

# Governing Social Cohesion & Migration

IP29

Civic stratification and control through welfare benefits and 'integration'

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This study aims to improve our understanding of how law, policies and practices govern social cohesion and migration through integration requirements and welfare benefits



## Right to welfare benefits

LAWS & PRACTICES	IMPACT ON STAY PERMITS
Administrative & Juridical	Revocation
Negotiations	Non - Renewal
Contradictions	Downgrading
Power inequalities	Warnings and Menaces

## Right to welfare benefits in the context of ...

### Legal frameworks

How do legal frameworks shape ideas of 'integration' vs. right to welfare benefits?

What are the differences and similarities at the cantonal, regional and communal levels?

#### LAW - federal level

Swiss Citizenship Act – SCA

- ✓ Total revision, entered into force in 2018
- ✓ First step of the "integration step model"

The allocation of welfare benefits becomes a means of migration control and civic stratification

Foreign Nationals and Integration Act – AIG

- ✓ Partial revision, entered into force in 2019
- ✓ Implementing "integration step model"
- ✓ Mandatory and unsolicited reporting from social services required
- ✓ Further restrictions for third-country nationals to access welfare benefits in discussion

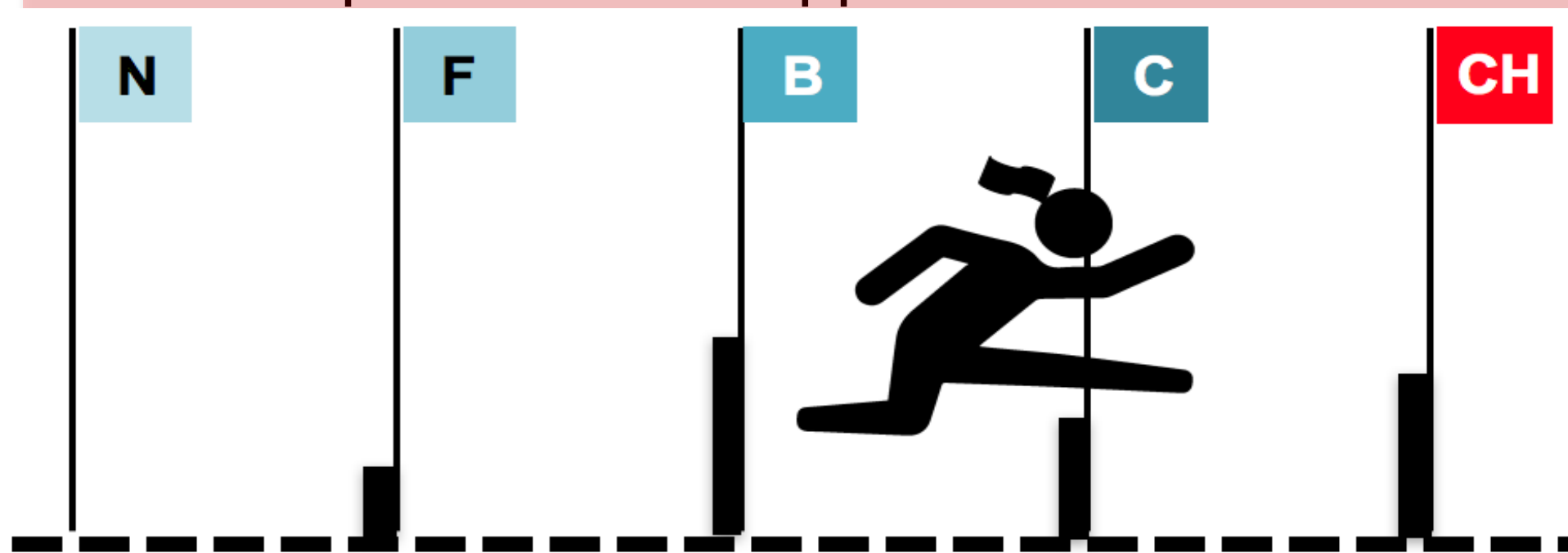
Welfare benefits become an explicit reason for exclusion through deportation

#### COURTS - cantonal & federal levels

Jurisprudence and cantonal administrative courts

- ✓ Influence, and are influenced by, practices of administration

Civic stratification through the legal system and implementation/application of law



#### Selected publications

- Achermann, Ch., B. Kalir and D. Rosset. (2019). "Re-searching access: What do attempts at studying migration control tell us about the state?," *Social Anthropology*.
- Borrelli, L. M. (2020). "Between Nicknames, Trust and Suspicion - Renegotiating Access with Government Agencies in Context of Migration", *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*.
- Borrelli, L. M., Kurt, S., Pfirter, L. and Achermann, C. (2021). "(Un)conditional welfare? Tensions between welfare rights and migration control in Swiss case-law", *Swiss Sociology*.
- Pfirter, L. (2019). "Constructing 'Unreachability' Through Menacing Warnings: The Coupling of Welfare Benefits and Migration Control in Switzerland", *Journal of Legal Anthropology*.
- Pfirter, L., L.M. Borrelli, D. Ruedin and S. Kurt (2021). "Citizenship models and migrant integration – Rethinking the intersection of citizenship and migrant integration through (b)ordering", in: *Handbook of Citizenship and Migration*, edited by Giugni, M. and M.T. Grasso.
- Andreetta, S. and Borrelli, L. M. (2022). Digital practices of negotiation. Social workers at the intersection of migration and social policies in Switzerland and Belgium. *Journal of Social Policy*.

### Institutional Structures

How are control mechanisms realized through institutional exchanges?

How do institutional structures affect respective bureaucratic practices?

#### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS

- Obligatory data exchange about welfare benefits between offices
- Increased communication regarding the assessment of "integration" and deservingness
- Different professional ethics
- Different interests
- Communication among and between social services and migration offices to establish common practices and legitimize decisions

(Re)production of the national community of solidarity and the imaginary of a socially cohesive society entitled to welfare benefits

#### This project contributes to ...

- 1 Debates on integration requirements and exclusionary policies and practices (Favell 2022; Goodman 2010; Korteweg 2017), by analyzing civic stratification (Morris 2002).
- 2 Discussions on social cohesion (Midtbøen 2015; Schiefer & Noll 2017) through its focus on politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis 2007), giving particular attention to the welfare state and welfare chauvinism (Andersen & Bjørklund 1990).
- 3 Relational understanding of decision-making by street-level bureaucracies (Brodin 2012; Eckert 2020; Lipsky 2010; Miaz & Achermann 2021)

### Public Service Workers

How are laws and policies implemented?

How is the notion of 'integration' interpreted in relation to social welfare benefits?

#### CANTONAL MIGRATION OFFICES

- ✓ Use of law to discipline foreign nationals  
Bureaucratic practices of communicating, menacing and warning
- ✓ Pressure from communes to (not) revoke permits  
Migration offices take over the role of social services by reducing costs of welfare benefits and "activating" non-citizens

#### LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES

- ✓ Obligation to communicate foreign nationals' reception of welfare benefits and "integration" to the cantonal migration office  
Border guard proxies:  
Social services take over the role of migration offices, by monitoring and assessing the "integration" of non-citizens

- ✓ Disciplinary measures and control mechanisms for all recipient  
Civic stratification through sanctioning of social assistance beneficiaries
- ✓ Political economy of an administrative organization

The categorization of individuals as foreign nationals allows the state to increasingly establish conditional access to, and punishment of, receiving (national) welfare benefits.