

## CHAPTER 8

# *INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL DIMENSIONS*

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### Introduction

This paper discusses the integration processes of immigrants and minorities with a recent immigrant background, and the policies related to the process of settlement of these newcomers in European societies. It thus excludes what are often called 'regional minorities', such as Frisians in the Netherlands, or Basques in Spain and France. As an initial premise, I would like to suggest that the experience and policies of different countries with integration reflects their experience and policies of immigration. Significant post-war immigration in Europe started early in the North-West European countries (1950s to 1970s), later in Southern Europe (1980s and 1990s) and even more recently in Central and Eastern European countries (1990s). Experience with integration policies follows in the same sequence: we see the longest experience with integration policies in (some countries of) North-Western Europe; limited and more recent efforts in the Southern European countries; and practically an absence of such policies in Eastern and Central Europe as yet. (At the time of the socialist regime, these latter countries were often confronted with the integration of regional minorities: however, at that time the process of integration was dealt with quite differently and many migrations were considered to be 'internal').

As a consequence, this paper will inevitably lean heavily on the North-West European experience and the lessons to be learnt from research and policy there.

This paper will cover integration policies at all relevant levels: from the local level of municipalities and cities, to the national level of states, and the international level of the European Union. Within this general approach, however, I will put a strong emphasis on the local level, since that is the level where such policies have to be implemented and are primarily felt, both by the immigrants themselves and by those parts of society that are most affected by immigration.

To describe the current status of integration research and policies, this paper will cover the following. In the first section, I will outline the context of European

integration policies, their special relationship with immigration policies, the different types of policies and their possible convergence. Having mapped the field roughly, I will then explore the nature of integration processes, their conceptualisation and lessons from empirical studies. The reason for devoting some space to these topics is the assertion that any integration policy should be based on a thorough, scientifically-based knowledge of the processes of integration and exclusion: if a policy wants to steer such a process, it should have a clear idea of what instruments it can use to possibly intervene, in which part of the process, and at what particular moment.

Such knowledge is a solid starting point for policy-making, but it is not enough. The processes of policy-making and implementation follow their own set course, which do not necessarily run parallel to the process of integration. That is why, in the following section, I attempt to explain some of these processes.

At the end of this paper I return to the core questions of immigration and integration policies on the one hand, and the relationship between local, national and international integration policies on the other. What will the future hold for this field?

### Overview of migration and integration policies in Europe

#### The immigration-integration nexus

International migration has become a major phenomenon worldwide in recent decades. Europe has received a significant share of it. According to the OECD, at the end of the 20th century there was a total of more than 20 million 'foreigners' living in the countries of the European Economic Area (OECD, 2001, p.12). That amounts to 5.3 per cent of the total population in that area, and it does not include naturalised immigrants. Nor does it include undocumented immigrants or those waiting for asylum or other applications. The recent IOM report (IOM, 2003, p.29), apparently using somewhat broader criteria, estimates the 'migrant stocks' in the

whole European continent at more than 56 million, or 7.7 per cent of the total population.

Migration movements into Europe have a variety of backgrounds and forms. On the one hand, uneven development and political instability, combined with the availability and affordability of new communication media and transport, have generated greater migration pressures and supply-driven migration movements. On the other hand, demographic and economic developments within Europe itself have given rise to new demand-driven movements into some countries, and will presumably do so into other countries in the near future.

While the figures mentioned for Europe as a whole may be impressive in themselves, they do not mirror the real impact of the new phenomenon, because migration and settlement patterns of immigrants are uneven, both in space and in time. Some European countries, like Switzerland, Belgium and France, had a long pre-war history of immigration which resumed again soon after WWII. Others experienced increasing immigration in the decades following WWII – mostly against their stated will of becoming an immigration country – these included the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. For a number of European countries, such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland, which used to be emigration countries until recently, immigration has taken off in just the last decade or so. Obviously, such historical differences are reflected in the size of the immigrant population: the order in which the countries are mentioned above roughly correlates with a decreasing percentage of their population of immigrant origin.

The impact, however, cannot be described only by figures. The perspective through which the phenomenon of immigration is perceived and defined is relevant. During the last three decades a common feature of all European countries has been their ad hoc, reactive and control-oriented character, in clear contrast to the more explicit and pro-active policies of countries such as Canada, Australia and the United States. These classic immigration countries have a history in which immigration has been a crucial element of the growth of their societies and they are aware of that. In those countries, there is a basic acceptance of immigration and they have developed elaborate institutional settings to handle it. Of course, the merits of immigration are discussed there too, and both the discourse on migration and its factual development change over time, but still that basic acceptance has not been fundamentally challenged. The common feature of Europe, on the contrary, is one of a basic non-acceptance of immigration.

Despite the fact that most North-West European countries deliberately do not call themselves immigration countries, some of these countries actually have higher

immigration figures than the classical immigration countries, measured simply by the percentage of foreign-born within their total population. For example, Switzerland and Germany have higher percentages than the United States. So the *facts* of immigration are to a greater or lesser extent the same as in those countries, but the *perception* is not. This has pervasive consequences for how immigrants are perceived, and what place they are attributed in society in general, and in the political system in particular, as we will see later. As a consequence, integration policies at the national level have generally been developed late or not at all, Sweden and the Netherlands being exceptional cases here. And if such policies have been formulated, this was often done as a consequence of a crisis situation relating to immigration or immigrants, and in most cases the result was piecemeal.

Within the emerging context of the European Union, such perceptions and ensuing policies of member states may change in the future. The fresh ideas published by the European Commission (2000 and 2003) on new immigration policies ('Communication on a Community Immigration Policy' of 22 November, 2000) and on integration policies for immigrants ('Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment' of 3 June, 2003) could in the long run promote more balanced, pro-active and comprehensive policies within the EU. To be realistic, however, at present the situation is one that does not fit the present and future state of migration, nor the situation of immigrants: policies relating to immigration within the EU area are essentially ambivalent. On the one hand, the EU created essentially a fundamental right to migrate *within* the EU area for citizens of its member states; furthermore a fairly lenient policy is practised in all states for highly skilled and company-linked migrants from outside the EU. On the other hand, EU member states have developed a restrictive and defensive - but largely ineffective - immigration policy to keep out all other unasked-for migrants. These policies have been more politically driven – through the perception mentioned above – than research-based. Integration policies at EU level are still in their infancy.

