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BUILDING INCLUSIVE CITIES

CHALLENGES IN THE MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE OF IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

By Dirk Gebhardt

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Executive Summary

European cities are vital actors in the process of immigrant integration. As the first point of contact for most immigrants, cities have a firsthand view of how national policies affect newcomers and minorities, and are in the best position to assess needs and opportunities. City-level policies, meanwhile, have been increasingly acknowledged for their important role in integrating new arrivals, adapting institutions and services to reflect diversity, and creating inclusive communities. Yet there is still much incongruence and contradiction between national and local integration visions and policies. Multilevel governance challenges have emerged in three areas in particular: integration programs for newcomers, efforts to support social mobility, and policies to address segregation.

Centrally planned introduction programs for newcomers—often the cornerstone of national immigrant integration strategies—tend to be poorly integrated with local policies and often too inflexible to react to local integration challenges. Where city priorities diverge from those of national governments, cities may even organize reception policies in parallel. In view of the significant amount of money that national governments spend on civic integration, the absence of coordination represents a major obstacle to overall efficiency. While states and cities have different perspectives and priorities, they can both gain from working together to make integration policies more rational, effective, and divorced from political ideology.

As the first point of contact for most immigrants, cities have a firsthand view of how national policies affect newcomers and minorities.

Cities in Europe are also major players in reducing obstacles to social mobility, but their efforts may be hampered by national legislation—or, in some cases, its absence. While some cities have made major strides as diversity employers—for example, by making intercultural competences part of the recruitment, appraisal, and training procedures of staff—legal barriers such as immigrants’ exclusion from certain public-sector roles (in some countries) can limit the scope of these efforts. Meanwhile, innovative tools pioneered at the municipal level to combat discrimination, such as anti-xenophobia campaigns, have been complemented by solid anti-discrimination policies in only a couple of countries.

Even localized problems require action across multiple levels of government. The local level has been a fruitful canvas for experimenting with ways to tackle spatially concentrated problems. Effective neighborhood programs adopt a number of complementary strategies to attract and retain residents, such as the design of housing and public spaces and “soft” measures to support small businesses. Although innovative, these measures need to be accompanied by a reinforcement of mainstream services —such as education and child care —to tackle the effects of segregation for which cities need the help of national policymakers.

The economic and financial crisis has made multilevel cooperation even more challenging, as cooperative policies were particularly affected by central government cuts. Local and national policymakers should consider ways to counter this trend and improve formal and informal coordination. More rigorous evaluation is critical to improving multilevel governance: evaluations have often been avoided for fear they would be used to justify cuts, but better information can help build trust across levels of government. Meanwhile, European Union (EU) funding could be used more strategically, to improve policies instead of fill gaps.



I. Introduction

Cities have always depended on immigration. More recently, an influx of foreign-born residents has compensated for historically low birth rates in some European cities, and sparked social and economic innovation. At the same time, as the world urbanizes at an unprecedented rate, immigration continuously challenges the ability of cities to organize this growth and encompass new levels of diversity.

Today, the question of whether cities can provide opportunities for immigrants to thrive—instead of creating permanent outcasts—is increasingly seen as a key issue relevant to both social justice and development.¹ While actual efforts to include immigrants play out in city neighborhoods, schools, and labor markets, the policies that steer the process are drawn up within often complex systems of governance at regional, national, and supranational levels. These systems are shaped by both formal national governance arrangements (unitarian or federal, centralized or decentralized) and more informal cultures and channels of communication. Furthermore, they bring together actors with often different perspectives and ideological positions on immigration and immigrant integration.

Various EU institutions have repeatedly stressed that cities have a vital role in immigrant inclusion and recommended that Member States take a more bottom-up approach to integration policy.² Meanwhile cities themselves are using the European arena to address common challenges across national borders. Through numerous projects and initiatives, such as EUROCITIES' Integrating Cities Process³ and the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Initiative, cities are formulating common positions in relation to national governments and EU institutions.

The question of whether cities can provide opportunities for immigrants to thrive—instead of creating permanent outcasts—is increasingly seen as a key issue.

There are two arguments for giving greater attention to cities' role in setting integration policy. The first concerns the proximity of city administrations to the implementation of policies and their effects. Cities have the best vantage point from which to observe and understand which policies work and which do not. Cities, too, end up managing the consequences of problems that are not addressed at a higher level. In such situations, municipal administrations often work independently to put pragmatic policy solutions in place.⁴ For example, several of Germany's large cities have created independent local health services and funds to serve unauthorized immigrants, prompted by fears that the *2005 Residence Act* would have devastating effects on public health. (Through this legislation, the German national government sought to block unauthorized immigrants from accessing state-subsidized institutions by obliging administrative

1 See Doug Saunders, *Arrival City: The Final Migration and Our Next World* (Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2010).

2 See Council of the European Union, "Declaration of the European Ministerial Conference on Integration in Zaragoza" Brussels 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/detail.cfm?ID_ITEMS=13055; and European Commission, "European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals," COM (2011) 455, European Commission, Brussels, http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/intro/docs/110720/1_EN_ACT_part1_v10.pdf.

