Where and Why Immigrants Intend to Naturalize: The Interplay Between Acculturation Strategies and Integration Policies

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Via naturalization procedures, immigrants have the opportunity to acquire rights and duties limited to nationals. Yet little is known about acculturative contexts and naturalization motives underlying immigrants' naturalization intentions. Employing a large sample of first-generation immigrants in Switzerland (N = 3928) and a multilevel approach, we articulated individual acculturation strategies and cantonal integration policies to explain naturalization intentions and underlying motives. Results at the individual level showed that assimilated immigrants report the highest intentions to naturalize, followed by integrated, and lastly by separated immigrants. Motives underlying naturalization intentions also differed as a function of acculturation strategies. Whereas integrated and assimilated immigrants reported higher symbolic motives than separated immigrants, the latter reported the highest level of instrumental motives. A cross-level interaction qualified results at the individual level. Indeed, the gap between integrated and separated immigrants was more pronounced under inclusive integration policies. Accordingly, integrated immigrants' naturalization intentions increased the more integration policies were inclusive, whereas this was not the case among assimilated and separated immigrants. Overall, our findings cast a positive light on inclusive integration policies as contextual affordances to overcome barriers to naturalization and encourage migration scholars to consider the broader political context in which immigrant acculturation is embedded.

KEY WORDS: naturalization intentions, naturalization motives, acculturation strategies, integration policies, multilevel modeling

As a rite of passage from immigrant outsiders to national insiders, citizenship acquisition represents an integration milestone for immigrants and grants them access to the rights and duties limited to national citizens (Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2011; OECD, 2011). As compared to immigrants without host-national citizenship, naturalized citizens tend to enjoy higher socioeconomic status in society, engage more in politics, and build stronger ties with host nationals (Bevelander, 2011; Bratsberg, Ragan, & Nasir, 2002; Hainmueller, Hangartner, & Pietrantuono, 2017; but see Donnaloja, 2020). More than any other acculturative component, citizenship acquisition is a pivotal accelerator of immigrants' long-term sociostructural incorporation (Hainmueller et al., 2017), political agency and claim making (Bloemraad, 2018), and transnational mobility and family reunification (de Hoon, Vink, & Schmeets, 2020). Citizenship acquisition holds therefore a large array of benefits for immigrants. Yet, a considerable share of immigrants voluntarily renounce naturalization, making policy interventions particularly crucial for reducing barriers and boosting naturalization intentions among immigrant populations (for a similar point, see Hainmueller et al., 2018). Indeed, citizenship acquisition is closely linked to the reception context and integration policies, as naturalization intentions vary as a function of specific setting conditions and openness of receiving societies (Fox & Bloemraad, 2015; see also Bornstein, 2017 for a broader discussion on the specificity principle in acculturation science).

The present research is the first attempt to articulate individual and contextual determinants to explain naturalization intentions. By adopting a multilevel approach that simultaneously considers predictors at individual and contextual levels, our goal is twofold: First, we investigate how acculturation strategies relate to naturalization intentions and underlying motives. Second, we investigate how integration policies moderate the effects of acculturation strategies on naturalization intentions. In order to do that, we employ a large survey among first-generation immigrants in Switzerland, a country that is widely known for its federal system, and therefore well suited to assess subnational integration policies (Helbling, 2010; Manatschal, 2011). At a crossroads between political sciences and social psychology, our study contributes to bridge-acculturation literature and the growing political psychological literature on citizenship acquisition (Bloemraad, 2018; Condor, 2011; Hainmueller et al., 2017; Verkuyten, 2018) and highlights the importance of inclusive integration policies to reduce barriers to naturalization.

IMMIGRANTS' ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES

In continuous first-hand contact with a new social context, immigrants gradually change the way they appraise and make sense of their experiences. This process of sociocultural adaptation to the receiving country encompasses a large array of domains, such as cultural practices, lifestyles, ideological beliefs, family values, social identifications, social networks, and civic engagement (e.g., Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010; Ward & Geeraert, 2016). John Berry's influential typological approach to acculturation distinguishes two orthogonal dimensions of sociocultural adaptation (Berry, 1997): (1) immigrants' willingness to maintain connections with their community and culture of origin, referred to as *heritage culture maintenance* in a broad sense; and (2) immigrants' willingness to enter in contact with the host-national community and culture, namely *host-culture adoption*. The combination of these dimensions results in four different acculturation strategies: *integration*, when willingness for both heritage-culture maintenance and host-culture adoption are high; *assimilation*, when host-culture adoption is high, but heritage-culture maintenance is low; s*eparation*, when host-culture adoption is low, but heritage-culture maintenance is high; and *marginalization* when both host-culture adoption and heritage-culture maintenance are low. Whereas integration, assimilation, and separation strategies are to a certain extent the result of immigrants' own choices and orientations, immigrants seldom choose to marginalize themselves but

they are rather marginalized by others (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2018; Wesselmann & Williams, 2017).[1]