European Union immigration policies are, in principle but not always in practice, policies of the whole community – they are a competence of the European Commission – but integration policies are not. Integration policies, however, are not Communitarian policies: national authorities make their sovereign decisions on policies in this domain. Any common initiative can only be implemented by a unanimous decision of the Council of Ministers. As such policies are context-bound in content, and at the same time procedurally non-binding, it will take much time and effort to develop a common base for integration policies at the EU level.

*A typology of integration policies*

In order to understand the present integration policies of European countries and their differences, I will first develop a basic typology. This typology is based on a simple analytical framework that centres around the concept of ‘citizenship’. Recently political theorists have contributed significantly to our thinking on citizenship, particularly when they have tried to answer the question of how basic democratic values can and should be combined with the two essentials of any integration policy: cultural and religious diversity on the one hand and socio-economic equality on the other (Bauböck, 1994; Bauböck et al., 1996; Brubaker, 1989 and 1992; Hammar, 1990; Kymlicka, 1995; Soysal, 1994; Young, 1990).

For this typology, I distinguish, on the basis of current scientific literature, three different aspects or dimensions of citizenship. The first is the *legal/political dimension*: this refers to the basic question of whether (or at what stage) immigrants are regarded as fully-fledged members of the political community. In practice the question is first of all whether alien immigrants have secure residence rights - and if they have, how far immigrants and ethnic minorities have formal political rights and duties, and if these differ from those of natives. This also includes the question whether newcomers may (easily or not) acquire national citizenship and thus gain access to the formal political system; it also includes the granting (or not) of political rights to non-nationals, for example at the local administrative level. Also the opportunities for less formal political participation, such as through consultative structures for immigrants, would be part of this dimension.

The second is the *socio-economic dimension* of citizenship: this pertains to the social and economic rights of residents, irrespective of national citizenship; these include industrial rights, and rights related to access to facilities (such as labour market mediation and training, unemployment and other benefits) in the socio-economic sphere. Do they have (equal) rights to accept work and to use such institutional facilities to find it? Do they have the same rights as indigenous workers? Do they have access to work-related benefits, such as unemployment benefit and insurance, as well as to state-provided social security provisions, such as social housing, social assistance and welfare and care facilities.

The third dimension pertains to the domain of the *cultural and religious rights* of immigrants: do they have (equal) rights to organise themselves and meet together as cultural, ethnic or religious groups? Are they recognised, accepted and treated like other comparable groups and do they enjoy access to the same or comparable facilities?

These three essential dimensions of citizenship can be examined together for the purpose of evaluating the integration policies of national and local governments, and they can be used as a yardstick for categorising

FIGURE 1

A typology space of migrant integration policies

Type	INCLUSION			EXCLUSION		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Legal/political dimension	+	+	+	-	-	-
Socio-economic dimension	+	+	-	+	-	-
Cultural-religious dimension	+	-	-	+	+	-

different integration policies. To create a typology chart of all combination of policies that countries may adopt, we give either a positive (+) or negative (-) score for each of the three aspects of citizenship described above (figure 1). The different possible combinations of these scores then defines the six possible models of approaches to integration.

From this simple typology a number of things become clear. The first and foremost distinction is the one between inclusive and exclusive policies, based on the legal-political dimension: if migrants or immigrants are not regarded as (potentially) part of the political community of the country or local community, and if their legal/political position is essentially different from national citizens, I call these exclusionist policies (types 4, 5 and 6). Among these are the so-called ‘guest-worker policies’ introduced after the Second World War. Such migration was defined as temporary, and thus exclusionist, i.e. types 4, 5 or 6. Dutch policies until 1980, for example, fitted perfectly type 4, since they combined political exclusion and a special legal position for these alien guest-workers with, in principle, equal rights in the socio-economic sphere and a policy of encouraging them to ‘retain their cultural and religious identity’ in view of their anticipated return. Austrian and Swiss guest-worker policies have fitted (and still do to a great extent) to types 5 or 6, in the sense that they combine political exclusion with unequal industrial and social rights.

Policies of the North-West European countries have moved over the course of time within the typology space. In the late 1970s and 1980s, for example, countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium and France explicitly acknowledged that most of their (former) labour migrants would be settling for good and that more inclusive policies were necessary (Vermeulen, 1997). These countries have, among other things, changed their naturalisation laws and/or practices in order to facilitate access to formal citizenship, most prominently for the children of immigrants. Sometimes they have given opportunities for formal political participation of legally resident aliens at the local level or have initiated group-specific forms of consultation and participation.

Not all European countries, however, have made such a change in their definitions or policies, or at least not to the same extent. Austrian and Swiss national policies, for example, still reflect to a large extent the premises of guest-worker policies. Germany made a significant step towards a more inclusionist policy in 1991 with a relative easing its formerly tough naturalisation regulations.

Against this background of continental Europe, the United Kingdom represents a different case: there is no tradition of a 'guest-worker scheme' and the great majority of those who immigrated to the United Kingdom were entitled to or already possessed a British passport upon arrival (as many came from the Commonwealth countries of India, Pakistan, Hong Kong and Bangladesh). The formal definition of 'alien' or nationality are not significant characteristics: it was and is the racial or ethnic descent that is the paradigm that has affected their subsequent integration. The British case, being one that is inclusionist in the formal sense from the beginning, makes us aware of the distinction between formal inclusion and inclusion in practice. Inclusion in the legal/political domain turns out to be a vital, but not a sufficient condition for attaining equality.

Although the legal and political aspects of national migrant policies in the legal/political domain have developed increasingly common elements across Europe (see Weil, 2000), quite substantial differences remain. Such differences reflect fundamental ideas about membership of the political community in different countries: Germany, for example, defines its national community in ethnic terms of ancestry, and thus welcomes re-settlers (*Aussiedler*) – Germans returning to the fatherland – but regards settled foreigners as *Ausländer*, or 'aliens'. The French republican concept, in contrast, is based on a political contract between individual citizens and the state, a contract that anyone who subscribes to the principles of that political system may enter into. The fact that such principles, in the French case, are strongly embedded in culturally defined institutions, however, makes things complicated for those immigrants who have different cultural and religious backgrounds. Here again, legal/political inclusion seems to be a necessity, but not necessarily a sufficient condition for full integration.

It follows that a different terminology goes with such different concepts: more exclusionist policies talk about 'aliens', '*Ausländer*', 'guest-workers' and other designations that accentuate the (supposed) temporary stay or the belonging of a person to another political unity. Terminology and content of such policies reflect basically the non-acceptance of immigration and of newcomers as permanent immigrants. In more inclusionist policies on the contrary, 'immigrant' is an accepted term, like in France, or the term 'ethnic minorities' is adopted as in the case of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the term reflecting, on the

one hand, the fact that a group (of immigrants) is part of the political community, and, on the other hand, that they have a specific place in that community in relation to the dominant majority.