3 Integrating Cities is a partnership between EUROCITIES (the European network of cities) and the European Commission that promotes local implementation of the Common Basic Principles on Integration in the European Union. See Integrating Cities, "What is Integrating Cities?," www.eurocities.eu/integrating-cities/home.

4 Tiziana Caponio and Maren Borkert, "Introduction" in *The Local Dimension of Migration Policymaking* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 19.



staff to report beneficiaries without legal permits to immigration authorities.)⁵

The second argument for paying greater attention to cities has to do with numbers. Migrants settle disproportionately in urban areas. Non-nationals in Belgium, for instance, represent 33 percent of the population in Brussels but just 11 percent of the national population; foreign-born residents represent 30 percent in Malmo compared to 15 percent in Sweden and 34 percent in London compared to 12 percent in the United Kingdom; 38 percent of Munich's population have a migration background compared to 20 percent in Germany.⁶ Roughly half of the city of Rotterdam is composed of so-called *allochthonous* (non-native) people, compared to 21 percent in the Netherlands. The density of urban immigrant communities has often prompted cities to react earlier to immigrants' needs and to follow different approaches than national governments.

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Despite the critical role of cities, national governments do not always seek to work with them on integration policies, and cities' scope of action with regards to immigrant integration is hampered by legal and political obstacles. Drawing on examples from key European destinations, this report looks at what cities are doing to better include immigrants and ethnic minorities, and how these efforts relate to national policies. It examines three broad areas: integrating newcomers, adapting mainstream local institutions and services to diverse urban societies, and overcoming the negative effects of segregation.

II. City- and State-Level Policies to Integrate Newcomers

Local and national governments are increasingly aware of the importance of offering immigrants integration support soon after their arrival. Measures to support immigrants' first steps in language acquisition and to familiarize them with their new environment have become a priority for many governments (backed by budgetary support). Newcomer integration is also a topic on which cities and states diverge in perspective and approach. Cities' "soft" inclusion policies, which aim to empower

5 The Munich model for providing health care to unauthorized immigrants, for example, is based on cooperation between the city, civil society, and medical-aid organizations. It relies on contributions from the city budget, private donations, and the voluntary work of medical and nonmedical staff. The city's leadership in clarifying legal uncertainties and cooperating with local immigration authorities is also important. See City of Munich, "*Wir haben Sie nicht vergessen . . .*" *10 Jahre Umgang mit Menschen ohne gesicherten Aufenthaltsstatus in der Landeshauptstadt München* (Munich: City of Munich, 2010). For more examples of such policies see Dirk Gebhardt, "Irregular Migration and the Role of Local and Regional Authorities," in *Assessing EU Policy on Irregular Immigration under the Stockholm Programme*, eds. Sergio Carrera and Massimo Merlino, CEPS Liberty and Security in Europe Series (Brussels: CEPS, 2010), www.ceps.eu/book/assessing-eu-policy-irregular-immigration-under-stockholm-programme.

6 According to Eurostat's 2012 figures for foreign nationals and the foreign born by group of citizenship; see Eurostat, "Migration and migrant population statistics," Table 2, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics; for cities according to EUROCITIES, *Integrating Cities Report. Cities and Migrants: Implementing the Integrating Cities Charter* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2013), Annex II, www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/publications/Cities-and-migrants-implementing-the-Integrating-Cities-Charter-WSP0-96LBY5; Integrating Cities Indicators, <http://www.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/ANNEX%20II%20Integrating%20Cities%20indicators.pdf>; and the Belgian national statistics office Statbel for Brussels.



migrants and provide the language and civic training they need to succeed, often collide with “hard” national admission policies that define highly differentiated rights and duties for labor migrants, family migrants, EU citizens, refugees, students, and unauthorized migrants. When national policy frameworks do not allow enough flexibility, or do not exist, cities often feel obliged to react autonomously to meet emerging needs on the ground.

A. *The Adaptability of National Newcomer Integration Programs*

Since their first appearance in the Netherlands in the late 1990s, civic introduction programs have been a key feature of national reception policies. Many countries across Western and Northern Europe offer dedicated national language and orientation instruction for newcomers from non-EU countries and other target groups. Because these programs have been made mandatory for certain groups and linked to integration tests and sanctions regarding residence permits and social benefit⁷ they provide an interesting test case for national and local cooperation. While civic integration programs represent an increased commitment to integration on the part of national governments, they have, in many cases, weakened the role of cities in integration policy.

The civic integration programs of the French state and the Flemish region in Belgium, for example, are steered centrally and implemented locally by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) without any formal participation from city governments. This leaves the potential contribution of city administrators—as the natural first contact points for immigrants and coordinators with local actors—largely untapped. Germany follows a similar model: the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and contracted NGOs work together to deliver the integration programs, *Integrationskurse*, introduced in 2005. Although most big cities and regions had their own language courses in place long before, the German *Integrationskurse* model was welcomed by municipalities, who were delighted by the state’s investment in language tuition. But the state’s takeover of integration came at a price. It has created a heavy bureaucracy around course allocation and course provision and fuelled criticism by course providers, teachers and cities.⁸ The courses are also inflexible in that they are not equally open to all target groups.⁹ Only a handful of cities have managed to integrate federal policy into their preexisting approaches to language provision.

