

Human Well-Being Research and Policy Making

Series Editors: Richard J. Estes · M. Joseph Sirgy

Angela Paparusso

Immigrant Integration in Europe

A Subjective Well-Being Perspective



Springer

Human Well-Being Research and Policy Making

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*To my beloved husband, for his love,
patience, and support.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction



Abstract This Chapter aims to illustrate the rationale and structure of the Book. Immigrant integration, understood in its complex and multidimensional character, is one of the key challenges of increasingly multicultural European societies. On the other hand, subjective well-being is recently capturing the research interest of migration scholars and researchers, as a measure of subjective integration. This Book aims to bring subjective well-being into the research strand of immigrant integration, using self-reported life satisfaction. This introductory Chapter begins by outlining the rationale and structure of the Book, as well as providing definitions of key concepts employed throughout the Book and positioning the present study in the broader field. Then, I proceed by providing a short historical overview of immigration in Europe, which is useful to understand the evolution of Europe as a continent of immigration and, therefore, of integration, in the last decades. The final paragraph focuses on the European response to the 2015 refugee crisis and provides insights into recent evolution in European migration governance.

Keywords Immigrant integration · Subjective well-being · Europe · Immigrants · Refugees

1.1 Rationale and Structure of the Book

Immigrant integration is a central issue in contemporary societies. It is at the core of both public debate and intimate reflection since it challenges both national identity and socio-economic cohesion. It pertains, at the same time, the private encounter with the ‘other’ and the communities’ best way of allocating resources and opportunities for all. For this reason, immigrant integration is at the top of European countries’ social policy agenda.

The topic of integration become even more relevant if we think that, as elucidated by Crul et al. (2013), European cities are gradually becoming majority-minority cities, as New York, Sao Paolo, Toronto and Sydney already are (Alba, 2020; Alba & Reitz, 2019). In the next decades, everyone living in a large European city will belong to an ethnic minority group. Some cities, such as Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin