

Name of the student:	Charlotte Gagnaire
Title of the thesis:	Examining Collaborative Dynamics in French Migrant Integration Policies: from National to Local Levels
Reviewer:	Brian Shaev

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

This is a thesis on a very important topic for European Politics and Society: the interaction between local and national levels in the delivering of migrant integration policies in France. It is a field that I have personally published in with the collaboration of Dr. Sarah Hackett (whose name is misspelled on page 9). The literature review on the ‘local turn’ in migration studies is overall good though it excludes a lot of important work. The main problem here is the almost total lack of literature review on local migrant integration in France. The thesis claims there is a ‘scarcity of studies on local-level integration policies for migrants in France’ but I am familiar with quite a few studies on urban migration policy in 5th republic France, including even one on Marseilles (in addition to the Giessner study which is one of the case studies in the paper—and there certainly is work on Paris. There is also no general literature review on migrant integration policies in France, so the paper is not set up to explain its contribution. The analysis section cites Giessner 2020 who wrote about migrant reception in Marseilles—why is this not in the literature review? The literature review focuses on theories of urban migrant integration but not the actual results of that literature regarding French cities.

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The methodology got off on a good track: comparing two cities in regards to their collaboration with national authorities about including civil society organizations in migrant integration. There are reasonable hypotheses laid out. The methodology is confusing though because there is ‘full’ collaboration on the one hand and then ‘high, moderate, low or no collaboration’ elsewhere. Is full the same as high collaboration or not in this analysis? The methodology is based largely on interviews but the paper never states how many people were interviewed and what organization? Placing transcripts in the appendix is not a substitute to explaining what interviews were used and how in the methodology so the reader can understand what the source base is for the thesis.

3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

I was really surprised by the analytical section: citations are few and spread a part and interviews are not directly cited at all but vaguely referred (but where is the reference? We cannot be hunting through the appendices trying to identify the sources the author is using for the claims). There is also confusion about what local level is being discussed specifically in the analysis as the regional level is conceptualized along with the municipality as ‘the local level’, but this causes confusion about which is being referred to. There are also claims like ‘The city has decided to’—who has decided? The mayor? The city council? Someone else? At other times ‘Paris’ consults with the state, etc., but I don’t know what that means. Also in Paris the arrondissements function basically as mini-municipalities but this is not discussed or mentioned at all in the thesis. The discussion and conclusion section is good at summarizing the paper’s findings but these are undermined by the lack of proper sourcing and explanation of sources in the analysis itself. Also it is a bit of a stretch without adding important nuance concerning the limitations of this unifocal analysis (just collaboration with civil society groups) to argue that since there has not been high collaboration regarding civil society organizations, therefore ‘the local turn in the implementation of immigrant policies and the collaboration within the vertical dimension is still limited.’

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE


(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The writing and formal aspects are largely good (not the academic standards or citation part though).

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

This is a thesis on a promising topic that is undermined by its lack of a proper literature review on the exact subject of the selected research, confusion about which level of local governments is being analyzed when, and poor and in places absent referencing for the claims being made in the analysis.

Grade (A-F):	D; 6.5 (UPF scale)
Date:	Signature:
24 June 2024	

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
B (81-90)	81-90 %	16,3%	4,5	11,7%	7,5-8,4	16,4%	8-8,9	11,0 %
C (71-80)	71-80 %	16,3%	4	20%	6,5-7,4	36,2%	7-7,9	18,4 %
D (61-70)	61-70 %	24%	3,5	28,3%			6-6,9	35,2 %
E (51-60)	51-60 %	34,9%	3	33,4 %	6-6,4	42,1 %	5-5,9	30,1 %

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.