

Towards ‘*We citizens*’: bridging national integration rhetoric and local policy practice

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Abstract

In the past decades, the population diversity in the western world has strongly increased. Especially cities have over time become more hybrid, diverse and multicultural. They face the complex challenge of maintaining and improving social cohesion among their diverse population, with its plural identities, various opinions, life styles and behaviour. This is complicated, as many urbanites are not merely residents of a particular city, but are part of several contexts. The extent to which they feel connected with their place of residence is therefore not always clear. Moreover, the present (national) debates on integration, with their monocultural vision and strong emphasis on ethnic and religious diversity hamper fostering social cohesion at the level of the city and impede identification strategies of groups and individuals. A broader definition of diversity and identity in the debates, as well as the binding force of local identity, could possibly give solace.

Key words: cities of diversity; identity; social cohesion; integration debate and discourse.

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1. Introduction

The increasing flows of people, information and goods bring a growing diversity of people to interact across the world. In Europe, rates of migration have been increasing at great speed since the mid 1990s, with notable flows from developing countries to developed regions (Kazepov, 2005; OECD, 2007) and with varying diversification effects in different countries (ERICarts, 2008). The influx of immigrants has transformed the ways in which demographic, social and cultural diversity occur, in particular in urban settings. For, in cities diversity, with its costs and benefits, occurs in proximity: costs in terms of (cultural and racial) conflicts, division and fragmentation and benefits in terms of (cross-cultural) informal exchanges of knowledge, fostering processes of innovation and creativity.

Cities face the complex challenges of maintaining and improving social cohesion among their, often highly diverse, populations (see Niessen, 2000). The diversity issue, put high on the political agenda at different political levels, addresses in particular migrants (new immigrants, refugees/asylum seekers) and national minorities (Roma) as sources of cultural diversity. According to the United Nations (2004) managing cultural diversity and respecting cultural identities are even two of the central challenges of our time. This is complicated for at least two reasons.

First, as individuals and groups have increasingly become situated within multiple contexts, in terms of identification, they have multiple points of reference. To what extent they feel connected with their place of residence is not always clear any longer. Some even argue that emotional social-spatial ties have become irrelevant (c.f. Harvey 1989; Giddens 1990). Thanks to internet, immigrants can maintain or even strengthen their ties with the community in their country of origin (c.f. Mamadouh, 2002; Spoonley, 2004). More generally speaking, (global) virtual communities can be created now around all aspects of diversity and irrespective of place (c.f. Holloway and Valentine, 2003; Seymour and Lupton, 2004; Valentine and Skelton, 2008). This has important implications for questions of identity and cultural/language maintenance and (thus) also for fostering social cohesion at the city level.

Second, a climate of sincere openness towards various forms of diversity and identity is required, but this requirement is not always met. In the past decade, the political context has gradually hardened. Prompted by the advancing European integration and by the strongly increased population diversity, in Europe the debate on culture, identity and territory has blazed up with great intensity. This debate is accompanied by tensions, doubts and fears that are disseminated and fuelled by the media (c.f. Critcher, 2003; Hier, 2003; Bauman, 2004). Incidents of violence, both on a large scale (terrorist attacks in the USA and EU) and on a smaller scale (in

neighbourhoods) have fuelled feelings of insecurity. Growing Islamophobia, increasing and various forms of racism and discrimination (especially based on visible differences) and socio-economic marginalisation have a primary role in generating disaffection and alienation. Cultural differences have changed from an identity - and diversity issue into a problem of internal security. Negative perceptions are not only held towards new migrants, but also towards traditional minority groups, especially the Roma, the largest minority in Europe (Castles, 2000; EUMC, 2006; EC, 2007; ERICarts, 2008). In many European countries national populism has exerted an increasingly strong attraction.

While this paper will pay some attention to the actual relevance of local social-spatial ties, it primarily intends to show that the present (national) debates on integration, embedded in increasingly vicious host-stranger relationships, tend to polarise, to evoke fear and feelings of insecurity. A monocultural vision and a strong emphasis on ethnic and religious diversity impede identification strategies of groups and individuals and hamper fostering social cohesion at the city level.

This brings us to the following leading question: *How can social cohesion in cities be fostered in the most optimal way, allowing for and doing justice to increasing diversity and the development of multiple identities in multiple time-space frameworks?*

As will be shown, a broader and clearer definition of diversity and identity in the debates, as well as the binding force of local identity, could possibly give solace. The Netherlands will be used as an example to illustrate this point, while there will be many references to the situation in other countries.

In the following sections, first, the multidimensionality of diversity, identity and social cohesion will be elaborated, focusing in particular on their relation with place (section 2). Next, section 3 will address the public and academic debates on integration, the visions on culture that underlie them and their approach towards diversity. Section 4 deals with the primary policy answers, challenges and obstacles related to diversity. In the final section, conclusions will be drawn and some constructive ways forward will be presented.

2. Multidimensional Diversity, Identity and Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is frequently seen as a prerequisite for the functioning of modern states and/or for internal security in multicultural societies (ERICarts, 2008). Urban researchers define social cohesion in different ways but they all refer to the coherence of a social or political system; to the ties that people have with this system; to their involvement and solidarity with it and to a society that ‘hangs together,’ in which conflict between

societal goals and groups and disruptive behaviour are minimal (Pahl, 1991; Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Novy et al., 2012 (this volume)).

To improve social cohesion, a variety of individuals and groups should be integrated in a wider social order, adhering to common norms, values, aims, principles and codes of behaviour. A strong attachment to a particular place and the intertwining of people's identities with specificities of places is presumed to contribute in this sense. However, in practice this is quite complicated. First, cohesion within a particular area (a neighbourhood, for example) seems to be served by homogeneity and consensus (sovereignty or having a say in one's own circle), but social cohesion at one scale might contrast with that at another: there is a tension between socially cohesive places and a cohesive society (Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Van der Welle and Mamadouh, 2008). At what scale then should social cohesion be pursued? Second, enhancing the feeling of 'us' to improve social cohesion in a particular group might be at the expense of the qualities of the relations with other groups ('them'), expressed by Robert Putnam respectively as *bonding* and *bridging* elements (c.f. Putnam, 1993; 2000; Putnam and Felstein, 2003; Giddens, 1991; Van der Welle and Mamadouh, 2008). This forms a policy dilemma as well. Third and finally, social cohesion is not consensus. Although Kearns and Forrest (2000) consider social cohesion as social harmony, conflicts that have their foundations in different interests, perspectives or ambitions play an important role in generating social

cohesion. Based on Durkheim (1984), Westin (2005) argues that social cohesion is promoted by reciprocity on a societal level. For a multiculturally composed society an important political goal is to enable reciprocity.

Before we continue, it is important first to reflect on the concepts of diversity and identity, on their interrelations and on their relation to place.

Diversity and Identity: multidimensional concepts

In general, diversity concerns all aspects based on which people differ from each other, visibly (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) or less visibly (particular needs, handicaps, sexual preferences, etc). The literature distinguishes three sorts of (overlapping) classifications, based on characteristics of diversity that are primary or secondary; constant or variable and observable or unobservable (see Janssens and Steyaert, 2001; Van Eyck van Heslinga and Van der Raad, 2008). Somewhat more simple, Janssens and Steyaert (2001) distinguish between a 'narrow' definition of diversity that concentrates on specific aspects such as ethnicity and gender and a 'wide' definition that relates to all possible aspects: demographic differences (ethnicity, gender, age), psychological differences (values, convictions, knowledge), organizational differences (seniority, profession and hierarchical level), and so forth. Diversity thus potentially includes everybody and the notion opens up possibilities for a free articulation of identities (Lentin, 2008). But this requires emphasizing the multidimensionality of diversity to start with, as it

does most justice to the complexity of reality, and emphasizing the mutual relations between different aspects, like ageing among migrants; religion and gender-roles; sexual orientation, etc.

The perception of diversity and the approach towards managing it are framed by particular political, economic and demographic contexts. One could imagine that the need to manage diversity is prompted, for example, by particular demographic developments such as processes of migration, increasing labour participation, changes in birth - or mortality rates, and so forth. Additionally, often there is also a normative element involved. This comes to the fore in policy approaches towards particular aspects of diversity that pursue equality between groups.

Identity is an umbrella term used throughout the social sciences to describe an individual's (changing) comprehension of him or herself as a discrete, separate entity ('self' identity). The notion of *social* identity, as defined in sociology and political science, is defined as the way that individuals label themselves and others as members of particular groups, expressing a multidimensional and multi-scale character. The constitution of a 'group' varies, and so does the construction of a collective identity. For, identities might be based on all aspects of diversity and are thus multidimensional in character.

Formulated in a different and more elaborated way, individuals identify themselves with different sectors (a community, a social class,

subculture, ethnicity, religion, age, race, gender, sexuality and so forth), called 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw, 1989; Staunaes, 2005), as well as with different scales (nations, cities, neighbourhoods). Others might identify them in particular ways ('imposed' identities) (c.f. Barth, 1969; Hall, 1991). Conflicts always lie in wait as identities might clash, for example, in terms of culture, religion or ethnicity. This holds both for an individual who has to negotiate different identities and for groups whose collective identities might clash. But also the intertwining of people's identities with that of places might imply tensions.