The city of Nuremberg is one such case. It creatively adapted the national program by setting up a local “central contact point for migration” (ZAM) to help immigrants identify the course that is right for them, carry out initial assessments, and conduct final tests. In order to fulfill this role, ZAM forged a complex partnership with a number of different bodies, including local language course providers, the local branch of the federal employment office, the regional immigration agency, and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (responsible for the courses themselves). Nuremberg was able to fuse a bulky and bureaucratic national integration program with a needs-based local policy for language provision to provide a one-stop shop for immigrants with language learning needs. In most other German cities, however, the federal integration courses are not integrated into city-steered language and integration offerings, simply because the national policy did not foresee the possibility of cooperating with cities.

By contrast, cities in Denmark and Sweden have a clear implementation responsibility. In Sweden cities

7 Christian Joppke, *The Role of the State in Cultural Integration: Trends, Challenges, and Ways Ahead* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/TCM-state-role-in-cultural-integration.

8 Frank Gesemann, Roland Roth, and Jutta Aumüller, *Stand der kommunalen Integrationspolitik in Deutschland*, Studie erstellt für das Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung und die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration (Berlin: Institut für Demokratische Entwicklung und Soziale Integration, 2012), www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Anlagen/IB/2012-05-04-kommunalstudie.pdf?blob=publicationFile.

9 The central coordination of courses at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees imposes many control duties on course providers and causes delays in the admissions of participants to courses. Another problem is that voluntary participants (such as EU citizens) can only attend federally funded courses once all mandatory participants have reserved seats, which makes it difficult to plan ahead.



lost their role in coordinating newcomer integration to the national employment service in 2010, but continue to organize orientation courses on the state's behalf, and can adapt them to local circumstances. In Denmark cities implement an orientation course and a vocational orientation program for newcomers in local job centers. The Danish program is also cofinanced by the central and local governments, and cities receive a financial bonus for getting participants into the labor market.¹⁰

Other countries have chosen to provide a looser framework that gives cities more autonomy in managing newcomer reception. Under the Finnish reception program, municipalities receive funds to run local advice services for newcomers. The program also provides temporary funding for local integration policy experimentation.¹¹ For example, the Immigrant Advice Center of the city of Tampere conducts initial needs assessments, refers newcomers to language courses and training, and connects newcomers to informal language learning opportunities.

B. Conflicting Perspectives and Policy Incoherence

How measures for newcomers are organized reflects the tensions between the goal of immigrant empowerment and inclusion on the one hand, and the logic of state control and coercion on the other. Too much central control can cause inefficiency and jeopardize inclusion by constraining the capacity to answer to specific local situations and new or emerging problems.

The frequent, unilateral changes that national governments make to newcomer integration policies can make it difficult to maintain stable partnerships and evaluate outcomes. A dramatic example is the Dutch government's 2012 decision to withdraw funding for civic integration in order to shift responsibility for integration to immigrants, who must now cover the costs of courses offered by the private sector. Dutch municipalities fear that more and more newcomers will be left in a precarious situation; although state-subsidized integration support and assistance has been withdrawn, immigrants are still expected to pass an "integration test" within three years to prolong their residence permit. Additionally, cities fear that language skills will deteriorate overall as voluntary participants, such as EU migrants, can no longer benefit. These groups now have to be served by adult education courses, although the funding of such courses has not been increased to cover the new demand.¹²

The abolishment of the Spanish national fund for immigrant integration in 2012 is another example of a unilateral withdrawal of state funds. It has deprived Spanish cities and regions of a vital resource in support of immigrants' reception and education.

C. Cities Acting on Their Own: Building Bridges and Filling Gaps

While national newcomer integration policies provide more coherence across an entire nation, they often fail to provide cities with the necessary means to meet the context-specific challenges they face (see Box 1). With the exception of the more integrated policies in Nordic countries, cities often organize newcomer reception in parallel or around, rather than within, national policies. In view of the significant amount of

10 Eva Ersbøll and Laura Katrine Gravesen, *INTEC Project: Integration and Naturalisation Tests: The New Way to European Citizenship*, Country Report Denmark (Florence: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, 2010), http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/doc/21761_369420556.pdf.

11 European Migration Network, *Annual Policy Report Finland, 2011* (Brussels: European Commission, 2012), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/annual-policy/2011/08a_finland_national_report_apr2011_final_nov2012_en_version_en.pdf.

12 See the statement of the Dutch organization of the four biggest cities: G4, *De nieuwe Wet inburgering. Risico's en knelpunten vanuit het perspectief van de G4* (Association of Dutch Municipalities [VNG], 2012). The city of Rotterdam estimates that about 100,000 residents are not fluent in Dutch.



money that national governments spend on civic integration,¹³ this makes reception policies inefficient.

Cities have developed their own newcomer integration policies in lieu of a coordinated approach in cases where national reception policies are either too rigid or nonexistent. Many have set up free or cheap language courses in order to improve on national offers that are either not accessible to all immigrants or not specific enough to meet practical needs. The city of Munich, for instance, has developed courses with vocational profiles (e.g., for the care and electronics sectors), which are combined with vocational training.

Box I. Integration Challenges for Mobile EU Citizens

The response to intra-EU migration that followed the accession of new Member States in 2004 and 2007 illustrates how conflicting perspectives can lead to incoherent policies. Relatively large numbers migrated from Eastern to Western European countries looking for work. Chain migration from rural areas in Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia brought a significant proportion of vulnerable migrants, including Roma, to a number of destinations in Northern and Western Europe. Cities in these countries witnessed large numbers of migrants living without shelter, living and working under exploitative conditions, facing obstacles to accessing health services, and bringing children with them who needed to be integrated into the education system.

Ironically the “privileged” status of these EU migrants made it more complicated for cities to address their integration needs. Some EU and national policies and funding sources (most prominently, the European Integration Fund) are restricted to third-country nationals, and more mainstream EU funds such as the European Social Fund (ESF) had in many cases already been allocated for other measures. Indeed, most national governments either denied that there was a need for specific policies for EU migrants, or responded with policing and deportations, as happened to Roma in Italy and France. Although a few governments opened up their civic integration programs to EU citizens, national and EU responses remained few and far between. One positive example was the UK’s Migration Impacts Fund, but this was abolished only one year after its introduction.

Some cities, finding the demand for services unmet by national administrators, initiated their own policy responses, for instance, by creating a “contact point for EU labor migrants and Roma” in Berlin, or a “Crossroads” service for EU citizens in Stockholm. Many European cities also became involved in transnational cooperation projects for migration management. Working with vulnerable migrants’ regions of origin, cities ventured into an area normally reserved for states.

Note: The fund was financed through a new administrative fee for immigrants and abolished by the new UK government, although the fee continued to be levied.

Sources: Elizabeth Collett, *The Integration Needs of Mobile EU Citizens: Impediments and Opportunities* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2013), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integration-needs-mobile-eu-citizens-impediments-and-opportunities; Melanie Gower, *Migration Impacts Fund* (London: Home Affairs Section, House of Commons Library, 2010), www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/RP08-65; EUROCITIES, *The Berlin Mobile Contact Point for EU Migrant Workers and Roma from the Perspective of the Service Providers* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2011), <http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/EUROCITIES%20report%20-%20Contact%20point%20for%20Roma%20in%20Berlin.pdf>; Crossroads, “Welcome to the Crossroads: Information and Support for Foreign EU Migrants,” accessed July 12, 2014, <http://stockholmcrossroads.se>.

13 For example, approximate figures for Flanders in 2012 are 30 million to 35 million euros, corresponding to an average of 2,000–2,500 euros per person; for Germany this is 224 million euros, 1,800 euros per person; for Denmark, 100 million euros, 5,000 euros per person; for Sweden (only Swedish for immigrants), 150 million euros, 4,500 euros per person; and France (only language course within a civic education program), 30 million euros, 1,500 per person. See Vlaams Parlement, *Beleidsbrief Inburgering en Integratie, Beleidsprioriteiten 2011-2012* (2011); Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, *Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2012* (2013) and www.bundesregierung.de; Morton Spiess, “Danish Language Courses” (presentation at Fifth Integrating Cities Conference, Danish Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration, Amsterdam, March 9, 2012); Sveriges officiella statistik, *Samtliga verksamheter inom förskola och annan pedagogisk verksamhet, skola och vuxenutbildning—Kostnader—Riksnivå* (2012); and own calculations.



In many cities, welcome centers—either for immigrants in general or for selected, highly skilled groups¹⁴—provide a more service-oriented approach to registering newcomers and providing information, in line with the goal of creating a “welcoming culture.” Although French cities do not have any formal competences in newcomer integration, the city of Nantes used funding from the European Integration Fund to map the needs of newcomers in cooperation with the city’s immigrant advisory body. This led to a set of new policies, including the provision of better multilingual information for newcomers and training on the needs of newcomers for front-office staff, and a new city mission to coordinate with external service providers.¹⁵ The city of Milan is developing an immigration center that will serve as a central drop-in point for immigrants and for civil society organizations (CSOs) dealing with immigration more widely.¹⁶

In the absence of national initiatives, cities have also developed their own introduction programs, such as Barcelona’s for those arriving through family reunification channels. Beyond simply providing information, the city uses its own budget to provide families with comprehensive, personalized guidance on the legal, practical, and psychological aspects of the family reunification process. Newly arrived family members may benefit from several different opportunities. These include a summer program for youngsters who arrive too late in the term to integrate into school directly, and specific courses for women and men.¹⁷

In the absence of national initiatives, cities have also developed their own introduction programs.

III. Adapting to Diversity: Designing Inclusive Local Policies and Services

Cities also play a vital role in ensuring that immigrants are integrated into the fabric of communities over the long term. Doing so involves addressing long-term obstacles and disadvantages in employment, education, and housing that can persist into the second generation, jeopardizing the promise of social mobility.¹⁸ Cities can promote integration by making local institutions and services equally accessible to all population groups. But the success of such efforts also depends on national legislation in areas such as banning discrimination, facilitating skill recognition, and allowing participation in local elections.

A. Adapting Local Institutions to Better Reflect Diversity

In many countries, the diversity of urban populations is not adequately reflected in city institutions. One major reason is that many statutory or tenured public-sector jobs are reserved by law for nationals and EU

14 See, for instance, the expat desks of the Dutch cities Amsterdam (www.iamsterdam.com/en-GB/Living/Expatcenter) and Rotterdam (www.rotterdam.nl/expatdesk), the Hamburg Welcome Centre (<http://english.welcome.hamburg.de/about-us>), and the Berlin Business Immigration Service (www.businesslocationcenter.de/de/service/business-immigration-service#1).

15 City of Nantes, *Dialogue Citoyen: Accueil et Premières Démarches des Nouveaux Arrivants* (Nantes: City of Nantes, 2013), www.nantes.fr/files/PDF/Publications/05-AVN/Dialogue-Citoyen/avis-citoyen-CNCE-13.pdf.

16 Telephone interview with policy advisor, September 2013.

17 A forthcoming evaluation (Consorti Institut d’Infància i Món Urbà, CIIMU) indicates that, according to users, the policy provides security and orientation to newcomers, improves access to public resources in education and work, and helps immigrants, including women, to create social networks in their new environment.

18 Eurostat, *Migrants in Europe: A Statistical Portrait of the First and Second Generation* (Brussels: Eurostat, 2011), http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-31-10-539/EN/KS-31-10-539-EN.PDF.



citizens. This is the case, for example, in Austria, Germany, Luxemburg, Portugal, and Spain.¹⁹ In France it is estimated that 5 million jobs, mainly for public servants, are legally inaccessible to non-EU citizens.²⁰ In most countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), even the children of immigrants, who usually have citizenship, are highly under-represented in the public sector (though the United Kingdom and Canada are notable exceptions).²¹

In order to create more inclusive institutions and services, cities have developed strategies to increase awareness of (and appreciation for) diversity, emphasizing concepts such as intercultural orientation, inclusion, and equal opportunities (see Box 2).²² For instance, intercultural orientation is a focus of Munich's city administration, with the goal of serving all population groups equally. Intercultural competences²³ have been integrated into job profiles as well as the recruitment, appraisal, and training procedures of relevant staff, starting at the management level. The city has also enlisted external partners; for instance, it encourages local sport clubs—which have often been polarized along ethnic and gender lines—to recruit minorities and become more representative of the city's population.

Copenhagen's "engage in the city" strategy sets out a vision for becoming Europe's most inclusive major city by 2015. With the goal of mitigating exclusion and discrimination, and promoting a sense of common identity, access to services is monitored. Training and campaigns on the rights and duties of all citizens are run by the city administration in partnership with immigrant NGOs, businesses, and the wider public. The city has sought the commitment of external partners through a diversity charter signed by more than 500 local businesses and CSOs. Through the charter, partners sign up to work toward the city's goals in their own organizations and to promote the strategy in their networks.²⁴

Box 2. Mainstreaming versus Targeted Integration Approaches

In those European countries that attract the most immigrants, the majority of cities now approach the inclusion of immigrants through efforts to "mainstream" immigrant integration. In other words, instead of targeting policies specifically to immigrants, they see immigrants as part of a general population whose diversity should be reflected by all local policies. Given the size of the immigrant and minority populations in many cities, local governments perceive separate policies to be less efficient, even though some targeted policies—for example, for the newly arrived—are still necessary. The city of Amsterdam has moved even further by removing the words "integration" and "of foreign origin" (*allochtoon*) from city policies and communications, and instead relies entirely on the openness of its mainstream institutions to serve all citizens. Similar approaches are being pursued by the cities of Rotterdam and Malmö. There are risks, however, that such approaches mask continuing disadvantages if access to services among different groups, including immigrants, is not continuously monitored.

Source: City of Amsterdam, "We praten niet meer over autochtoon/allochtoon," February 13, 2013, www.amsterdam.nl/gemeente/organisatie-diensten/dmo/burgerschap/nieuws/artikel/.

19 See European Migration Network, "Ad-Hoc Query on the Access to Public Administration Employment for Citizens of Other EU Member States," European Commission, Brussels, June 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/ad-hoc-queries/miscellaneous/403_emn_ad-hoc_query_public_administration_employment_25may2012wider_dissemination_en.pdf.

20 See Groupe d'Etudes (GED) sur les discriminations, *Une forme méconnue de discrimination: les emplois fermés aux Etrangers* (Paris: GED, 2000), www.vie-publique.fr/documents-vp/ged_emploireserves.pdf; Haute Autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité, "Délibération n° 2009-139 du 30 mars 2009," www.haldefr.fr/IMG/pdf/Deliberation_2009-139.pdf. In 2012 a new law was proposed in the senate to remove these barriers.

21 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Settling In: OECD Indicators of Immigrant Integration* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2012), 127.

22 For an overview of city strategies see EURO CITIES, *Integrating Cities: Cities and Migrants*.

23 The city defines intercultural competences as knowledge, skills, and attitudes that allow staff to recognize cultural differences and to take competent decisions on how to address them in practice.

24 Engage in Copenhagen, "Københavns Mangfoldighedscharter (Copenhagen Diversity Charter)," www.blanddigibyen.dk/skrivunder/mangfoldighedscharter/?view=list.



Local integration strategies like those of Munich and Copenhagen have become common in European cities and beyond—for instance, in Toronto. They render integration policies more transparent through the definition of concrete goals, measures, and responsibilities. At the same time, they contribute to normalizing integration debates as they break down the buzzword of “integration” into concrete, measurable policies.

B. Combating Discrimination

Cities have a long tradition of combating discrimination and racism.²⁵ This commitment is expressed in campaigns that underline a common local identity: for example, Dublin’s “One City One People” initiative and Amsterdam’s campaign *Discriminatie—Amsterdam is er klaar me* (Discrimination—Amsterdam is through with it). Such campaigns often draw on the particular role immigration plays in a city’s history, as in Nantes’ exhibition *Nantais venus d’ailleurs* (Nantes residents who came from elsewhere). Barcelona tackles the most widespread rumors against immigrants through training and information campaigns, including its comic “Blanca Rosita Barcelona,” which debunks stereotypes and highlights the immigration history of many established residents.²⁶ Since 1998 the city has had its own Office for Nondiscrimination to provide face-to-face advice, register complaints, and monitor discrimination.²⁷

A major obstacle to better and more widespread local initiatives is the lack of effective national nondiscrimination policies. While the EU Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) has defined a Union-wide framework for combating ethnic and racial discrimination, it leaves most of the implementation to Member States. The Fundamental Rights Agency’s 2008 EU-MIDIS survey showed that 82 percent of ethnic minority respondents living in the European Union did not report discrimination they had experienced, and that 57 percent were unaware of what legal protection against discrimination existed.²⁸ Results like this demonstrate that, in many states, efforts to counter discrimination have not yet evolved into a set of proactive policies that can change the reality on the ground.

Some national governments have provided examples to follow. In the case of the Netherlands, a 2009 act on municipal anti-discrimination provisions made it the responsibility of municipalities to record and monitor complaints against discrimination in local nondiscrimination bureaus. Similar structures exist in Belgium and France. In the United Kingdom the 2010 Equality Act provides binding guidelines for assessing how policies might influence disadvantaged groups (“equality duty”) and for positive action for minorities.²⁹

C. Adapting Local Employment Services

Adapting employment services to accommodate immigrants’ needs often goes hand in hand with a more local approach to service delivery. In a wide range of countries, local job centers have been created to respond to the complex needs of the long-term unemployed, including immigrants. Such services are either set up by cities as complementary initiatives (e.g., in Sweden), as stand-alone initiatives when labor market responsibilities have been devolved from the state to the local level (e.g., in Denmark), or as partnerships between national public employment services and local social assistance services (e.g., in the Netherlands). Job centers are most successful when they offer flexible, client-centered support, particularly to those

25 For an overview on nondiscrimination policies in cities see the UN International Coalition of Cities against Racism, www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/coalition-of-cities, and its European branch ECCAR, www.eccar.info/. See also EUROCITIES, *Integrating Cities Toolkit on Anti-Discrimination Policies* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2012), www.eurocities.eu/media/fbook/antidiscrimination/index.html.

26 City of Barcelona, “BCN Anti-Rumor Network,” <http://bcnantirumors.cat>.

27 Michele Grigolo, “Incorporating Cities into the EU Anti-Discrimination Policy: Between Race Discrimination and Migrant Rights,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34, no. 10 (2011): 1751–69.

28 EU Fundamental Rights Agency, *Rights Awareness and Equality Bodies, Data in Focus Report, European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey* (Brussels: European Union, 2010), http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/854-EU-MID-IS_RIGHTS_AWARENESS_EN.PDF.

29 See Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Government Equalities Office, “Equality Act 2010: Guidance,” www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance.



people who face the greatest obstacles to entering the labor market. As this group often includes a high share of immigrants, needed support includes help in gaining recognition for foreign skills and credentials and the provision of language courses.

In some countries, providing targeted employment support represents an organizational challenge for monolithic public employment agencies. In Germany research has indicated that most local job centers were oblivious to the diversity strategy of the national job agency and made little effort to adapt their offering to the particular challenges faced by immigrants.³⁰ In Sweden the public employment service, which coordinates the integration program for refugees, had problems adapting to its new role to provide comprehensive support for newcomers and to liaise with local actors.³¹

Where employment services do not have the capacity to deal with skill recognition, local authorities and NGOs in Spain and Portugal, for instance, have set up dedicated one-stop shops. These programs translate qualifications and skills, provide access to formal recognition procedures and further training, and help immigrants and employers overcome the hurdles of complicated skill recognition procedures and regulations. The German IQ-Network, an initiative of the Federal Agency for Migration, is a good example of a well-integrated, multilevel approach to the problem. IQ links up regional networks and local advice centers that are developing new procedures for skill validation and further training under the new federal act for the recognition of foreign qualifications. IQ is a learning structure: local and regional experts feed their experiences with skill validation processes into the network, translating the legal act into concrete policies.³²

IV. Addressing the Negative Effects of Segregation

Immigrant and minority populations that are physically segregated may face unique obstacles to integration. Segregation is a common phenomenon in cities, and is thought to exacerbate individual disadvantages: stigmatization, unfit infrastructure and services, and problematic social relations can all prevent full access to society's resources in areas such as employment, education, and health care. There is a tradition in many European cities to tackle these problems through policies targeting areas instead of people. There are two strands of such policies: firstly, comprehensive neighborhood development programs, and secondly a reinforcement of mainstream policy instruments in the most disadvantaged areas.³³

Neighborhood development programs combine a wide range of special measures in disadvantaged neighborhoods—from the improvement of public spaces to social work—in order to incentivize development. Such programs are usually multilevel—bringing together EU, national, regional, and local funds—and provide cities with the scope to define appropriate solutions. They exist in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, among others. The Dutch government, for example, has been running a number of programs since 1994 that combine the renovation of housing and public spaces with

30 Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation, Centre for European Economic Research, Otto von Guericke Universität Magdeburg, TNS Emnid, Team Dr. Kaltenborn, Stiftung Zentrum für Türkeistudien, Dr. Dorothee Frings, and Institut für Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung, *Wirkungen des SGB II auf Personen mit Migrationshintergrund, Projekt IIa1 04/06, Abschlussbericht* (Berlin: Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, 2009), www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/forschungsbericht-f395.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

31 See Statskontoret, *Etableringen av nyanlända: En uppföljning av myndigheternas genomförande av etableringsreformen* (Stockholm: State Treasury, 2012), www.statskontoret.se/upload/Publikationer/2012/201222.pdf; and Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, *Ett hållbart asyl- och flyktingmottagande, Annex 1: Förslag till åtgärder inom asyl- och flyktingmottagandet* (Stockholm: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions [SKL], 2013).

32 Netzwerk Integration durch Qualifizierung, "Integration through Qualification (IQ)," www.netzwerk-iq.de.

33 Laura Colini, Darinka Czischke, Simon Guntner, Ivan Tosics, and Peter Ramsden, *Against Divided Cities in Europe* (France: UR-BACT, 2013), http://urbact.eu/fileadmin/general_library/19765_Urbact_WS4_DIVIDED_low_FINAL.pdf.



soft measures such as support for small businesses, support for the unemployed, and social work.³⁴ A growing focus is making areas more attractive to the middle class.

Neighborhood development programs serve as laboratories for new forms of resident engagement (for instance in urban planning) and have produced a multitude of innovative projects, including in the field of immigrant integration. Studies indicate that they have strengthened residents' quality of life, social relations, and sense of belonging,³⁵ but their temporary character and funding structure has prevented them from being scaled up. Further, as many researchers and policymakers argue, the programs cannot tackle the root causes of segregation, which include a mix of macroeconomic factors, social and housing policies, and discrimination. As such, neighborhood development may be criticized as a zero-sum game, in which addressing problems in one neighborhood simply displaces them to another.³⁶

National and local governments in Europe are often reticent to adapt mainstream services to their specific challenges.

An alternative approach is to reinforce mainstream sectoral policies in order to boost the resources available in the areas facing the biggest challenges.³⁷ Education and child care are especially critical: the quality of these services has a strong impact on children's future opportunities, and affects well-off families' choice of residence. For example, Copenhagen combined area-based policies with targeted sectoral support; by topping up funding, the city aims to turn schools in the most disadvantaged areas into the most attractive schools in the city. Additional resources were used by the city to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to mainstream services and to create better cooperation structures, for instance, with housing associations in the area.³⁸

Another example is the English Sure Start children's centers, which combine child care with a wide range of services for parents, all under one roof. Cities are allowed to adapt the service to specific local challenges, including providing support for immigrants.³⁹ Sure Start was first introduced in areas scoring lowest on the English Index of Multiple Deprivation (as part of the government's plan to grant additional resources to disadvantaged areas). Evaluations found that it improved parenting and contributed to a better learning environment for children at home.⁴⁰ But services were cut substantially in 2011, hitting those cities with the biggest concentrations of the disadvantaged hardest.⁴¹

National and local governments in Europe are often reticent to adapt mainstream services to their

34 Gideon Bolt and Ronald van Kempen, "Les politiques urbaines aux Pays-Bas," in *Centre d'Analyse Stratégique: Politique de la ville. Perspectives françaises et ouvertures internationales*, ed. Noémie Houard (Paris: Center for Strategic Analysis, 2012), 163–74.

35 For a transnational overview of area-based programs, see Roger Andersson and Sako Musterd, "Area-Based Policies: A Critical Appraisal," *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 96, no. 4 (2005): 377–89. On the English New Deal for Communities, see Paul Lawless, "Area-Based Urban Interventions: Rationale and Outcomes: The New Deal for Communities Programme in England," *Urban Studies* 43, no. 11 (2006): 1991–2011.