Turning to the second and third dimension and looking particularly at inclusionist policies, I will first remark that type 3 theoretically does not exist in Western Europe at present. Liberal democracies, in principle, do not allow for inequality and unequal rights for any who are regarded as members of the political community. Type 3 policies may, however, exist in practice, in so far as racism and discrimination are tolerated and such high principles of equality are ignored in practice.

In terms of official policies, however, we can distinguish the second major dichotomy within inclusionist policies in Europe. Type 1 countries embrace multiculturalist and/or diversity policies, while type 2 countries have forms of integration policies that are primarily based on the premise of assimilation. Type 1 multicultural policies presuppose not only political inclusion and equality in the socio-economic domain, but also aim at cultural and religious equity. The basic premise of multiculturalism – defined as a set of normative notions on how to shape a multicultural society politically – is that immigrants cannot become equal citizens unless the state and society accept that both individuals and groups have the right to be culturally different. According to multiculturalists, the prevailing institutions and rules in society are historical and cultural products that are not neutral for newcomers and thus may need revision in order to accommodate newcomers. The United Kingdom, Dutch and Swedish policies in the 1980s and early 1990s presented themselves as multiculturalist policies, following that line of reasoning. Integration policies of type 2, in contrast, take the state and society of settlement as 'given', both in the cultural and normative sense. Newcomers are expected to adapt, at least to the public institutions of that society. This may lead to strong assimilation pressure. French policies have traditionally been associated with this type, although in recent years even in France the plea for '*le droit à la différence*' (the right to be different) is gaining weight.

### *Convergence of policies?*

The definitions of the different types of policy described above are idealised types. As mentioned earlier, I have given one of only two scores on each dimension: positive or negative. In practice the divide between them is much fuzzier and they develop over the course of time. An important question is then whether positions have been moving in the same direction and whether there has been convergence in European integration policies.

Looking again at the three domains, we have to conclude that the extent of convergence that has occurred is not equally strong in each of these domains. There has

been some convergence in the legal/political domain: for example, in all member states, minimum EU rules apply to residence rights of many 'third country nationals'. Also the wide disparities between French and German naturalisation legislation have narrowed. In recent years, there have been increasing calls in Germany to enable children of immigrants to gain citizenship more easily. The *jus sanguinis* principle is thus being relaxed and the *jus soli* principle is being considered, while in France the opposite is happening.

The strongest pressure for convergence is in the socio-economic domain, particularly in work-related rights and benefits. Norm-setting laws, rules and directives of the European commission, based on the premise of equal rights and non-discrimination, and assisted by trade union pressure within national contexts, have contributed to much more uniformity than before in work-related situations. This is much less the case, however, when it comes to accessibility and equal rights in the domain of welfare provision such as social assistance and benefits, social housing, education and health.

The largest disparities that still exist are in the cultural-religious domain. Policies related to the two most important elements in this domain – those of language and religion – show little evidence of convergence. British, Swedish and Dutch policies, inspired by their multiculturalist ideologies, stand here in direct contrast to French, German and Austrian policies that – for different reasons – do not give much room for immigrants to demonstrate their cultural and religious heritage in the public sphere. Awareness of the need to have such policies varies significantly, and pressure from the European institutions is not strong here. One of the basic problems is that language and religion are often tightly bound up with notions of national identity. Diversity policies can easily be perceived as threatening that national identity. Nevertheless some signs of convergence can be seen, often at the local level, for example in the recognition of Muslims as negotiating partners, and a rudimentary institutionalisation of so-called 'new' religions. But at the same time there are still wide disparities with regard to religious instruction in state schools and opportunities for religiously based schools.

### **Processes of integration and exclusion: lessons from research which have a bearing on policies**

Having mapped out the field roughly, I will now explore the nature of integration processes, their conceptualisation and lessons from research.

### ***Defining integration and relevant levels and actors in integration processes***

Newcomers in a given society are often perceived as the classic 'other': one who does not belong there. This observation has been the starting point of a long tradition of research initiated by early founders of sociology like Simmel (1908) and refined by scholars such as Park and Burgess (1921) and Elias and Scotson (1965).

Definitions of the 'other' or 'stranger' may be based on various attributes: on legal status ('aliens'), on physical appearance ('race'), on (perceived) cultural and religious differences, on class characteristics or on any combination of these elements. Such definitions do not only have consequences for interpersonal relationships, they also play out on the collective level, defining 'in-groups' and 'out-groups'. They may express themselves in discriminatory practices and lead to deteriorating inter-ethnic relations and a weakening of social cohesion in communities, cities and states. At the political level the concept of 'other-ness' may also be exploited, for example by anti-immigrant movements or parties.

As soon as immigrants arrive in their new country they have to acquire a place in the new society, both in the physical sense (a house, a job and income, access to educational and health facilities, etc.), but also in the social and cultural sense. Particularly if newcomers see themselves as different and are perceived by the receiving society as physically, culturally and/or religiously 'different', they will aspire to acquiring a recognised place in that new society and becoming accepted. It is from these observations that we deduce a basic and at the same time comprehensive *definition of integration: the process of becoming an accepted part of society*. This elementary definition of integration is – intentionally – open in two respects. Firstly, it emphasises the process of integration rather than defining an end situation. Secondly, it does not state the particular requirements for acceptance by the receiving society (in contrast to the normative models that have been developed by political theorists that we mentioned in the previous section), thereby leaving different intermediate and final outcomes open. That makes the definition more useful for the empirical study of these processes, allowing us to capture more of its diversity.

The open, elementary definition of integration covers at least three analytically distinct dimensions of becoming an accepted part of society, as described in the previous section where we discussed citizenship: the legal/political, the socio-economic and the cultural/religious dimensions. The first dimension affects migrants in two ways. From the perspective of individual immigrants, the legal position and related rights allocated to them may have significant positive or negative consequences on their behaviour and their efforts to integrate. Long periods of uncertainty about application

for a residence permit (and dependency in the case of asylum seekers), and having no access to local and/or national political systems and decision making, for example, obviously have negative implications for the migrant's preparedness and efforts to integrate. From the perspective of the receiving society, such exclusion policies are an expression of basic perceptions that see immigrants as 'outsiders', an attitude that is not conducive for constructive policies in the socio-economic and cultural-religious domain. Exclusionary policies thus have negative effects on integration processes. Turning this reasoning around, there are solid indications that where inclusion of immigrants in formal and informal channels of political participation does take place, this leads to a variety of beneficial policies in the socio-economic and cultural-religious domain (for relevant empirical material at the municipal level see for example: Alexander, 2003; Bousetta, 1997; Fennema and Tillie, 1999 and 2001; Moore, 2001; Penninx et al., 2004; and Rogers and Tillie, 2001).