Acculturation Strategies Predict Naturalization Intentions

Acculturation has mostly been framed as a matter of cognitions and affects related to sociocultural adaptation (Brown & Zagefka, 2011; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013), rather than as a matter of behavioral participation in structures and institutions of the receiving society (De Vroome & Verkuyten, 2014; Geurts, Lubbers, & Spierings, 2020). Relatedly, acculturation strategies have never been studied in direct connection with citizenship acquisition, namely the formal procedure granting immigrants full structural incorporation in the receiving society (Bloemraad, 2006; Hochschild & Mollenkopf, 2009). The small amount of existing studies examined the relation between acculturation strategies and naturalization intentions only indirectly and referred to citizenship acquisition as an assimilationist practice of self-selection into the national identity (Diehl & Blohm, 2003; Kolbe & Crepaz, 2016; but see Politi, Chipeaux, Lorenzi-Cioldi, & Staerklé, 2020 for a more nuanced account of citizenship acquisition). Indeed, many naturalized citizens tend to distance themselves from their previous markers of cultural identity and from other immigrants in order to demonstrate their loyalty towards the host-national community (Diercks, Politi, Valckle, Van Assche, & Van Hiel, 2020; Just & Anderson, 2015; Sarrasin, Green, Bolzman, Visintin, & Politi, 2018; Strijbis & Polavieja, 2018). This motivational explanation echoes findings from a variety of intergroup contexts showing that individuals undergoing a process of upward mobility (e.g., citizenship acquisition), increase their identification with the high-status acquired group, and derogate the inherited low-status group (Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011; Kulich, Lorenzi-Cioldi, & Iacoviello, 2015; van Veelen, Veldman, Van Laar, & Derks, 2020).

As a rule of thumb, it seems plausible to assume that integrated and assimilated immigrants—those who are most strongly oriented towards the receiving society—signal their national allegiance by intending to naturalize (Maehler, Weinmann, & Hanke, 2019; Pogonyi, 2019; but see also Hochman, 2011). Naturalization intentions should be even stronger in the event of assimilated immigrants, those who have already distanced themselves from their ethnic and national community (Chipeaux, Kulich, Iacoviello, & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2017; Kolbe & Crepaz, 2016). We therefore expect that:

H1a: Immigrants embracing assimilation strategies should intend to naturalize more than immigrants embracing integration strategies.
H1b: Immigrants embracing integration strategies should intend to naturalize more than immigrants embracing separation strategies.

Acculturation Strategies Predict Naturalization Motives

Citizenship acquisition is not merely the sign of abiding bonds with the host culture, but rather the result of a complex set of personal goals and contextual considerations (Fox & Bloemraad, 2015; Robertson, 2008). Most likely, these specificities explain why separated immigrants might be motivated to acquire host-country citizenship even if weakly attached to the receiving society. On the one hand, naturalization fulfills symbolic needs as a marker of social identity, thus fulfilling motivations to belong to the host-national community, as well as immigrants' willingness to perform their

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[1]As compared to the other acculturation strategies, marginalization results from qualitatively different psychological processes and is largely due to external factors (Bourhis et al., 1997; Verkuyten, 2004). For these reasons, in the current study, we excluded marginalization from our hypotheses.

national identity through social and political participation (Carrillo, 2015; Hainmueller et al., 2017; Van Hook, Brown, & Bean, 2006). On the other hand, naturalization fulfills instrumental needs (Bauböck, 2018; Harpaz, 2015; Joppke, 2019), such as the motivation to reduce vulnerability and discrimination and to increase international mobility and labor-market opportunities, in particular among separated immigrants who may have otherwise weak symbolic bonds with the receiving society.

In light of these premises, different acculturation strategies should be related to different motives underlying naturalization intentions.

H2a: Because immigrants embracing integration and assimilation strategies are strongly oriented towards the receiving society, we expect them to endorse belongingness and political participation motives (symbolic motives) more than immigrants embracing separation strategies.

H2b: Because immigrants embracing separation strategies are weakly oriented towards the receiving society, conversely, we expect them to endorse instrumental motives more than immigrants embracing integration and assimilation strategies.

RECEIVING SOCIETY-INTEGRATION POLICIES

Integration policies consist of regulations and measures taken by state agencies that formalize rights and obligations of immigrants towards the receiving society (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; Favell, 2003). By paving the way for immigrants' social, economic, and political incorporation in the receiving society, integration policies are closely tied up with the definition of citizenship itself (Brubaker, 1992; Kymlicka, 2001; Marshall, 1950). Integration policies promote equality of opportunities and regulate immigrants' access to individual rights and material resources (e.g., labor market, family reunion, nationality, social benefits). In addition, integration policies focus on social recognition, as is the case with policies regulating immigrants' access to group rights and symbolic resources (e.g., religious freedom, cultural diversity, communitarianism, political representation). Overall, there is converging evidence that inclusive integration policies improve immigrants' adjustment: Lower wage gaps, reduced discrimination, more belongingness, higher levels of trust, and greater life satisfactions were indeed observed among immigrants under inclusive integration policies (Ersanilli & Saharso, 2011; Wright & Bloemraad, 2012).

The Interaction Between Acculturation Strategies and Integration Policies Predicts Naturalization Intentions

Previous research has demonstrated that receiving society-integration policies and immigrants' naturalization intentions are related. Accordingly, Bennour (2020) found that inclusive regional integration policies foster immigrants' naturalization intentions, either directly, among EU/EFTA citizens, or over time, in the case of individuals from less-developed countries (see also Wright & Bloemraad, 2012). Inspired by the insight that integration policies moderate the effect of exposure to the context of residence (e.g., via length of residence) on naturalization intention, we expect that integration policies should also moderate the effect of acculturation strategies (see also Bornstein, 2017, on the interactive role of acculturation settings). In other words,

H3: We expect a cross-level interaction between immigrants' acculturation strategies (individual level) and integration policies (contextual-level) to predict naturalization intentions.

More specifically, we predict integrated immigrants to be particularly sensitive to the level of inclusiveness of the receiving society. Indeed, immigrants who embrace integration strategies signal their willingness to be incorporated into the social and political body of the receiving society. Yet, they may lose interest and renounce from naturalization if the receiving society is hostile towards their concurrent desire to maintain connections with their heritage culture. Conversely, inclusive integration policies fulfil symbolic needs of social recognition and send signals that immigrants can maintain their cultural distinctiveness, while being included as legitimate member of the host-national community (Bloemraad, 2013; Guimond, de la Sablonnière, & Nugier, 2014). It follows that inclusive integration policies should amplify naturalization intentions particularly among integrated immigrants who wish to adopt the host culture while maintaining their heritage culture. We therefore expect that inclusive integration policies should increase naturalization intentions among integrated immigrants, thereby making the gap between integrated and assimilated (separated) immigrants less (more) pronounced.