An important issue concerns the trajectories of identity building: the 'mechanics' by which collectives create distinctions, establish hierarchies and negotiate and renegotiate rules of inclusion; the ways in which identities are constructed through intersections of multiple dimensions (gender, ethnicity, race, age, sexuality and class); the way in which social categories of identification and difference intertwine with individual processes of becoming (Staunaes, 2005). Several works, anchored in the study of discourse and symbolization, approach identification as a dynamic process that unfolds in relation to economic, historical, and political contexts. Identity discourse and symbols are cast as mediators of structure and action (Cerulo, 1997; Ghorashi, 2003). Interesting in this sense, is a Dutch report, entitled: *'Identification with the Netherlands'* (WRR, 2007), in which the Dutch scientific council for government policy (WRR), distinguishes three

types of identification: *Normative* identification concerns the opportunities that one has in society to live in accordance with one's own norms and values. *Functional* identification comes about when people are primarily viewed as individuals with different functional ties, for example as a member of a sports club, professional group or political party. Finally, *emotional* identification relates to feelings of solidarity with others and place: about a sense of belonging.

A certain context might emphasize particular identities at the expense of others. Regarding American political and cultural discourse, for example, almost twenty years ago, Aronowitz (1992) argued that although 'class' was still a hard material reality, it had been removed from this or was hidden within gender and race discourses (Bettie 2003). Another example relates to the Netherlands, which used to be a compartmentalized society, in which people were primarily identified in relation to their particular religious or political ideology. In more recent political and cultural discourses, one often finds the distinction between the 'autochthonous' population and 'foreigners,' relating the collective identity of these two 'groups' primarily to their (original) country of origin.

Diversity, Identity and Place

There are several ways in which diversity and identity might be connected to place. This is reflected in the wide variety of topics in scientific studies.

In view of the leading question of this contribution, an interesting study to mention is the large-scale research programme on Social Cohesion that was carried out by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), between 1999 and 2006. One of the main conclusions was: if one wants to strengthen the social cohesion of the Dutch society and the ties of particular ethnic groups with that society, one should concentrate on maintaining identity and self-respect of the groups concerned (Evenblij, 2007). Appreciation is positive, while pressure often goes all wrong in relation to the intended purpose. This was an important insight, especially for governments of cities with a substantial population of foreign descent¹. Other studies that are related to this topic and that are certainly worth mentioning, are the topic of ties (or a lack of them) at different scales (c.f. Webber, 1963; Granovetter, 1972; Stratton and Ang, 1994; Schuyt, 1997; Wellman and Haythornthwaite, 2002; Delanty, 2003; Duyvendak and Hurenkamp, 2004); studies on place making (c.f. Lupi, 2008); sense of belonging (c.f. Savage et al., 2005); imagined communities (c.f. Anderson, 1983); ‘community and neighbourhood’ (c.f. Lupi and Musterd, 2006; Blokland, 2003) and studies on the impact of place (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Musterd et al., 2008). Other literature examines ties in terms of nationality and identity (c.f. Castells, 1996; 1997) or citizenship (c.f. Modood et al., 2006; Modood, 2008).

The multidimensionality of diversity, as related to place, strongly comes to the fore in studies on (spatial) inequality, power and conflict. Bradley (1996), for example, considers the interplay of four major dimensions of social differentiation (class, gender, ethnicity and age), showing the interrelation of different forms of inequality (see also Scharf et al., 2004; Daatland and Biggs, 2004; Massey, 1993; Christ and Thomas, 2008; Harrison et al., 2005; Denton and Massey, 1988; Massey and Denton, 1993). European and other research that has been done from the late 1990s² has strongly focused on *cultural* diversity and has yielded a wealth of insight in the pathways to social exclusion and in possible (effective) policy answers, especially as related to migrants and minorities in different types of cities.

The multidimensionality of identity is, for example, examined in studies on gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, class and national identity, whether or not in conjunction with each other (c.f. Morrill, 1995; Cerulo, 1997) or on the way in which social categories of identification and difference intersect (c.f. Crenshaw, 1989; Wetherell, 1998; Staunaes, 2005). Of special relevance for this contribution is the issue of local identity. Interesting scientific research that was recently conducted concerns studies on identification processes among ethnic groups in the Dutch cities of Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Two studies in Rotterdam were respectively conducted as a survey among 650 Turkish-, Moroccan- and autochthonous-

Dutch young people (Entzinger and Dourleijn, 2008) and based on interviews with members of the Surinamese, Turkish or Moroccan middle class (225) and with members of the autochthonous-Dutch middle class (100) (Van Bochove et al., 2009). In both studies in Rotterdam, the strongest feeling of solidarity turned out to be the one with the own ethnic group in the Netherlands. In terms of emotional identification, young people from the ‘foreign’ middle class felt primarily a citizen of Rotterdam (a ‘Rotterdammer’) and secondly a citizen of the Netherlands (a Dutchman or Dutchwoman). For autochthonous young people, on the other hand, in general the Dutch national identity outweighed the Rotterdam identity.

The research that was conducted in Amsterdam consisted of both a survey and 50 interviews among young people in Amsterdam (aged 18-30 years) of Dutch, Moroccan, Turkish or Surinamese descent (Van der Welle and Mamadouh, 2008). Also in this research the strongest feeling of solidarity was the one with the own ethnic group in the Netherlands. In addition, many young people chose to present themselves primarily as a citizen of Amsterdam (‘Amsterdammer’), as this identification could easily be combined with an ethnic identity. Moreover, for some, emphasizing the local identity was used as a strategy to push clashing identities into the background.

While the topic of local identity requires far more intensive exploration, based on these results, one could argue that place *does* matter.

Moreover, and even more importantly, Van der Welle and Mamadouh (2008) establish that local identity has the potential to connect people with each other.

Diversity, identity and social cohesion in cities should be understood within the wider contextual changes in Europe. In this sense, especially the increasing migration and the gradual hardening of the political climate are of particular relevance. These are clearly reflected in the ideologies in ongoing debates on integration.

3. Political and Public Debates on integration

While public and political debates on integration in theory could apply to all characteristics of diversity, in the past decades, they have concentrated primarily on cultural diversity; on the *integration of immigrants*, also in the Netherlands. This issue is often directly related to a wider debate on social cohesion and inequality, especially at the level of the city. Cultural diversity is not understood in the same way across Europe, though, due to varying conditions and historical experiences in different countries. In some parts of Europe an important issue of distinction is language (e.g. *Belgium, Catalonia*), in others it is religion (until recently, in *Northern Ireland*), belonging to a recognized minority (*Sweden, Finland, the Balkans*) or race (*UK*), or a mix of national origin and language (*Estonia, Latvia, France*) (ERICarts, 2008).

Considering the debate on integration in the Netherlands, there have been clear stages: while it was still expected in the 1970s that the so-called 'guest workers,' who had come to the Netherlands from the 1960s on, would go back to their countries of origin in the end, in the 1980s this 'remigration' idea was abandoned. The country was declared a 'multicultural society' and the integration of migrants was now permanently high on the political agenda. Multiculturalism unfolded in specific ways in different national societies, though, reflecting their specific circumstances, histories and social imperatives (Nagel and Hopkins 2010).

While the Dutch politicians had an eye for the arrears of migrants, the tensions, insecurity and actual problems that their large-scale arrival in particular urban neighbourhoods caused for the original, autochthonous residents fell on rather deaf ears. Also in a broader sense, there were feelings of insecurity in the Netherlands: traditional religious and socio-political barriers had been breaking down and individualisation was increasing. As a result of these processes 'clear' collective identities gradually gave way to more uncertain, individual identities.

In the early 1990s, integration became increasingly looked at as the own, individual responsibility of migrants: the focus shifted from the group towards the individual. In most European countries, also in the Netherlands, 'citizenship' became the leading principle within the debates on integration. Initially, 'active citizenship' of people from ethnic minorities was

considered sufficient: speaking the language and being actively involved in society. The new Dutch 'integration policy' intended to improve the socio-economic position of migrants, through employment, education and political participation (Sleegers, 2007).

In the late 1990s, however, political consensus was being eroded. In an epoch of 'new realism' (Prins, 2004), integration increasingly became a question of identity. This was the case in Netherlands, but probably also in many other European countries. Demands on migrants were revised: they were now required to learn the language of their host country and to adopt its norms and values. A new sense of nationality was considered the solution for 'preserving' the own (Western) society (c.f. Scheffer, 2007). In view of the questions raised in various European countries, integration increasingly became an issue of national identity: what is 'the Netherlands,' what is 'France' and 'who are "we"?"

In the early 2000s, the public and political debate on the multicultural society, integration and national identity burst out with great intensity. In the Netherlands, the immediate cause was an essay written by the Dutch publicist Paul Scheffer in one of the leading Dutch newspapers, NRC Handelsblad. Next, the terrorist attacks in the United States and the murder on the Dutch film director and columnist Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, by a young radical muslim from Moroccan descent, fuelled the debate on integration. These changes in attitude towards newcomers

reflected changes in social and political contexts and were speeded up by worldwide events, such as '9-11' and the bombings in Madrid and London. Conflict on both global and local levels was reduced to a cultural clash (based on Huntington, 1994). A central question became whether 'the' Islam was a threat for the 'own' Western culture. Some argued that norms and values of the Islamic culture were possibly incompatible with those of Christianity. Debates on this topic were most open and explicit in Denmark, The Netherlands, and the UK, but also rather lively in France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Belgium, for example. Defining a more explicit and strong national identity was seen as the solution for maintaining the 'own' society and as a means to make clear to migrants who 'we' are and who 'they' should adapt to. Adaptation to 'the' national identity became the central point in integration policy. Some politicians problematized cultural differences as separate problems that politics should pay attention to. In the Netherlands, many political parties embarked on this point of view and multiculturalism as a normative ideal was declared bankrupt. In various European countries the alleged existence of a cultural incompatibility increasingly united the political left and right (Lentin, 2008). Integration was now considered to be a mutual obligation of migrant and society.

The discourse on integration changed in the past years as well, both in terms of tone and meanings assigned. Regarding the Netherlands, Slegers (2007) refers to 2000 as a turning point: the mild and politically

correct discourse that depicted multiculturalism as the ideal image and migrants as a group requiring help, then changed into a discourse in which migrants had to meet stringent adaptation requirements. This new discourse on integration, with clear equivalents in other European countries, tends to emphasize the positive aspects of the 'own' culture and often assigns negative meanings to other (especially non-western) cultures. The assigning of meaning in this discourse has various shortcomings, though, with serious impacts on integration policy and identity politics.

Shortcomings in the debates on integration

First, concepts of diversity and identity are narrowly and uni-dimensionally defined, often limited to ethnicity and religion. Many other aspects remain underexposed and require more attention, like social-economic background, gender, lifestyle, age (intergenerational aspects), language, sexual orientation, as well as their linkage to the issue of identity. Besides, the emphasis is on identification with groups and cultural and religious differences between (different ethnic) groups are often seen as the most decisive factor when trying to explain social problems. However, a cultural focus only is insufficient for understanding the problems in marginalized areas, as actually a whole range of differences produces unfairness and inequality (Tubergen, 2005). Most of the problems concerned are foundational problems of culture, race and socio-political power and have to

be understood with other logics, such as the protest against ethno-racial discrimination and stigmatisation, resistance to social inequality related with unemployment and flexibilisation of the labour market (Hesse, 2000; Ramadan, 2008).

Second, cultural diversity is often merely approached negatively and hardly as an opportunity. Examining the (international) debates on integration of immigrants as related to places (mostly cities) where they settle, there are paradoxical and contested views on immigrants. However, that diversity can be approached in a truly different and far more positive way is proved by the United States, an immigration society for ages. Diversity is looked at as a source of innovation and is connected to economic performance. Debates address different aspects of migrants at the same time ('Iranian American') and view them as adding the richness of their culture to the American society. Instead of a polarized debate, which tends to polarize identity formation in turn, the debate emphasizes mixture, thus leaving room for various, hybrid identities. This also holds for the presently ongoing 'creative city' debate of 'founding father' Richard Florida (2002), in which diversity is approached as an asset to economic development. Rath (2007), however, critically argues that cultural diversity in terms of the contribution of immigrants is hardly addressed in this debate.

Finally, the tone of the integration debate is characterized by (underlying) stereotype constructions of difference. While referring to 'we'

(the autochthonous population) and 'they' (the foreigners), differences as such are looked at as problematic. Ethnic groups are also often depicted as homogeneous, ignoring their mutual differences. Similar stereotype constructions of difference, reproduced by the media, have serious consequences for the way in which 'others' are looked at (c.f. Ehrkamp, 2002; Wetherell, 2007). Moreover, particular constructions can imprison a whole group for decades. Second and even third generations descendants of 'guest workers' are often still depicted as 'the other', for example. Besides, freezing boundaries between cultures strongly influences processes of identity building and the 'sense of belonging' that these 'others' feel in a particular (host)society (Ghorashi, 2006). Often the 'own' identity in host societies is considered the norm and, as such, is not brought up for discussion. However, if one does not reflect on his or her own identity, the feeling of unity and of 'us' will be hard to realize. Raj Isar (2006) and Lentin (2008) point in this sense at the historical tendency of European nation-states to deny heterogeneity through the insistent production of an 'imagined homogeneity'. Underlying dichotomies thus hinder the unity in diversity, the development of identity and most certainly also the fostering of social cohesion. Besides, they put key values in society, like solidarity, under pressure and may contribute to stigmatisation of particular neighbourhoods by outsiders (cf. 'les banlieues' in France) and contribute to

redlining practices by financial institutions or commercial disinvestments in these areas.

It is important to emphasize, though, that integration issues and concepts like ‘multiculturalism’ should not merely be understood as part of the realm of state action and policy. They are actually a living phenomenon, shaping the spaces of everyday life, especially in the (larger) cities, where social groups encounter, experience, recognise and make sense of cultural difference. Their relationships and interactions are marked by prejudice, tolerance, empathy, hospitality and incivility – and sometimes all of these simultaneously (Nagel and Hopkins, 2010). While Ramadan (2007) points at the difference between the national rhetoric and the local reality, based on research in Amsterdam and Berlin, Vermeulen (2008) points at the complications that the national rhetoric causes. He establishes that the debates on integration work as serious restrictions for local policy makers. Generally speaking, there has been a major shift from a multicultural vision towards a monocultural vision, implying changing views on diversity. This will be discussed next.

4. Policy answers so far: challenges and obstacles

In the past decades, governments of EU member states have followed different approaches in their policies, strategies and programmes towards

minorities, immigrants, refugees and asylumseekers. At the same time, basically one can distinguish two types of integration models on which their approaches have been based: a '*diversity and empowerment*' model and a '*social cohesion*' model (ERICarts, 2008).

[Add table 1 here]

The '*Diversity and Empowerment*' model focuses on the legal or political recognition of defined minority cultures and identities that coexist within a territorially defined area (nation, region or locality). The affirmation of cultural diversity and equality is expressed in a number of countries through measures to assist specific groups of the population, such as providing support for their organisations, introducing quota regulations, taking strong legal action against racist or hate crimes, empowering or protecting marginalized groups, re-writing history books, and so forth. This approach has been traditionally prevalent in most of the Nordic countries and in the United Kingdom and seems to gain ground in Belgium (FL), Ireland, Lithuania, and Slovenia (ERICarts, 2008). According to Stratton and Ang (1994) multiculturalism, the basis of this approach, is controversial precisely because of its real and perceived (in)compatibility with national unity.

The '*social cohesion*' model, on the other hand, aims at a more unified society with political stability, internal security, economic growth, and equal opportunities for all individuals and groups, regardless of their origin. A common national identity, related values and learning the national language are promoted and requirements in immigration/citizenship laws and policies have been developed or tightened. Important indicators are new rules of naturalization, imposed on immigrants, which realign nationality with citizenship. Efforts to strengthen nationality as the formula for inclusion were recently undertaken in several (large) European states, including France, Germany and the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark. This approach is found in countries, which have ethnically diverse communities (Belgium, France, the Netherlands); which attracted large numbers of migrant workers (Austria, Denmark, Greece, Germany, Luxembourg, Spain); or which used to be part of the former Soviet Union or Yugoslavia from which times certain groups with unclear legal status remain in the population (some Baltic States, Slovenia). Regarding refugees and asylum-seekers, social fringe groups in the suburbs of large cities in Western Europe, or specific minorities (the Roma) in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe, improving their basic socio-economic conditions has been given priority (ERICarts, 2008).

Summarizing the foregoing, the first model primarily aims at affirming diversity and dialogue in society, whereas the second model

specifically pursues generating greater cohesion. The question whether societies should integrate their immigrants into one, national life-style or rather embrace all the different cultures represented in society, is referred to as the ‘diversity versus cohesion antagonism’ (ERICarts, 2008).

The early 2000s have been marked by a turn against the multiculturalist models of integration, which were considered to be unable to create conflict-free, multi-ethnic societies. In many EU member states they have been pushed aside to make way for models of assimilation (Alexander, 2003; Joppke, 2004; Lentin, 2008; Nagel and Hopkins, 2010). Although the Netherlands are not mentioned in the country examples in table 1, based on various observations (Essed, 2002; Entzinger, 2003; Ghorashi, 2006; Alexander, 2007; Vermeulen, 2008), the main approach of the country has most in common with assimilation/cohesion strategies, even though the word ‘multiculturalism’ at times still pops up in the political and public debates.

Vermeulen (2008) refers to the visions on culture that underly the two integration models as ‘monoculturalist’ versus ‘multiculturalist’. As he shows in table 2 (below), these underlying visions result in very different understandings of diversity.

[Add table 2 here]

An integration model that is based on a multicultural vision has an eye for the positive aspects of diversity; pays attention to the structural inequality between groups, as well as to underlying patterns in the host society that cause and maintain them. It takes diversity as the point of departure, supports disadvantaged groups and leaves room for different identities. In a monocultural integration model, on the other hand, the 'own' culture and the national identity are the prevailing standard. Migrant groups and diversity are primarily constructed in terms of problems.

A similar distinction can be found in the present (two) visions on integration at the city level: the first adopts the view that immigration is closely and positively related to the wider functioning of the city, the influx of immigrants contributing to the city as a centre of innovation, knowledge production and cultural exchange. In this vision integration is addressed as a long-term process in which people find their way. The second vision, however, presumes a more negative relationship between the city, immigration and integration, constructing immigrants in terms of problems to the city because 'they' do not integrate, keep their own identity, become radical, and so forth. It is primarily this second view on (the integration of) immigrants that comes to the fore in the present public debates in Europe.

Whether one has a monoculturalist or a multiculturalist vision on integration and whether it is positive or negative, both have far reaching

consequences for policy approaches at the local level. These will be discussed next.

