, Italy does not seem to be investing for developing a model of knowledge society. At least in the field of the social sciences, which had increased in importance in advanced democracies in the attempt to invest in innovation, there is no evidence that the various governments are investing in the same way other European member states are.

In the sphere of immigration, in terms of research and policies, it has been determined that in Italy there is not a strong national tradition of policy research and advice to the policy-making. One reason is that in Italy immigration research is relatively a new field since Italy has become an immigration country only recently and therefore, developed a research approach comparable to the rest of Europe only in the 1990s. Moreover, early immigration research was mainly based on data collection and did not attempt to understand the phenomenon of migration in relation to the integration of immigrants. This kind of research has only developed in correspondence with the 1998 Immigration Law and found some consideration in the implementation of policies. However, with the subsequent change of government the role of academics and experts was almost absent or did not have a main role.



The influence of the EU within this context has been present at policy and at research level. At policy level mainly this paper emphasised, following the signing of the Schengen agreement, pressure from other members state to increase control on the borders and also pressure to formulate a more European aligned immigration policy which was done with the 1998 legislation. The establishment of EU citizenship and consequent regularization of Roma communities, when Romania entered the EU, prevented deportation measures for these minority groups which were included in the security package wanted by the centre right government in 2009.

The analysis of the EU funded projects broadly showed that the approach towards immigration and related issues was an attempt to partly reformulate the idea of migration in Europe and also to look for the reasons for better integration. The characteristic of the results which emerged from the various projects was that also of informing the policy making process. As we have seen previously the idea of research formulated within the FPs was that of informing the policy making process also at national level. For this reason, each project had policy guidelines or recommendations, which in theory should be used by policy makers and experts as well.

At research level, this is more complicated to determine the influence of the EU Commission. One reason is that it is difficult to assess the impact of social science research in this case immigration research. Research can be disseminated in many ways and it is the duty of the university/institutes involved to make use of the data collected. In almost all the projects, policy recommendations outlined the Italian policy *national trends* pointing in directions, which can be recognised in the Commission approach and in a certain discourse, which has been generated by the IMISCOE at European level and through FIERI at national level. From this approach, it is possible to see analogies in the study of the policy process and in the relation between research and policy-making. In this respect, also the recommendations of the EU funded research point in the same direction. This is the case where EU funded project such as IMISCOE has an impact at national level and/or find similar approaches. This comes also in a time where the Italian social sciences are not recognised at institutional level²⁸ particularly in the CNR and MIUR where the social sciences should find funding for development and applied research. It seems that one Italian trend is also the lack of a coherent tradition in the social sciences, a trend which begun in the post war period and remained the same up to this time. From these considerations, it is possible to conclude that the supranational level have effects on the national level and it prevents the national politicised issues, particularly in the field of migration to prevail. On the research side, in Italy there is a discourse, which is strongly influenced by the international context and correspond to what is predicated by the EU Commission through the FPs. There, however, the nexus between research and policy seems absent. Although the knowledge is available for policy-makers, there is not the political will to adopt an approach like that of other European countries mentioned above.

²⁸ 'La scomparsa della sociologia della scienza ufficiale italiana: suicidio od omicidio?' Guido Martinotti
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