Subnational Integration Policies in Switzerland

We test our predictions in Switzerland. The Swiss context is particularly appropriate for using multilevel techniques to study the articulation between acculturation strategies and subnational integration policies in relation to naturalization intentions. First, Switzerland is a federal state, meaning that integration policies and naturalization procedures vary greatly across the 26 cantons (Manatschal, 2011). Second, Switzerland is a direct democracy, so that subnational integration policies mirror political opinions endorsed by host nationals about how to manage intergroup inequality and cultural diversity (Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013; Helbling, 2010). Third, the naturalization regime in Switzerland is generally restrictive and quite reticent to accommodate cultural diversity (Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, & Passy, 2005; Manatschal, 2011). Although Swiss dual-citizenship provision does not force immigrants to choose between host and home countries, the legal requirements to apply for naturalization are particularly restrictive. Indeed, at the time of the survey, citizenship criteria required 12 years of residence, a test of language proficiency and general knowledge of Swiss society and institutions, an individual interview with political representatives, as well as proof of economic independence and no dependency from social aid (State Secretariat for Migration, 2020).

To model subnational integration policies as a contextual factor, we used the Migration-Mobility Survey (MMS, https://nccr-onthemove.ch/research/migration-mobility-survey/), a large national survey examining integration of foreign nationals in Switzerland. Online and computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATIs) were conducted in fall 2016 across the 26 cantons, among people born abroad and with foreign citizenship who arrived in Switzerland during the last 10 years. The survey was conducted in six languages and included adult immigrants from 70 different countries of origin who were at different stages of the naturalization process.

METHOD

Participants

The total sample comprised 5921 first-generation immigrants without Swiss nationality who moved to Switzerland during their adulthood. At the time of the survey, most of the participants were not yet legally entitled to start the standard naturalization procedure. Because we were focusing on naturalization intentions, we excluded participants who did not know whether to apply for Swiss citizenship or not (32.4%, $n = 1920$),[2] or who were subjected to special regulations, so that they were

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[2]Additional analyses including these undecided individuals corroborated the main findings. For more information, see Table S1 in the online supporting information.

already enrolled in the naturalization process (1.7%, $n = 104$). Two respondents did not answer to this question. Our final sample thus consisted of 3928 respondents. Forty-six percent of participants were women ($n = 1797$). Age ranged between 24 and 64 years ($M = 39.09$, $SD = 9.08$). Length of staying in Switzerland ranged from less than 1 to 10 years ($M = 5.37$, $SD = 2.77$). Thirty percent ($n = 1177$) of participants were in possession of a settlement permit (C permit), 63% percent ($n = 2455$) were in possession of a temporary permit (B permit). A minority of participants (7%, $n = 280$) was in possession of a variety of other permits, such as diplomat, international status, or short-term residence permits.

Outcome Variables

Naturalization Intentions

A single item measured participants' naturalization intentions: "Do you intend to apply for the Swiss nationality in the future?" The scale ranged from 1 (*"No, certainly not"*) to 4 (*"Yes, certainly"*) and was treated as continuous when testing the main hypotheses. Overall, participants were positively inclined to acquire Swiss citizenship ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.02$), the mean score differing positively for the theoretical midpoint of the scale, $t(3917) = 18.26$, $p < .001$.

Naturalization Motives

Participants who probably or certainly intended to apply for Swiss nationality were then asked to account for their naturalization intentions (62.5% of the total sample, $n = 2448$). Six naturalization motives were provided using a multiple-choice Yes/No dichotomous question: "I feel I belong to Switzerland" (61.2% of affirmative answers, $n = 1498$); "I wish to vote in national elections, to get involved in my local community" (58.7%, $n = 1438$); "It will give me better professional opportunities" (35.4%, $n = 866$); "It simplifies administrative procedures" (26.9%, $n = 659$); "It will protect me from being expelled from Switzerland" (17.4%, $n = 427$); "It makes it easier to visit my country of origin" (11.2%, $n = 275$).

To evaluate the dimensionality of naturalization motives, we adopted a multistep procedure using SPSS Version 26.0 (Lorenzo-Seva & Ferrando, 2012). A tetrachoric correlation matrix was first computed on the raw data. Second, the obtained matrix was submitted to exploratory factor analyses (EFA) using Unweighted Least Squares. Third, raw data were transformed into z-scores and multiplied with the factor loadings retrieved from the EFA. Finally, normally distributed standardized factor scores were computed for each participant. Given that naturalization motives were measured using a multichoice Yes/No dichotomous question, this technique is best suited to alleviate skewed (and thus biased) factors due to the binary nature of the data (Greer, Dunlap, & Beatty, 2003; Parry & McArdle, 1991).

Results revealed two underlying factors that explained 59% of the total variance. Yet one indicator ("It will protect me from being expelled from Switzerland") loaded evenly and weakly on both factors, $\lambda_{F1} = .17$ and $\lambda_{F2} = .18$, and was therefore discarded from analyses.[3] The procedure was repeated, again yielding two factors that explained 63.4% of the total variance. Table 1 reports tetrachoric correlations and factors loadings for the five retained naturalization motives. Factor 1 denoted *instrumental motives,* such as simplified administrative procedures, better professional opportunities,

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[3]The results were identical when including the offending indicator in the main regression models.