Having defined the key concept of integration and its dimensions, the next question is: who are the actors involved? There are basically two parties involved in integration processes: the immigrants with their own characteristics, and differing levels of effort and adaptation, and the receiving society with its characteristics and varied reactions to these newcomers. It is the interaction between the two that determines the direction and intermediate and final outcomes of the integration process. However, these two are fundamentally unequal partners in terms of (political) power and resources. The receiving society, its institutional structure and its reaction to newcomers are therefore much more decisive for the outcome of the process. Integration policies are part of the institutional arrangements in a society, particularly since we should define such policies broadly to include both general policies and their effects on immigrants, and policies specifically concerned with the integration of immigrants. As such policies are defined politically by (the voting majorities of) the receiving society, there is an inherent danger of the relationship being lopsided. Policies will tend to represent the expectations and demands of the society, or the dominant parts of it, rather than being based on participation, negotiation and agreement with immigrant groups themselves.

The foregoing discussion indicates that the process of integration is thus not – as is often supposed – only taking place at the level of the individual immigrant, whose integration can be measured in terms of his/her housing, job and education, and his/her social and cultural adaptation to the new society. It is also taking place at the collective level of the immigrant group. Organisations of immigrants are the expression of mobilised resources and ambitions, and may become an accepted part of civil society (and a potential partner for

integration policies), or they may isolate themselves or get excluded by the society of settlement.

The second kind of institutions that are of particular relevance for integration comprise the ones that are specifically of and for immigrant groups, such as religious or cultural institutions. The value and validity of such institutions, in contrast to general institutions, is limited to those who voluntarily choose to belong to them. Although their place is primarily in the private sphere, such specific institutions may also have a role in the public sphere as important actors of civil society, as the history of churches, trade unions, cultural and leisure organisations and professional institutions in European cities and states has shown. Such specific – migrant related – institutions may become an accepted part of society at the same level as comparable institutions of native groups, or they may isolate themselves or remain unrecognised and excluded.

The mechanisms working at the individual, the organisational and the institutional level are different, but the results at each of these levels are clearly interrelated. Institutional regulations determine to a great extent the opportunities and scope for action of organisations. They may also exert a significant influence on the development and orientation of immigrant organisations, as Fennema and Tillie (in Penninx et al., 2004) have shown. Institutions and organisations together, in their turn, create the structure which defines the opportunities and limitations for individuals. It is also possible that individuals may mobilise and change the landscape of organisations, and potentially contribute to significant changes in institutional arrangements. However, in view of the unevenness of power and resources that we mentioned before, such examples are scarce, though not absent.

I will illustrate the interconnectedness of integration processes at different levels by comparing the development of the position of Turkish Muslims in the Netherlands and in (the Federal Republic of) Germany (Penninx, 2000). These immigrants came in the same period of the 1960s and 1970s, for the same reasons and with roughly the same characteristics, but policy reactions to Islam and the Turks differed markedly in the two countries. The Netherlands introduced an 'ethnic minorities policy' in the early 1980s, which granted, among other things, official recognition of Islam on the same footing as other religions, thus opening opportunities for its public manifestation (Rath et al., 2001). It also involved the recognition of (Islamic) organisations, which could act as potential partners in integration policies. In turn, this implied ongoing relations and negotiations between these organisations and the authorities, both for the public regulation of specific facilities for Islam in the Netherlands (halal slaughtering, mosque building, public call for prayer, public Islamic broadcasting, state funded Islamic schools, etc.) and for integration activities by Islamic

organisations for their rank and file. In contrast, Germany (although different in the different Länder and municipalities, as shown in Berlin, Cologne and Frankfurt) has been in general much less engaging.

The interesting result of these divergent policies relating to the specific institutional arrangements for Islam and to Islamic organisations is that, on the individual level, attitudes towards the receiving country and towards integration, particularly as measured among young and second generation Turks in the Netherlands and Germany, seem to differ markedly. The results of Heitmeyer's research in Germany (Heitmeyer et al., 1997) and a comparable survey done by Sunier in the Netherlands (Sunier, 1996 and 1999) illustrate this point. While the German study reports inwardly-oriented and even fundamentalist attitudes on an alarming scale, the Dutch study signals a much more positive attitude towards integration and involvement, particularly in local society. (Sunier's observations in Rotterdam in the mid-1990s are confirmed by a recent study of Canatan et al. (2003) on the role of mosques in Rotterdam in the wider social context of the city and their integration activities.) This is supported by more critical and independent views concerning established Islamic umbrella organisations such as Milli Görüş, which has its headquarters in Germany (see also for Germany Karakasoglu, 1997; Karakasoglu and Koray, 1996; Oezbek and Koray, 1998; for the Netherlands, see Doornik, 1991; Landman, 1992; Rath et al., 2001).

Finally, I want to highlight another important element influencing integration processes: the time factor. Processes of integration of newcomers are long term by their very nature. At the individual level, an adult immigrant may adapt significantly in the cognitive dimension of his behaviour: it is both pragmatic and pays off rather quickly if you learn how things are done, by whom etc. The adaptation of adults in the cultural and normative dimensions of their behaviour, however, tends to be less easy: knowledge may change, but feelings and preferences, and moral evaluations are quite persistent during an individual's lifetime. This is a general rule for mankind, but it becomes more manifest in those who change their home environment through migration.

The situation of the descendants of the 'first generation' of migrants generally differs in this respect. Through their primary relationships within their family and the network of the immigrant community, they are familiar with their traditional culture, and possibly its background elsewhere. At the same time, however, they become thoroughly acquainted with the culture and language of their society of settlement, through informal contacts in the neighbourhood from early childhood onwards, and particularly through their participation in public institutions, the educational one in the first place. If this double process of socialisation takes place in favourable conditions (in which policies play a major role), this second generation develops a way of life and

lifestyle in which they combine the roles, identities and loyalties of both these different worlds. Ways to do this are manifold, which makes for more and more differentiation within the original immigrant group. At the group level this means that the litmus test for integration, and for the success or failure of policies in this field, is the status and success of the second generation.