General social policy or target group policy

A crucial choice to be made is one between general social policy versus policy specifically targeted at particular groups. Consider the example of combating youth unemployment. In many cities, a high percentage of these young unemployed is of foreign descent. An important issue therefore is whether one can effectively combat high youth unemployment without taking into account the background of the unemployed migrant youth. Should one emphasize and use particular group characteristics in policy or not? This issue is known as the ‘dilemma of recognition’ (Ireland, 2004; Vermeulen, 2008).

In the Netherlands, for a long period of time, the choice was made to emphasize group characteristics. Moreover, as equality is the norm in the Dutch welfare state, diversity was primarily approached as a shortcoming. This so-called ‘deficit approach’ pursued removing weaknesses and arrears among particular (target) groups, such as immigrants and women. This combination of group targeting and deficit approaches, however, carry great risks with them. For, a focus on deprivation can lead to stigmatisation (Essed, 2002) or might make one blind for the talents and opportunities of groups with alleged arrears. Vermeulen (2008) also points at the fact that the

recognition of specific groups can unintentionally mobilize and stimulate collective identities, which causes particular group identities to become stronger: groups might isolate themselves further and problems might become even bigger. An even more fundamental problem is that the dominant group functions as a 'norm group.' Underlying processes of society that possibly impede integration might not be problematized and are thus being maintained. This is what Essed (2002) calls 'cultural cloning'. Her criticism resonates Ghorashi's, elsewhere in this contribution, and also applies in other contexts: Amin (2002), for example, refers to the strong overtones of whiteness in understandings of British citizenship (see also Massey (1993) on 'power geometry' and Lentin (2008) on the politics of diversity).

Area-based urban policy

Prompted by the fact that in the past decades, new immigrants have often settled in particular areas in the larger cities, over time, the relationship between the spatial segregation of migrants/ethnic minorities in cities and integration processes has become a core political issue. From the 1990s on, a widespread policy answer has been 'area-based' urban policy, in which social-economic problems in designated deprived urban areas were addressed. Migrant minorities were characterized as 'problem groups,' due to their social-economic deprivation and language deficiencies, but also due

to youth criminality and vandalism. Social mixing strategies have been introduced to counteract the development of ethnic homogeneous neighbourhoods and to realize more mixed neighbourhoods, using new housing development programmes and allocation schemes for social housing tenants. Incidentally even spatial dispersal policy for particular groups has been advocated (Musterd and Andersson, 2005). However, scholars argue that too much attention is given to areas with concentrations of immigrants, whereas immigrants in areas that are not known as concentration areas will often be a majority. Additionally, policy answers may focus too much on large-scale spatial social engineering projects, while empirical evidence provides support for more policy attention in the domains of education and labour market access (Musterd et al., 2009).

It seems that in both target group policy and area-based urban policy, it is primarily cultural diversity that has been addressed. Moreover, diversity has been primarily approached in terms of a deficit, in terms of a problem.

6. Conclusions and constructive ways forward

How can social cohesion in cities be fostered in the most optimal way, allowing for and doing justice to increasing diversity and the development of multiple identities in multiple time-space frameworks? While the foregoing discussion is far too limited to fully answer this question, some important conclusions can be drawn.

City governments face the difficult challenge to improve social cohesion among their increasingly diverse population. Dealing with multiculturalism as a living phenomenon, they have three dilemma's to start with: at what scale should social cohesion be pursued? Which 'us' should be enforced? And how much conflict should one accept in realizing it?

Considering the multidimensionality of diversity and identity, in theory, the city population could be approached in a variety of ways. However, as this paper has shown, in practice these options are actually far more limited, due to the wider (national) political and policy frameworks within which city governments formulate and implement their policy: Debates and discourses on integration are formulated within a political climate that is increasingly hostile towards 'others'. This is reflected in models on integration, that have become increasingly monoculturalist, with serious implications for the way in which 'diversity' is approached. In present visions on integration at the city level, diversity is primarily constructed in a negative way. Additionally, the national debates and discourses on integration tend to have a one-sided focus on cultural or religious diversity, constructing identities of groups accordingly, often not taking the variety of identities of the members of these 'groups' into account. This does not do justice to the multiple identities of groups and individuals and might impede their identification strategies.

Considering the content, the tone and the meanings are assigned in these debates and discourses, the use of container concepts is striking, as is the lack of accuracy in assigning meaning. Stereotype constructions of difference, disseminated by the media and constantly repeated in society, are enforced instead of being counteracted. They have a major impact on the ways in which 'others' are looked at and on their 'sense of belonging'. National integration rhetoric and local policy practices function as communicating vessels: particular (negative) connotations in the wider debate on integration fuel (negative) images of particular groups and might thus impact connotations of these groups at the local level. Moreover, as a discursive framework, it might hinder local discourses and local policy options as related to integration and thus be counterproductive for local politicians and policy makers. Consider the 'dilemma of recognition': if 'Moroccan youth' is repeatedly constructed in terms of problems and criminal activities in national discourse, for example, it will be far more difficult at the local level to arrange trainee posts, for young, ambitious, but unemployed Moroccans.