Table 1. Tetrachoric Correlations and Factor Loadings of Naturalization Motives

		Tetrachoric Correlations				Factor Loadings	
	Indicators	2	3	4	5	Instrumental	Symbolic
1	Simplified procedures	.43	.46	.26	−.01	**.44**	
2	Professional opportunities		.39	.04	−.08	**.33**	−.16
3	Easier to visit home country			.15	.05	**.29**	
4	Wish to vote and get involved				.24		**.64**
5	Belongingness to Switzerland						**.19**

Note Loadings on the focal factor are indicated in bold and not showed if <.05.

and freedom of movement. Factor 2 denoted *symbolic motives*, including both wish for political participation and feelings of national belongingness.[4]

Individual-Level Predictor

Acculturation Strategies

Four items measured participants' acculturation strategies, in terms of attachment and civic involvement.[5] All scales ranged from 0 (*Not at all*) to 7 (*Totally agree*). Two items assessed participants' levels of *host-culture adoption*, $r(3863) = .38$, $p < .001$: "To what extent are you interested in news and current events in Switzerland"? ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 1.80$); "To what extent do you have a feeling of attachment to Switzerland"? ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.99$). Two items assessed participants' levels of *heritage-culture maintenance*, $r(3863) = .40$, $p < .001$: "To what extent are you interested in news and current events in [country of origin]"? ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 1.89$); "To what extent do you have a feeling of attachment to [country of origin]"? ($M = 5.07$, $SD = 2.07$). All mean scores differed positively from the theoretical midpoint of the scale, all $t(3865) > 72.91$, all $p < .001$.

K-means Cluster Analysis using SPSS Version 26.0 was used to attribute participants to a limited number of acculturation strategies. Clusters were derived using the default Hartigan-Wong algorithm, algorithm that minimizes the Euclidean distances of all points with their nearest cluster centers, by flattening within-cluster sum of squared errors. This algorithm maximized both the similarity of observations within clusters and the dissimilarity of observations between clusters (Everitt, Landau, Leese, & Stahl, 2011). As previously argued, clustering methods are best suited to map out acculturation strategies (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Esses, Medianu, Hamilton, & Lapshina, 2015). A four-cluster and a three-cluster solution were compared.[6] As expected, the three-

[4]Unlike previous findings (Politi et al., 2020), political participation and belongingness motives loaded under the same latent factor. Yet, we suggest precautions in discarding a tripartite motivational structure. In the MMS survey, indeed, naturalization motives were assessed with a multichoice Yes/No dichotomous question, and political participation and belongingness motives were measured with a single item, thereby impeding the estimation of two latent factors. Because belongingness loaded only weakly on Factor 2 (symbolic motives), it is plausible that better measurement of naturalization motives would have revealed a more complex motivational structure.

[5]We considered here two facets of acculturation together: attachment and civic involvement. No items in the questionnaire measured instead adoption and maintenance of cultural practices. Although the lack of questions on cultural practices is not ideal, previous research has shown that different acculturation facets measure similar underlying orientations towards receiving and home societies (Berry et al., 2006; Schwartz et al., 2010) and that these acculturative orientation are best understood in terms of affect rather than sociocultural practices (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Brown & Zagefka, 2011).

[6]As compared to the three-cluster solution, the four-cluster solution provided worse fit to the data. Moreover, the interpretation of final cluster center values revealed no presence of marginalization strategies in the sample. Indeed, none of the four clusters revealed low means for both acculturation dimensions of host-culture adoption and heritage-culture maintenance. The three-cluster solution was therefore preferred. Additional information about the four-cluster solution can be found in Table S2 in the online supporting information.

Table 2. Host Culture Adoption and Heritage Culture Maintenance as a Function of Acculturation Strategies

	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
	Assimilation 30.5%, $n = 1197$	Integration 43.6%, $n = 1712$	Separation 25.9%, $n = 1019$
Host-Culture Adoption			
Interested in Switzerland	5.02 (1.64)	6.08 (1.00)	3.46 (1.64)
Attached to Switzerland	5.55 (1.40)	5.78 (1.04)	2.85 (1.57)
Heritage-Culture Maintenance			
Interested in home country	2.99 (1.64)	6.01 (1.09)	5.47 (1.44)
Attached to home country	2.97 (1.70)	5.88 (1.21)	5.88 (1.30)

Note Means (and standard deviations) are reported for each of the three acculturation strategies separately. Frequencies and percentage of participants are indicated below each cluster label.

cluster solution provided better fit to the data and differentiated between three acculturation strategies (i.e., assimilation, integration, and separation). Means and standard deviations for each cluster can be found in Table 2.

Cluster 1 denoted an *assimilation strategy* (30.5%, $n = 1197$); participants attributed to this cluster reported relatively low scores for the two items measuring heritage-culture maintenance and relatively high scores for the two items measuring host-culture adoption. Cluster 2 denoted an *integration strategy* (43.6%, $n = 1712$); participants attributed to this cluster reported relatively high scores for the two items measuring heritage-culture maintenance and relatively high scores for the two items measuring host-culture adoption. Cluster 3 denoted a *separation strategy* (25.9%, $n = 1019$); participants attributed to this cluster reported relatively high scores for the two items measuring heritage-culture maintenance and relatively low scores for the two items measuring host-culture adoption. Because acculturation strategies comprised three categories (i.e., assimilation, integration, and separation), we selected integration as the reference category.

Individual-Level Control Variables

Other than basic sociodemographic characteristics of the sample, such as age and gender, a number of variables were also included as individual controls.

Country of Origin

Seventy countries were represented in the sample.[7] We created a first variable, called *EU citizenship*, to distinguish between EU (61.7%, $n = 2419$) and non-EU citizens. We further classified the countries of origin as a function of their *Human Development Index (HDI),* a composite index measuring average achievement on three basic dimensions of human development: life expectancy, quality of education, and standard of living (UNDP, 2019). HDI ranged from .35 to .94 ($M = .83$, $SD = 0.13$). We created a dummy variable measuring *allowance of dual citizenship*. Based on the MACIMIDE (Maastricht Center for Citizenship, Migration and Development) dataset (Vink, de Groot, & Chun Luk, 2015), we differentiated countries of origin—such as Brazil or France—which allow their citizens to obtain a new citizenship (60.8%, $n = 2370$) and countries of origin—such as India or Austria—which do not allow dual citizenship.

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[7]Main origin groups comprised Germany, Austria, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, North America (Canada and the United States), India, West Africa (e.g., Ghana and Senegal), and South America (e.g., Argentina and Brazil). See the MMS website for full information about the sampling method.

Socioeconomic Status

We measured socioeconomic status using two indicators, *level of education* and *financial vulnerability*. Levels of education ranged from 1 (*"No formal education or qualification"*) to 9 (*"PhD or equivalent"*). Yet, relatively low levels of education ranged from 1 to 6 and included a wide spectrum of degrees up to advanced technical and professional training (41.0%, $n = 1606$). Medium levels of education ranged from 7 to 8 and included education levels equivalent to Bachelor and Master degrees (49.7%, $n = 1945$). High levels of education comprised people with PhD degree or equivalent (9.3%, $n = 365$). Financial vulnerability ranged from 1 (*"Able to put money aside"*) to 4 (*"Go into debt"*) ($M = 1.49$, $SD = 0.71$).

Contextual-Level Predictor

Integration Policy Index

To assess the inclusiveness of subnational integration policies, we used the cantonal *Integration Policy Index (IPI)*, which measures cantonal variations ($N = 26$) in integration policies. Integration policies were ranked on a scale from −0.55 (most exclusive) to 0.77 (most inclusive) according to the ease or difficulty of accessing different rights and obligations across three integration-related domains: political, sociostructural, and cultural/religious. The IPI covers these three domains using 21 indicators (Manatschal, 2011).[8] Although data were gathered between 2005 and 2008, the index reflects path-dependent cantonal traditions of integration policy, indicating a high degree of stability over time (Manatschal, 2012). Figure 1 shows the IPI for each of the 26 Swiss cantons separately.

Contextual-Level Control Variables

Instrumental motives underlying naturalization intentions may not only be related to immigrants' acculturation strategies and subnational integration policies, but also to the broader economic context (Myers, Calnan, Jacobsen, & Wheeler, 2011). Two economic contextual controls were therefore included, to reduce cantonal discrepancies in terms of wealth and unemployment and maintain the attractivity of citizenship acquisition constant.

Gross Domestic Product per Capita

To assess cantonal variation in wealth, we used the *Gross Domestic Product per capita* (GDP), which seized the economic output of a canton relative to its population ($M = 85775.53$ CHF, $SD = 26,986.69$) (FSO, 2019).

Foreigners' Unemployment Rate

In addition to controlling for the general economic situation in each canton, we included an indicator of immigrants' financial vulnerability. *Foreigners' unemployment rates* were used to control for the cantonal share of noncitizens who were unemployed and registered at the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) ($M = 6.7\%$, $SD = 1.43$) (FSO, 2020).

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[8]Because of the strong overlap with the dependent variable, we reran analyses excluding access to nationality from the list of indicators. Results were robust, and no meaningful differences were observed. The full index was therefore used to test hypotheses.
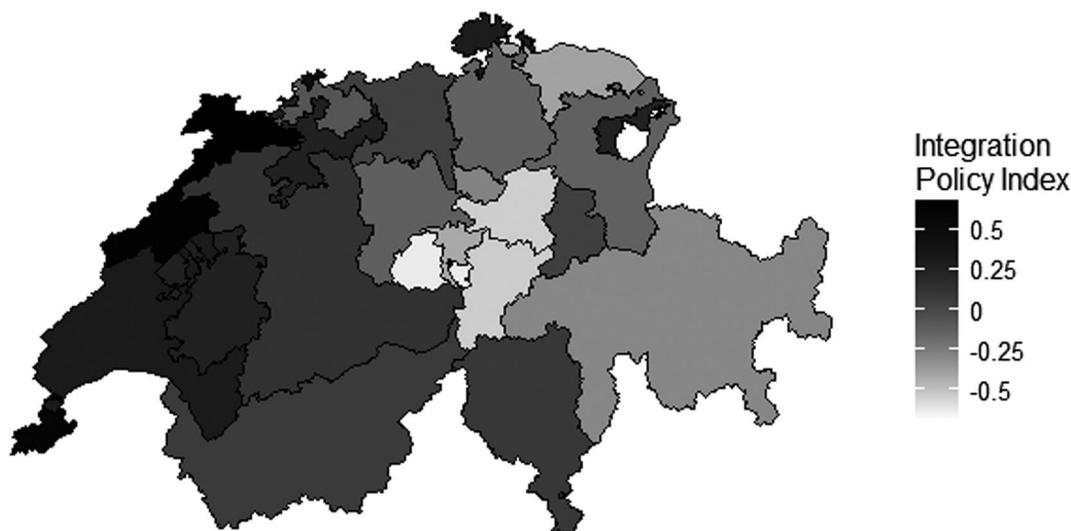
Figure 1. Cantonal Integration Policy Index (IPI). The index is reported for each of the 26 Swiss cantons separately. Darker shades indicate more inclusive integration policies.

RESULTS

Baseline Models

Hypothesis testing was carried out with STATA. In a first step, we estimated a baseline model where naturalization intentions were regressed on individual- and contextual-level predictors (Model 1) and then focused on the subsample of participants inclined to naturalize to predict symbolic (Model 2) and instrumental motives (Model 3).[9] At this first stage of analysis, we accounted for the nested nature of the data, without estimating cross-level interactions. The multilevel set-up was justified by the significant variance at the cantonal level observed in the data. Estimates were derived from a series of multilevel mixed-effect generalized linear models with random intercepts and fixed slopes (Steenbergen & Jones, 2002). Full information on the estimates is reported in Table 3.

Individual and Contextual Predictors of Naturalization Intentions

In Model 1, we tested main effects on naturalization intentions both at the individual and the contextual level. With respect to individual-level control variables, higher intentions to naturalize were observed among younger participants, those who had lived in Switzerland for longer and had a long-term C-permit, who were highly educated, and those originating from either less developed, non-EU countries, or from countries where dual citizenship was allowed. With respect to contextual-level control variables, neither GDP per capita nor foreigners' unemployment rates explained naturalization intentions. Also, no main effect of integration policies on naturalization intentions was observed. This is in line with previous research stating that integration policies do not directly affect the entire immigrant population but only some subcategories (Bennour, 2020).

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[9]It should be noted that over one third of participants (i.e., those reporting no or weak intentions to naturalize) was not asked to report naturalization motives. It was therefore not possible to merge Models 1, 2, and 3 in a single mediation model (Hayes, 2018).

Table 3. Individual- and Contextual-Level Predictors of Naturalization Intention and Underlying Motives

	Naturalization Intentions	Symbolic Motives	Instrumental Motives
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	b (SE)	b (SE)	b (SE)
Individual-Level Predictor			
Integration strategy			
Assimilation strategy	0.23 (.04)***	0.03 (.03)	−0.08 (.03)*
Separation strategy	−0.81 (.03)***	−0.29 (.04)***	0.19 (.05)***
Individual-Level Controls			
Age	−0.010 (.002)***	0.002 (.002)	−0.008 (.002)***
Gender	−0.04 (.03)	−0.06 (.03)	−0.001 (.03)
Length of stay	0.02 (.007)**	0.02 (.006)***	0.003 (.007)
C Permit			
B Permit	−0.11 (.04)**	−0.09 (.04)*	0.06 (.04)
Other permit	−0.50 (.07)***	−0.37 (.07)***	0.15 (.08)
Primary education			
Secondary education	0.18 (.05)***	0.23 (.05)***	0.03 (.06)
Tertiary education	0.10 (.05)	0.42 (.05)***	0.11 (.06)
Financial vulnerability	0.02 (.02)	−0.03 (.02)	0.04 (.02)
HDI	−0.97 (.16)***	0.38 (.15)*	−0.46 (.16)**
EU citizenship	−0.14 (.04)**	0.02 (.04)	−0.16 (.04)***
Dual citizenship allowance	0.21 (.03)***	−0.04 (.03)	0.05 (.03)
Contextual-Level Predictor			
Integration Policy Index	0.18 (.11)	0.13 (.06)*.	−0.10 (.07)
Contextual-Level Controls			
GDP	0.001 (.001)	0.001 (.001)	0.001 (.001)
Foreigners' unemployment	−0.003 (.02)	−0.01 (.01)	0.001 (.01)
ICC	0.06	0.001	0.002
AIC	9822.5	4957.0	5289.2
BIC	9941.2	5066.7	5399.0
Log−Likelihood	−4892.3	−2459.5	−2625.6
N	3822	2379	2379

Note Estimates derived from a series of baseline multilevel mixed-effects generalized linear models with random intercepts and fixed slopes. Unstandardized coefficients and standard errors are reported.

*$p \leq .05$

**$p \leq .01$

***$p \leq .001$.

Most importantly, in line with Hypothesis 1a, immigrants embracing assimilation strategies were more willing to naturalize than immigrants embracing integration strategies. Immigrants embracing integration strategies were furthermore willing to naturalize than immigrants embracing separation strategies, supporting Hypothesis 1b.

Individual and Contextual Predictors of Naturalization Motives

In the second and third model, we tested main effects on symbolic and instrumental motives both at the individual and the contextual level. With respect to individual-level control variables, greater symbolic motives underlying naturalization intentions were observed among participants who have lived in Switzerland for longer, those in possession of a long-term C permit, highly educated, and originating from highly developed countries. Greater instrumental motives underlying naturalization intentions were instead observed among younger participants and those originating from either less

developed or non-EU countries. With respect to contextual-level control variables, neither GDP per capita nor foreigners' unemployment rates explained naturalization motives. Although not predicted, a positive effect of integration policies was observed on symbolic motives, meaning that the more integration policies at the cantonal level were inclusive, the more often symbolic motives were reported by participants who intended to naturalize. Conversely, no contextual-level effects of integration policies were observed on instrumental motives.

Based on regression estimates of Model 2, and in line with our rationale, immigrants embracing integration and assimilation strategies reported similar levels of symbolic motives. In line with Hypothesis 2a, immigrants embracing integration strategies reported instead higher symbolic motives than immigrants embracing separation strategies. Based on regression estimates of Model 3, immigrants embracing integration strategies reported greater instrumental motives than immigrants embracing assimilation strategies. Although not predicted, this result suggests that integrated immigrants who maintained connections with their home country value the material advantages of citizenship acquisition (such as international mobility, increased labor market opportunities, and reduced bureaucracy) to a greater extent than assimilated immigrants. In line with Hypothesis 2b, immigrants embracing integration strategies reported lesser instrumental motives than immigrants embracing separation strategies.
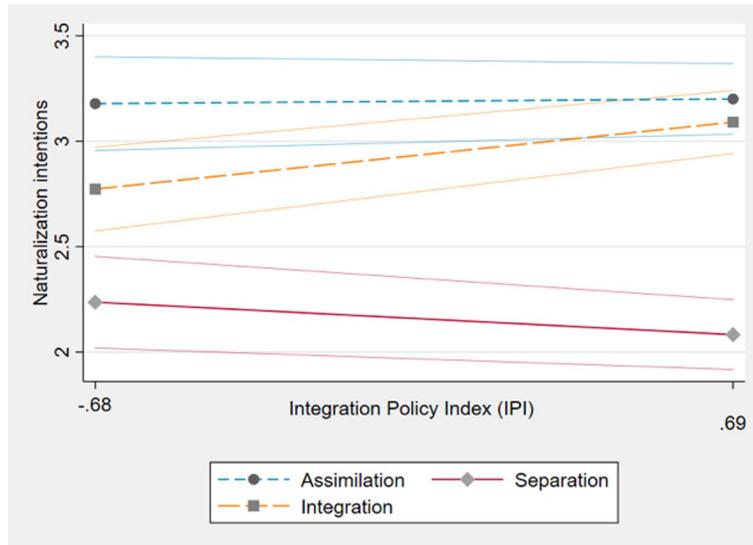
Cross-Level Interactions

In a second step, we included cross-level interactions between acculturation strategies and integration polices in the model to predict naturalization intentions.[10] In line with Hypothesis 3, the Wald-test of joint significance revealed a cross-level interaction between acculturation strategies and integration policies χ^2 (2) = 9.62, p = .008, meaning that the effect of immigrants' acculturation strategies on naturalization intentions differed as a function of the level of inclusiveness of integration policies. By decomposing the omnibus interaction term, we observed that the more inclusive the integration policies the more pronounced was the gap between integrated and separated immigrants, b = −0.31 (.13), p = .02. Although less pronounced, the gap between integrated and assimilated immigrants was marginally reduced under inclusive integration policies, b = −0.24 (.13), p = .07.[11] A test of simple effects further corroborated these findings, revealing that intentions to naturalize among immigrants embracing integration strategies increased the more inclusive were cantonal integration policies, b = 0.31 (.11), p = .003. No increase in naturalization intentions was observed among immigrants embracing assimilation, 0.07 (.13), p = .54, and separation strategies, 0.005 (.12), p = .97 (Figure 2).

DISCUSSION

The present research articulates immigrants' acculturation strategies and cantonal integration policies in explaining where and why immigrants intend to acquire host national citizenship. Examining a large sample of first-generation immigrants in Switzerland, our results showed that immigrants' acculturation strategies and naturalization intentions are bonded together. As a turning point in the acculturation process, citizenship acquisition was sought to a varying degree, for distinct

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[10]Additional analyses showed that policies did not moderate impact of acculturation strategies on naturalization motives. Full information about cross-level interactions on both naturalization intentions and underlying motives can be found in Table S3 in the online supporting information.

[11]The intercorrelation between integration policies and acculturation strategies (VIF 1.58) was well below the accepted tolerance threshold (VIF 10). Most likely, the interaction term was therefore not biased by multicollinearity problems. When the multilevel structural-equation modeling approach with latent group-mean centering was used (see Table S4 in the online supporting information), the robustness of the interaction term was further confirmed (Lüdtke et al., 2008).

Figure 2. Graphical representation of the omnibus cross-level interaction between immigrants' acculturation strategies and cantonal integration polices. Confidence intervals are at 95%. The higher the IPI the more inclusive are cantonal integration policies. The scale measuring naturalization intentions ranged from 1 (*No, certainly not*) to 4 (*Yes, certainly*).

reasons and in distinct acculturative contexts, by immigrants embracing different acculturation strategies. Because immigrants embracing separation strategies were weakly oriented towards the receiving society, they reported low intentions to acquire host national citizenship. Among those separated immigrants inclined to naturalize, instrumental motives (i.e., increased international mobility, reduced bureaucracy, and more labor-market opportunities) were particularly accentuated. Although immigrants embracing integration and assimilation strategies were both strongly oriented towards the receiving society, integrated immigrants reported lower intentions to acquire the host-national citizenship than assimilated immigrants. Among those integrated and assimilated immigrants inclined to naturalize, symbolic motives (i.e., feeling of belongingness to the host-national community and a wish to participate in the political affairs of the receiving society) were equally endorsed. Conversely, instrumental motives were more accentuated among integrated than assimilated immigrants.

Overall, we confirmed the prevalence of assimilationist strategies among immigrants who intend to naturalize. This result has profound societal consequences: Full-fledged access to political rights following citizenship acquisition implies, in principle, that naturalized citizens gain the potential to become legitimate spokespersons of the interests of immigrant communities (Scuzzarello, 2015; Simon & Grabow, 2010). Yet because assimilated immigrants were more likely to naturalize than integrated immigrants, processes of political absorption among assimilated immigrants may contribute to maintaining asymmetric power dynamics between national majority and immigrant minority groups (Politi et al., 2020; see also Just & Anderson, 2015; Kolbe & Crepaz, 2016; Strijbis & Polavieja, 2018).

Moving beyond the typological approach to acculturation, we demonstrated that the drop out of integrated immigrants from citizenship acquisition is not solely the result of individual acculturation strategies, but it interacts with the political-reception context (Bornstein, 2017; Bourhis, Montaruli, El-Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, 2010). Corroborating findings of Bennour (2020), who observed subgroup-specific effects of integration policies, we showed that the relation between immigrants' acculturation strategies and naturalization intentions varies as a function of the level of inclusiveness

of cantonal integration policies. In particular, the gap in naturalization intentions between integrated and separated migrants became more pronounced under inclusive integration policies. Accordingly, inclusive integration policies amplified naturalization intentions only among integrated immigrants, namely those who wish to reconcile host and heritage cultures.