### *Plurality of outcomes, diversity of policies*

If the integration process results from the interaction of two parties which takes place at different levels, as I have posited so far, and if we add the differentiating effect of time and generations, what can we expect in terms of outcomes? Comparative studies provide clear answers on this point, namely that a plurality of outcomes is the rule. A first category of studies compares the integration process of different immigrant groups within the same institutional and policy context of a nation or locality: these reveal that different immigrant groups follow different patterns of integration and assimilation. For the Dutch case, for example, Vermeulen and Penninx (2000) have shown that Moluccan, Surinamese, Antillean, Southern European, Turkish and Moroccan immigrants differ in the speed of their integration and in the tracks they tend to follow. The consequence of the design of such studies, however, is that the explanation for such differences is found primarily in the particular characteristics of the immigrant groups, simply because the (national or local) context in which they are being integrated is the same.

A second category of cross-national comparative studies, which looks at the integration of the same immigrant group in different national contexts, does exactly the opposite: such studies also find differences in outcome, but these are primarily ascribed to the differential functioning of the context into which the group is trying to integrate. Here again differences turn out to be significant, as was discussed earlier with regard to Penninx's observations on Muslims in Germany and the Netherlands. It is additionally illustrated by two studies carried out by the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies of the University of Amsterdam. The first one compared the institutionalisation of Islam in the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom in the post-war period (Rath et al., 2001), which found markedly different outcomes as a consequence of the institutional arrangements and traditions of public acceptance of religions in these societies, and the subsequent difference in interactions. The second study was on the attitudes and actions of trade unions in relation to immigration, and the position of immigrants in society, in seven European countries (Penninx and Roosblad, 2000). Once again remarkable differences are evident. For example, the high degree of membership of trade unions of Turkish immigrants in Sweden (above 90 per cent) and the low degree of this same group in France

(around 15 per cent) turns out to be basically the consequence of how trade unions are organised and are incorporated (or not) in the socio-economic decision-making at the national level.

A recent empirical research project on 'Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship' (MPMC) in 17 European cities shows the heterogeneity of the two parties on an even wider scale. Looking at the immigrants first, the background of their migration, and selectivity that goes with it, are very diverse in both time and space. Part of the migration movements towards Europe's cities has a background in the colonial relationship with the country of destination, and this is clearly visible in cities like Amsterdam, Birmingham, Lisbon and Marseille. Another part goes back to – again selective – demand-driven migration of mainly low skilled workers. Some of these immigration flows have a long history, as seen in Swiss, Belgian and French cities, while others are of more recent origin dating from the post-war decades. And all countries and cities have received a different mix of immigrant flows of the last three decades: significant supply-driven movements of refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants, often along with highly skilled cosmopolitan professionals and company-linked migrants. The total picture emerging from this is not only a significant growth in diversity of origin (from mainly European to more and more global nowadays), but also of marked differences in the social and cultural capital that immigrants bring with them and/or have developed during their stay.

Variability is also strong, if we now study the other partner involved, the receiving community. The 17 cities show a great variety in their institutional settings and their policies and reactions to immigrants (see Alexander, 2003). Some of this variance can be explained by differences of the national institutional systems in which cities are embedded, but there are a great many local factors and circumstances that increase the variability of local reactions and policies. These include: the local political composition that may work for or against inclusion; the physical layout of the city and its relation with the neighbouring area (compare Paris and Berlin before 1991); the historical experience with earlier immigration and diversity; the specific instruments and resources available to local policy makers to steer processes in the vital domains of (social) housing and urban regeneration; the labour market and entrepreneurship; and the education and health services.

### ***Policy lessons***

In my view, there are some important lessons to be drawn from these general observations on the outworking of integration processes. Reformulated as lessons for policy-making – and here I combine research findings with normative assumptions - I see three essential lessons. The first is that a key condition for an effective

integration policy is transparency of admission of immigrants and a clear definition of their residential and legal status. Expectations of, and actual long-term residence should be acknowledged by a secure legal position and opportunities to participate in politics and policy-making, especially in policies that affect their position. Local authorities are, in this legal/political domain, to a great extent dependent on (immigration, integration and naturalisation) policies at the national level, but not completely. They may develop effective alternative channels for participation, thereby creating a local form of inclusion and citizenship, as was shown in the MPMC project (Penninx et al., 2004).

Secondly, integration policies should be comprehensive in the dimensions and domains covered, thereby signifying that they do not only represent the interests of the native majority, but also the needs of the immigrant. The economic and social domains, particularly the labour market, education, housing and health are priority domains. Policies in the political and cultural domain (including religion), however, are indispensable over the long term for integration. The forms that such policies may take in practice depend very much on the existing institutional arrangements in receiving societies, and on the political willingness to change these to gradually become more inclusive.

Thirdly, (local) integration policies should follow strategies and tactics that engage the partners in the integration process at different levels. It should combine 'top down' political guidelines with 'bottom up' mobilisation. It should define the process of integration as 'open', within the rules of liberal-democratic societies, leaving room for a more diverse, but cohesive society as a result. The diversity reached in this way is neither predetermined nor static, but negotiated, shared and ever-changing.

### **The organisation of politics and policy-making**

Policies intend to steer processes in society, in our case the integration processes of immigrants in society. As stated in the introduction of this paper, we need not only a thorough insight into the processes of integration in order to formulate and implement effective policies, we also have to get such policies politically approved and supported. The way that politics and policy-making work, however, is often problematic in relation to immigrants.

### ***Majority-minority relationships and political participation***

Above I have stated that a key condition for effective policies is that actual long-term residence should be acknowledged by a secure legal position, and that there must be opportunities to participate in politics and policy-making, especially in policies that affect long-



term immigrants. Here I observe that the existing political system often blocks such a condition. The political demise of the report of the Süßmuth Commission (2001) in Germany is an outstanding example, but surely not the only one. But this also applies to local policies, as is aptly shown by Hans Mahnig (in Penninx et al., 2004) in his comparison of the cities of Berlin, Paris and Zurich. The conundrum here is that decisions on integration policies and their content and orientation are taken within a political system in which the majority vote decides. In such a system, majority-minority relationships, and the actual or perceived clash of interests connected with them, are played out at both the national and local level. This may lead to outright exclusion of most immigrants (aliens) from the formal political system, or it may – if they are (partially) included – marginalise their voice. Perceptions about immigrants turn out to be important in such a process, often more than facts (see the observations on national immigration policies in an earlier section). This is emphasised even more if issues of immigration and the position of immigrants become politicised questions. This mechanism leads either to an absence of integration policies and an avoidance of immigrant issues, or to lopsided and patronising policies reflecting mainly majority interests and disregarding the real needs and opinions of immigrants.

Although this is the rule in Europe, both at the national and local level, exceptions exist at both levels. Some British cities serve as local examples. Most of their immigrants, being of ex-colonial origin, have British citizenship, and so have a voice in the political process. This does not prevent significant polarisation of majority-minority relationships, as a wealth of literature in the United Kingdom and the case study of Garbaje on Birmingham testifies (in Penninx et al., 2004). However, over the course of time, the significant concentration of immigrants in certain districts, when they work in political coalition with the mainstream parties, may lead to substantive participation in local and even national politics. Crises in such cities have reinforced this process. Thus local government, rather than national government, may play a prominent role in establishing new practices of political participation.

A different trajectory towards more political participation and inclusive integration policies is seen in Swedish and Dutch societies and their cities. In both these countries, quite comprehensive integration policies were introduced at the national level in a period in which immigration and immigrant integration was much less politicised: in Sweden in the mid-1970s and the Netherlands at the beginning of the 1980s. In both cases there also existed at that time an active and fruitful relationship between research and policy-making in this field. These conditions promoted the early establishment of liberal and inclusive measures and policies in these countries leading, among other things, to the early

introduction of local voting rights for aliens (Sweden in 1976, the Netherlands in 1985) and easier access to naturalisation for (a significant proportion of) newcomers. Such novelties (at that time) were introduced with the conviction and awareness that forces within migrant groups need to be mobilised to have policies accepted and implemented and cohesion created. Naturalisation and local voting rights were seen as means to promote integration, rather than as final testimony of acquired integration.

The trajectories and achievements described above for certain cities in the United Kingdom, Sweden and the Netherlands, however, do seem to be the exception rather than the rule as yet. In most other cities studied by the MPMC project, the preconditions mentioned above were absent. The question of when and what kind of policies are developed in these cities, seems to be closely related to the urgency of the situation, crisis situations often leading to actions and policies that are strongly biased to reflect the perceptions and interests of locally dominant groups.

If integration policies are accepted as being necessary, an additional aspect of the process of policy-making emerges. In contrast to the long-term nature of integration processes discussed above, the political process in democratic societies requires policies to bear fruit within a much shorter time scale, i.e. between elections. There can be a backlash with failures from unrealistic promises and demands derived from this ‘democratic impatience’ (Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000) – that is the political desire to have quick solutions for problems and processes of a long-term nature. The recent vigorous debate on the (supposed) failure of integration policies in the Netherlands is a good example.

More difficult than democratic impatience, however, is the situation in which the political climate prevents well-argued policy proposals from being accepted. Anti-immigrant sentiments have become increasingly translated into political movements and the topics of immigration and integration have become extremely politicised. Unfortunately, this trend can be seen in several European countries and cities, the Zurich example, as described by Mahnig (in Penninx et al., 2004), being an extreme example of this. It means that much more attention should be given to the question of how to frame immigration and integration policies politically in such a way that they are acceptable and accepted by the ruling political system.

### *Implementing policy: contents and strategies*

All the foregoing observations relate to the political process that may or may not lead to the establishment of explicit integration policies. I will add here some observations on the form and content of such policies, where they have been established. First of all, as I have indicated earlier, integration policies are, by necessity,

context bound. It is implicated by the answer to the question 'In what immigrants are supposed to integrate?' At the level of states, differences between countries in the ideologies and practical models through which they incorporate (alien) immigrants have received quite systematic attention (see for example Bauböck et al., 1996; Brubaker, 1992; Castles and Miller, 1998; Favell, 2000; Freeman, 1995; Guiraudon, 1998; Hammar, 1985; Soysal, 1994).

But apart from such specific migrant-related differences, the general characteristics of states and societies matter. In the socio-economic sphere, for example, integration mechanisms in societies with a strong liberal market orientation (and hence limited welfare and social facilities) differ from those in caring welfare states that are more based on solidarity and which redistribute a much greater proportion of their national income. Similarly in the cultural and religious domain, historical peculiarities of institutional arrangements create significant differences in the feasibility of policies in certain domains. By consequence the scope, actors and instruments of policy design differ widely.

This context-bound nature is illustrated by Vermeulen (1997), who compares immigrant policies in five European countries since the 1960s. These relate specifically to a) integration and labour market policies; b) policies relating to immigrant languages; and c) policies in relation to religious systems introduced by immigrants. It shows basically that the actual content of integration policies is to a great extent dependent on, or inspired by, the pre-existing institutional arrangements in these domains within the different countries. For a country that traditionally had different recognised languages within its territory (or religions for that matter), it is, in principle, easier to make additional provisions for newcomers in this domain. This aspect has been studied by Vermeulen and Slijper (2003), who analysed the outworking of multicultural policies in Canada, Australia and the United States. They found that multiculturalism differs, not only in terms of its historical development in each of these countries, the practice of it turns out to be clearly context bound. Their examples pertain to the national level of states, but the same rule holds true for the local level, as the MPMC study (Penninx et al., 2004) and the comparative analysis of city policies by Michael Alexander (2003) has shown.

In their turn, local variations may, to a significant extent, be explained by different national policies, institutional settings and their underlying concepts, as the body of cross-national research suggests. These include both local institutional arrangements, and the opportunities for local policies on integration and the participation of immigrants. Embedded as cities are in their national contexts, they necessarily reflect national policies and paradigms. I will demonstrate this on the basis of the political conception of immigrants as a 'problem' and, and how the ensuing strategies for their

integration at the national level are applied to these policies.

One paradigm defines the immigrant principally as an alien and outsider, one who is only temporarily part of that society. That society emphatically does not see itself as an immigration country and migrants are therefore only temporary 'guests'. At best, in such a society, measures may be taken to make that temporary stay comfortable and profitable for both parties and to facilitate their anticipated return, but there is no logical basis for inclusive policies that would incorporate these immigrants as full citizens or political actors. Such an exclusionary definition leads to the kind of policies that Michael Alexander (2003) in his typology calls either 'non-policy' or 'guest-worker policy'. The forms and instruments of such policies are variable and accidental, being mostly ad hoc reactions to concrete problems.