Actively influencing the tone of the integration debate and the ways in which meanings are assigned would be an important key for improvement. In order to make space for broader definitions of diversity and identity, their meaning should be clarified. Participants in (political and public) debates, governments in particular, could help by being more

accurate in their communication policy: using more precise group designations instead of container concepts like 'foreigners'. Underlying assumptions in stereotype constructions of difference should be made explicit: why would a third generation individual from Turkish descent still be depicted as the 'other', for example? This also implies a critical reflection on the own alleged homogeneous society and on processes that maintain different forms of inequality: why does the earlier mentioned individual from Turkish descent still finds himself in a disadvantaged position, for example?

The multidimensionality of diversity and the range of identities that people have should be explicitly emphasized in the debate on integration. This would offer far more connections for policy, than the present narrow definition of ethnic and religious diversity. Moreover, diversity should not merely be approached in a negative way or in terms of a 'deficit'. Its power and added value for society should be emphasized instead and should be taken as the point of departure. At the local level, one should explore the binding element of (cultural) diversity in discourses on immigrants and the creative city. Group and individual identities require more attention: research points at the potential of the 'local identity', in order to connect all sorts and conditions of people and to bridge differences in identity.

Considering the fault-lines that are drawn in present political and public debates on integration, future research should focus on the ways in

which ‘the other’ is constructed: how particular images or themes, like inclusion, exclusion, citizenship, nationality, ethnic diversity/identity, gender relations, immigration and integration have changed over time and what their impact has been on policy and on identity building processes.

In accordance with the political agendas, in recent decades there has been a strong research focus on *cultural* diversity. However, other aspects of diversity, like ageing, lifestyle, etc. have been underexposed. They are crucial for a better understanding of processes of integration and require research as well. Mindful of Ramadan’s plea for leaving cultural fault-lines behind in order to create a ‘*We citizen,*’ research should focus even more explicitly on (the spatial manifestation of) social-economic problems, as well as on ways of building trust and a ‘unity in diversity’.

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TABLES:

Table 1: Main approaches to majority-minority relations with country examples

Main Approaches		Affinity of Approach to Proposed Definition of ICD	Country Examples
Cohesion or Assimilation	Homogenisation	None	Turkey
	Assimilation (adaptation to mainstream population) "Cohesion-led Integration" (partly based on universalistic views, e.g. in France, but more often concerned about domestic security)	Limited	Austria Belgium (FR) Cyprus Denmark Estonia France Germany Greece Latvia Romania
Diversity & Empowerment	Multiculturalism	Medium or Varying	Belgium (FL) Croatia Finland Ireland Italy Lithuania Luxembourg Slovenia Sweden
	"Diversity-led Integration" (rights based and/or fostering empowerment and diversity)		
	Affirmative / positive action towards diversity		
	Intercultural encounters	United Kingdom	
	Open intercultural dialogue	Strong	Portugal (?)

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NOTE: Country examples are based on an overall assessment of approaches, policies and traditions made by the national correspondents and editors, which does not rule out different approaches or exceptions e.g. in specific sectors!

Source: ERICarts 2008: 89.

Table 2: Monoculturalist and multiculturalist visions as related to different understandings of diversity.

Vision:	Positive consequences of diversity	Negative consequences of diversity	Cause of negative consequences	Combating negative consequences
Monoculturalist	None	Social deprivation of groups/limited social cohesion.	Diversity is the cause of problems. Cultural factors of migrant groups cause deprivation.	Combat diversity in the public domain, for example, by addressing citizens as individuals of the nation. Other collective identities should not be accepted or stimulated by the government.
Multiculturalist	Enrichment	Structural	Unequal	Increasing sources/opportunities

	of culture	inequality between groups.	opportunities/sources of deprived groups. Social-economic factors. Host society.	of deprived groups. Diversity as such is not a problem, neither in legislation nor in policy. Approach towards diversity should be pragmatic.
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Source: Based on Vermeulen (2008: 17)

¹ For an elaborate discussion on social cohesion as such, see Novy et al, 2012 (this volume). For studies on governance and managing diversity, see Healey et al., 1995; Allen and Cars, 2001; Veldboer et al., 2002 and García et al., 2012 (this volume).

² A substantial number of European comparative research projects has been carried out within the European Framework programmes (FP4, FP5, FP6 and FP7). Examples are URBEX, BETWIXT, MIGRINF, SOCOHO, ENGIME, LOCALMULTIDEM and KATARSIS.