


Chapter 6


Migration Policies of Local Governments in France

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ABSTRACT

Local governments in France are structured in a tripartite system consisting of “municipal”, “departmental”, and “regional” administrations. Since French local governments are founded on the principle of centralization, they operate under strict supervision from the central government. The aim of this study is to reveal the transformation caused by migration in France and to evaluate the effects of local migration governance on migrants. In line with this aim, the study examines the migration policies of local government units in France and reveals the current state of migrant welfare at the local level. First, the concept of migration governance and policy is addressed. Second, it discusses what has been done regarding migration management in France. Lastly, it explains the migration policy of local governments in France, evaluates the condition of migrants, and discusses these issues. The study employs the method of document analysis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migration is a complex and multifaceted social phenomenon that arises from human mobility and unlimited needs and demands. With migration, significant changes can occur in the political, economic, and social structures of countries. These changes can affect both the countries of origin and the destination countries. Therefore, migration has become a crucial element that states incorporate into their strategies and policies. To avoid being negatively affected by the transformations caused by migration, states attempt to frame migration governance within a structured context and develop relevant policies and strategies. Migration policy, in general, is a roadmap specifically created for a country to manage internal and external migration. Local governments play as significant a role as central administrations in a country's migration policy. Local administrations also develop policies and strategies to manage the transformations caused by migration at the local level. This situation extends their role beyond simply meeting the communal needs of local populations and assigns them new responsibilities. Migration, as a complex and comprehensive issue, is widely discussed in many countries around the world and has become central to the lives of societies. European countries also see migration as a major issue and develop and implement policies to manage it. France stands out as one of the most experienced countries in developing migration policies. France has a long migration history due to heavy immigration from its former colonies. Since the 19th century, it has been one of the countries in Europe receiving the highest number of migrants. France developed its immigrant integration model based on the republican values brought by the 1789 French Revolution. Terrorist attacks that occurred in France during 2015-2016 led to a division between Muslim and non-Muslim migrants in French society. President Macron, elected in 2017, has taken a negative stance regarding migrant policies.

Macron's approach to migrants has also influenced the strategic decisions of local governments regarding migration management. France, a unitary state governed by a semi-presidential system, has a tripartite structure of local administrations: "municipal", "departmental", and "regional" units. These local governments, established on centralist principles, are under strict supervision by the central authority. The purpose of this study is to highlight the changes migration has brought about in France and assess how local migration governance affects migrants. For this purpose, the migration policies of local government units in France are examined, and the well-being of migrants at the local level is revealed. The study begins by addressing the topics of migration governance and migration policy. Then it discusses actions taken in France concerning migration management. Finally, it explains how local governments in France manage migration and evaluates and discusses the situation of migrants. Document analysis is used as the research method in this study.

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