In contrast to such exclusionary views, other countries embrace a paradigm that includes immigrants over the course of time. In the way this inclusion is envisaged, however, two distinct concepts of immigrants and their integration can be discerned. The first one is that typified by the French, republican vision. France has a particular vision of the state, its relationship to its citizens, and the ensuing political system and institutional arrangements in the public sphere. Following this vision, the distinction between citizens and aliens is crucial, and alien immigrants should ideally become citizens and thus be recognised as *individual* political actors. Immigrant associations, however, are not recognised as such. French republican terminology avoids notions such as ethnicity, ethnic minorities and multiculturalism that suggest groupings and institutionalised difference of any sort, be they based on origin, culture, religion or class. Formal equality at the individual level is the overriding political principle. In this sense this definition should depoliticise the issue of immigrants and their integration (which has not, however, prevented immigration becoming a huge issue for the political parties in France).

The second inclusionary paradigm is the Anglo-American one, in which immigrants are also expected to have or take up citizenship individually. However, having done so, the political system leaves much room for ethnic organisations and activities of immigrants. Ethnicity and ethnic minorities are perceived as relevant notions, even to the extent that (for example) the ethnic background of the total population is officially registered in censuses. Although equality is an important principle in this political vision too, there is the additional notion that substantive equality may in practice be supported by membership of cultural, ethnic, immigrant or disadvantaged groups. Political dialogue between groups on issues of multiculturalism is thus an explicit part of politics (irrespective of the outcome of such political dialogue).

The reasoning behind these different paradigms leads to different strategies employed in integration policies. The French republican system leads principally to strategies that emphasise equality within the given system as priority. There is an avoidance of designating fixed ethnically formulated target groups and a non-recognition of ethnic organisations as important actors, as they would be seen as counteracting integration. The inherent problem with such a definition is that of mobilising and having dialogue with leaders from within immigrant groups in the implementation of policies. The Anglo-American paradigm tends to be more inclined to designate target groups and formulate group-specific policies, even to the extent of giving certain groups positive discrimination or affirmative action. It is more prone to recognise, if not stimulate, forms of representation of such groups, for example by giving subsidies directly to immigrant organisations, or indirectly by subsidising certain activities of such groups. This vision is also more inclined to combine the promotion of equality together with an acceptance of cultural differences, implying a recognition of the cultural and religious aspects of integration processes.

We have intentionally outlined these two models of inclusion as contrasting ones in order to illustrate their internal reasoning. However, in practice we see many variations and eclectic *bricolage* of the elements of both the theoretical models and the instruments of policies. This is the case both at the national and the local level (see Penninx et al., 2004). The elements of this *bricolage*, moreover, may also change over the course of time.

Differences in (national and local) contexts will lead to divergence and to many different integration policies, so runs the argument in the preceding section. But how does the picture look if we attempt to bring together evidence and arguments for convergence?

Several cross-national studies indicate some level of convergence, though rather hesitant or partial. Vermeulen (1997, pp. 150-152) lists a number of issues that show at least some convergence. Firstly, in immigration policy, the European Commission has issued a number of directives in recent years that aim to harmonise member state policies. These concern, in particular, the residential status regulations for immigrants from non-EU countries. Secondly, some convergence has also occurred in naturalisation policies. For example, the wide disparities between French and German legislation and practice in this field have narrowed: the *jus sanguinis* element in the German legislation is thus being relaxed and the *jus soli* principle has been introduced to enable children of immigrants to gain citizenship more easily; at the same time in France the *jus soli* principle has lost ground in recent years. The recent studies of Weil (2000) and Hansen and Weil (2001) on methods of awarding nationality to aliens confirms the increasing convergence across the countries

of Europe. Thirdly, Vermeulen also sees some convergence by the use of a common terminology that is particularly being encouraged by supranational organisations. He warns, however, that simple use of such common vocabulary as 'integration' and 'multicultural' may be deceptive: "Using the same words does not necessarily mean people agree in their ideas. It could even serve to create the illusion of agreement".

Obviously, there are specific forces at work at the local level that lead to convergence. It seems that the strong local character of the settlement process of immigrants itself acts as a force towards convergence of policies. Whatever the institutional arrangements are, local authorities have to find answers to the same questions. These obviously include how to provide immigrants with adequate housing and jobs and how to make educational and health facilities available for them; but they also include how to react to their demands to fulfil religious obligations or how to provide facilities to use and teach their mother tongue. They furthermore have to deal with very similar reactions of the native population to immigrants, i.e. discrimination and social exclusion. Neglecting and avoiding these questions is easier at the more distant level of national policies, but at the local level the questions make themselves felt concretely, the more so if the number of immigrants and their concentration in certain localities increases. If local authorities do not address such questions on their own initiative, they may be forced to do so by emerging crises. 'Inner city riots' as they are often called in the United Kingdom, or the *banlieues problématiques* in France are illustrations of triggers that may lead to (new) local policies. In this sense such crises may be seen as 'bottom up' forces for convergence.

A logical consequence of such local policies, which have been designed to defuse specific crises, is that these policies are often framed as space-specific policies in which housing, concentration and segregation are central issues. The 'Inner City Policies' in the United Kingdom developed since 1968 and the '*Politique de la Ville*' in France since the 1990s illustrate this. (As I described earlier, the convergence of urban policies and integration policies in Sweden and the Netherlands have a different background).

These forces of convergence do not only stimulate the emergence of policies and influence the content of them, their implementation also tends ultimately to encourage similar strategies. In some cases, the consultation of immigrants, and engagement of individuals and organisations in the implementation, is part of policies from the beginning, as in the case of Manchester described by Moore (in Penninx et al., 2004). If this is not the case, however, it often quickly becomes clear that it is impossible to effectively implement immigrant policies without linking into the immigrant groups themselves and engaging them in their formulation and implementation. The Marseille and

Toulouse examples of Moore (in Penninx et al., 2004) effectively illustrate how the city authorities there have found informal ways of linking in to immigrant groups by recruiting mediators from them. The Oeiras example - a suburb of Lisbon with a high concentration of immigrants - shows another form of solution to the same problem: to improve dialogue with the immigrant community, the local authority simply uses existing neighbourhood, sport and leisure organisations, though these happen to be made up mainly of immigrants (Marques and Santos in Penninx et al., 2004). These and other examples suggest that conditions for effective implementation lead to a certain convergence in the strategy used, although the forms may differ.