36 Colini et al., *Against Divided Cities in Europe*; Loretta Lees, "Gentrification and Social Mixing: Toward an Inclusive Urban Renaissance?" *Urban Studies* 45, no. 12 (2008): 2449–70.

37 Colini et al., *Against Divided Cities*. A typical example of reinforced mainstream services is the U.S. magnet school program that started in the 1970s. So-called magnet schools offer special services or courses to attract outside pupils to otherwise disadvantaged areas, thus contributing to desegregation.

38 City of Copenhagen, *Policy for Disadvantaged Areas of Copenhagen* (Copenhagen: City of Copenhagen, 2012), https://subsite.kk.dk/Nyheder/2009/April/~/_media/6BEC9FBD981E4035849347BEE92BA9F2.ashx.

39 EUROCITIES, *Cities for Active Inclusion: Demographic Change and Active Inclusion in Birmingham: St Thomas Children's Centre* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2012), 6–8, <http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/Birmingham%20demographic%20change%20report.pdf>.

40 UK Department for Education, "Evaluation of Children's Centres in England," www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/series/evaluation-of-childrens-centres-in-england-ecce.

41 Annette Hastings, Glen Bramley, Nick Bailey, and David Watkins, *Serving Deprived Communities in a Recession* (London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2012), www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/communities-recession-services-full.pdf.



specific challenges. This is particularly striking in the field of education, where a wide gulf separates the quality of teaching in schools that serve the disadvantaged versus those that serve more well-off students. In cities, where diverse populations are often segregated and polarized, a one-size-fits-all approach puts strain on staff and makes it difficult for societies to reap the benefits of diversity. However, countries with a long-standing tradition of programs for disadvantaged neighborhoods have begun to think about a complementary approach of also reinforcing the capacity of mainstream services (e.g., the recent reform of French urban policy).

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Reconciling local and national perspectives on integration policy is a key challenge across Europe. While national policymakers seek universal coherence and control over which immigrant groups have access to services, cities have an interest in reacting to specific challenges on the ground and fostering social inclusion. Successful cooperation across administrative levels remains rare. In the area of newcomer integration, national governments focus too heavily on coherence and miss out on the benefits of including cities as partners (although there are some notable exceptions in the Nordic countries). State governments, meanwhile, have often proven to be unreliable partners for cities, by frequently changing policies unilaterally and withdrawing funding. National policies can be bureaucratic and difficult to adapt to local challenges.

In this context, many cities are leading the way in setting up local institutions and services to reflect the diversity of those they serve, and in promoting an inclusive local identity based on nondiscrimination. Their efforts are hampered, however, by legal barriers preventing immigrants from accessing statutory public-sector jobs, local voting rights, and skill recognition. With some exceptions—including Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom—national governments have not matched cities' ambitions by instituting proactive policies against discrimination in the public and private sector and in raising public awareness.

In the area of newcomer integration, national governments focus too heavily on coherence and miss out on the benefits of including cities as partners.

On the topic of segregation, 30 years of area-based policies focused on disadvantaged neighborhoods have led to many improvements. But these policies were not able to break the vicious cycle of disadvantage caused by segregation; problems need to be addressed with measures that equip mainstream education, employment, and other services to meet the specific challenges of disadvantaged areas.

To improve the multilevel governance of integration policies, several steps may be recommended:

- **Improve formal and informal coordination on integration policy.** Improving coordination between local and national governments is not just a matter of statutory duties. The national integration plans of Germany and Austria, for example—and also the informal cooperation of Swedish municipalities and the state—have shown how local, regional, and national governments can improve policy coordination in areas of shared competence.



- **Forge a stronger culture of evaluation.** With a few exceptions, integration policy is notoriously underevaluated at all levels. A lack of resources, the short life cycles of programs, and the fear that evaluations may be used to justify cuts are some of the reasons for this. In an environment of mutual trust, evaluations can provide the foundation for better cooperation between the city and state, demonstrating the effectiveness of different integration measures for different groups of immigrants (e.g., relative to control groups who don't participate). Evaluation techniques such as determining social returns on investment can avoid overly narrow or short-term assessments of policy impacts. A stronger evaluation culture can also contribute to shifting the focus of debates from the often-proclaimed but vague "failure of integration" to the quality of the policies themselves.
- **Make better use of EU frameworks and funding.** The Lisbon Treaty mandates that the European Union "provide incentives and support for the action of Member States" in promoting integration. So far, the European Union has successfully supported *horizontal* exchange and learning between peers, for instance, through the European Migration Network (EMN), the National Contact Points for Integration, and the funding of exchanges between cities or regions. In order to reflect the fact that immigrant integration is a shared task, the European Union should support a *vertical* technical exchange to tackle specific bottlenecks. The ubiquitous concept of "good practices," which too often looks at policies in an isolated and static way, should become more reflective of "good coordination" across levels.

EU funding should be used more strategically to improve policies instead of filling gaps. Agreements on the rollout of successfully tested pilots across the national, regional, and local levels would help to make the new European Migration Fund more useful. This fits with the European Commission's goal of improving the "shared management" of the fund across levels of government.



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