This last finding is particularly noteworthy and demonstrates that inclusive integration policies allow overcoming symbolic barriers that prevent a large number of immigrants from naturalizing (see Hainmueller et al., 2018, for a discussion on structural barriers). Indeed, numerous empirical studies conducted among a large array of minority groups have consistently shown that integration is the most preferred and adaptive acculturation strategy (Berry et al., 2006; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). What is more, previous empirical research demonstrated that integration and biculturalism among immigrant groups enrich receiving societies with new ideas and critical thinking (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014; but see Simon, Reichert, & Grabow, 2013). Inclusive integration polices seem therefore beneficial both for the recognition of immigrant communities and the social fabric of receiving societies. Corroborating this beneficial effect of inclusive integration policies for social cohesion, immigrants in our sample reported a greater sense of belongingness and willingness to participate in the political affairs of their community, when integration policies were more inclusive.

According to our findings, however, assimilated and separated immigrants were not reached by inclusive integration policies. The null finding for assimilated immigrants may imply that individuals from this group are not responsive to, or simply in no need of, the inclusive force of integration policy, as they already have the highest propensity to naturalize. Similarly, separated immigrants' intentions to naturalize remained rather low regardless of the cantonal policy put in place. This observation is challenging and calls for alternative measures to better include these immigrant categories into the social fabric of receiving societies (Uslaner & Conley, 2003).

Limitations and Future Directions

By considering the articulation of immigrants' acculturation strategies and contextual integration policies in explaining naturalization intentions, the present research makes a novel contribution to the growing political psychological literature on acculturation and citizenship acquisition (Condor, 2011; Verkuyten, 2018). Nevertheless, a number of limitations must be acknowledged. First, the two indicators of acculturation strategies (i.e., interest in news and events, feelings of attachment) have leftout other important acculturative facets, such as seeking interactions (Berry et al., 2006; Schwartz et al., 2010). Similarly, measurement of naturalization motives with multichoice dichotomous questions was not ideal and possibly concealed more complex dynamics. For instance, political participation and belonging may fulfill distinct psychological needs, yet the nature of the scale used in the present study prevented us from a fine-grained assessment of the motivational structure underlying naturalization intentions. Moreover, naturalization motives were only assessed among the subsample of immigrants inclined to acquire host-national citizenship. It was therefore impossible to test whether naturalization motives mediate the relation between acculturation strategies and naturalization intentions. Future research should include psychometrically validated instruments for motive assessment and test the motivational processes underlying naturalization intentions.

Second, because our analysis focused primarily on the articulation between acculturation strategies and integration policies, other important specificities and sources of variations in acculturation strategies were only briefly mentioned (for an overview, see Bornstein, 2017).[12] In line with recent theorizing about the so-called "instrumental turn" in citizenship acquisition (Finotelli, La Barbera, & Echeverría, 2018; Joppke, 2019), for instance, our results showed that non-EU citizens and

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[12]As a starting point for future research, readers can find additional analyses in the online supporting information where individual and contextual predictors were used to explain acculturation strategies (Table S5).

immigrants originating from countries low in HDI are more willing to naturalize and endorse instrumental motives to a greater extent than the others. When their countries of origin allowed for dual citizenship, immigrants were more willing to naturalize, but those who intended to naturalize endorsed similar levels of instrumental and symbolic motives. Because Switzerland grants dual citizenship, however, we were not able to test whether host-country dual-citizenship provision affects naturalization intentions and underlying motives (Bloemraad, 2004; Diehl & Blohm, 2003; Harpaz & Mateos, 2018; Jones-Correa, 2001; Knott, 2019). When both home and host countries force immigrants to choose between incompatible national allegiances, cost-benefit calculations and exclusive notions of national belongingness may be more salient. Relatedly, the contextual variation in integration policies was modeled only within Switzerland, a country that stands out for its political and economic stability, but also for the reluctance of federal policies and public opinion to accommodate cultural diversity and minority rights (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013; Koopmans et al., 2005). To best tackle effects of dual-citizenship provision and cultural diversity climates on naturalization intentions and underlying motives, future research should consider international comparisons between countries that differ substantially in their integration policies and naturalization regimes.

Third, the cross-sectional nature of the data prevents us from making firm causal claims. Although naturalization intentions were asked prospectively, longitudinal designs would be best suited to tackle the effects of acculturation strategies and integration policies at early stages of the migration trajectory on the actual decision to naturalize among eligible immigrants. Future research should also go beyond personal motivations to drop out from naturalization and consider other constraints (e.g., lack of knowledge, cost of the naturalization procedure, procedural discrimination, failure of the procedure) that can equally hinder immigrants' intricate journey towards citizenship acquisition.

CONCLUSION

The present research highlights the complex relation between acculturative dynamics and citizenship acquisition. For the first time, psychological processes related to acculturation strategies and personal motivations were articulated with a political context that can either enhance or hinder immigrants' intentions to naturalize. Our findings not only enrich the social-psychological literature on acculturation and citizenship acquisition with new insights but also provide valuable arguments about the catalyst role of inclusive integration policies to promote belongingness and participation among immigrant communities.

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Supporting Information

Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's web site:

Table S1. Hypothesis Testing Using the Full Response Scale to Assess Naturalization Intentions
Table S2. Host Culture Adoption and Heritage Culture Maintenance as a Function of Acculturation Strategies
Table S3. Multilevel Model Including Cross-Level Interactions Predicting Naturalization Intention and Underlying Motives
Table S4. Cross-Level Interaction Calculated using Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling
Table S5. Individual- and Contextual-Level Predictors of Acculturation Strategies