### **Policy lessons**

Moving on from specific examples, it is now time to generalise from these observations to the process of policy-making and determine what lessons can be learnt from them. The first is, that to get policies established, we not only need a solid scientific knowledge of the processes of integration, we also need to know what makes such policies politically acceptable and endorsed. What is needed is a balanced framework which does not hide the problems to be solved, but primarily stresses the common interests of all. There is much to be gained here: crises can be avoided, which are inevitable if problems are consistently neglected; but also the cohesiveness of cities and states could be restored and promoted. It would then be possible to reap the potential fruits of immigration and immigrants. Acceptance of immigrants and their active participation in society is an essential condition for success. Negotiated new forms of diversity would result from it. On this front there is still much work to do, for all the parties involved, but for politicians primarily.

A second lesson is that the viability of integration policies in the long term depends heavily on realistic targets of such policies being attained, together with an adequate analysis of the institutional setting on which to build such policies. Applying a less ideology-driven, practical approach, combined with the active participation of immigrants and their organisations, will not only avoid backlash effects among the majority population, it will also result in a process of dialogue in which immigrants are involved and feel recognised.

### **Immigration and integration policies in Europe: pressures for new approaches?**

As I explained earlier, European states still predominantly try to handle international migration in a framework that is essentially based on the notion of the nation-state. In such a framework, the world is divided into separate nation-states each with its own national citizens and territory: migration across political borders is seen as an anomaly in such a system. As a consequence,

migration policies have primarily been defensive and control-centred instead of pro-active, and integration policies for immigrants reactive, if not absent. These two reinforce each other: the lack of a consistent and transparent immigration policy is an impediment for effective integration policies. The lack of consistent integration policies, and the (real or perceived) failure of integration of newcomers, who now come from increasingly diverse origins, leads in turn to predominantly negative perceptions of migration and immigrants, and hence to the reinforcement of defensive immigration policies.

This situation pertains particularly to North-West European countries that have a longer (post-war) tradition of immigration. This is reflected in the cumbersome process of establishing migration and integration policies at the EU level. An EU migration policy (as decided in the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997) is often felt as running counter to (perceived) national interests or is even seen as a threat. One Dutch politician expressed it explicitly, thus: "If we have more lenient immigration policies than our neighbours, the Netherlands is going to become the waste pipe of Europe". That leads to the danger that such policies will come down to the lowest common denominator of the EU countries involved. The consequence of such perceptions is that integration policies at the EU level have, up until now, mainly been expressed in a negative way: combating exclusion, racism, xenophobia and discrimination. In most member states, significant and comprehensive integration policies are absent, with a few exceptions as mentioned earlier.

Formulated in this way, this is a gloomy picture indeed. On a more positive note, however, I see two important forces at work that may contribute to a way out of this stalemate. The first force is that of growing economic and political integration within the European Union. This integration of the separate states may have worked as a negative force in the first phase, reinforcing the negative spiral by taking away borders within the Union. Gradually, however, an awareness has grown that the only way out is common, comprehensive and pro-active policies for migration and integration. The two dominant problems of today - unsolicited immigration and demographic decline - can only be handled effectively by a common EU stance. The Amsterdam Treaty and Tampere Summit were the first steps to tackle these problems. These have been followed by suggestions for a framework for comprehensive and pro-active policies, as expressed in the 'Communications on a Community Immigration Policy' (European Commission, 2000) and on 'Immigration, Integration and Employment' (European Commission, 2003). Furthermore, agreement has been reached on a number of concrete directives. One cause for optimism is that several new immigration countries of the EU, not hampered by long traditions of reactive national policies in this field, have been acting as a significant supportive force for such EU initiatives.

The Greek presidency at the Thessaloniki summit of June 2003 stands as a witness to this. Admittedly, the EU process is slow and will probably take several more years of debate and negotiation, but it stands a good chance of acting as a catalyst for future policies of member states.

The second major force for change of national policies comes from within. As has become clear, European cities are the places where globalisation is clearly visible, both in its general consequences (the high profile of multinational corporations) and in terms of the changing population. New immigrants are arriving as a direct or indirect consequence of globalisation; they tend to settle in these cities, and local politics and policies have to cope with the consequences. This may lead to tensions between the national arena and the local one, and may increase the pressure for comprehensive integration policies. This pressure may take several different forms. In countries such as Switzerland, Germany and Austria, where national integration policies have been piecemeal or absent, the pressure to formulate adequate policies, and demands for greater responsibility and increased resources, have come from their big cities. The cities of Zürich, Bern and Basel in Switzerland, for example – in the absence of such policies at the national level – took the initiative of developing local policies ('Leitbilder') in the late 1990s. Berlin, Frankfurt and Vienna developed such policies even earlier when there was an absence of national policies and resources.

In countries where integration policies were initiated rather early at the national level, such as the Netherlands and Sweden, such tensions take a different form. The major cities in these countries, being confronted with immigration on a quite different scale to the rest of the country, joined forces to claim more executive power and resources from the national government to cope with their problems. They were facing pressures in areas common to many immigrant communities: the housing system (segregation and degeneration of neighbourhoods); the labour market (disproportionate unemployment, high levels of social benefit costs); the educational system (concentration of pupils of immigrant origin in certain areas); and public order (racial harassment, crime and tension between groups). These two countries have built a single framework in recent years covering both general policies for metropolitan areas and integration policies for immigrants; this has created, in principle, a new and more comprehensive approach.

It has often been tensions with the immigrant community that have led to a critical dialogue between the big cities and national governments; this has highlighted the areas where national and local policies have been contradictory. Cities do not always win these battles. However, city authorities may use their discretionary power (and avoid public national debate) to gain more room to manoeuvre in favour of (certain) immigrants. What such examples make clear – and this

is the broader message – is that the interests at stake in formulating national integration policies, and its practice at the local level of cities, may be substantially different. Integration may also be perceived quite differently at the local and national level. At the city level the day-to-day consequences of immigration are much more obvious (and the implications of policies are felt by immigrants more directly). If any serious attempt to cope with these problems – or to put it more positively, to attempt to get the best gains of it – is taken at that level, it will put pressure on the higher and more abstract national level. Many European metropolises and cities are becoming aware that they need long term, consistent integration policies in order to remain viable as communal entities, liveable for all residents. They realise that the absence of such policies would be nothing less than a recipe for disaster.

Finally the foregoing observations lead us to a more general conclusion as to the relation between policies at the local, national and supranational level. In our view, local authorities should be given more resources, instruments and room to act in locally appropriate and effective ways. National policies on integration, and by implication EU policies also, should set a general framework and rules, and provide support to local policies and actors. The real work has to be done locally and it has to be done creatively by a coalition of all interested parties.

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