

A pragmatic approach to integration

December 2017

Naomi Magnus

Introduction

This report focuses its attention on the topic of integration. For this purpose, integration is defined as “the process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups”¹. Rather than viewing integration through an ideological lens, this report takes a more pragmatic approach. It focuses on the need for greater social integration in order to improve relations between migrant and host communities, and to ensure everyone respects and upholds a core set of British values, such as pluralism and tolerance. This is especially important given growing tensions around immigration and the government’s current focus on reducing immigration to the tens of thousands. In this context, it is important to focus on what policy changes can be made to help ease some of these tensions, which are often linked to anxieties about social integration between migrant and host communities. In fact, measures to promote social integration are likely to be far simpler than the measures needed to drastically cut immigration figures. The bulk of this report therefore focuses on successful (and unsuccessful) approaches to integration policy, using these as a springboard from which to make concrete policy recommendations.

The picture so far

Integration forms an important part of wider debates on immigration and social cohesion. Integration is distinct from assimilation, a process by which immigrants become indistinguishable from the host society in which they live, absorbing and fully conforming to their norms, cultural practices and lifestyle. In contrast, integration involves mutual processes of give and take between newcomers and the host community, with both shouldering responsibility. As such, “rather than hindering the UK’s multicultural policy, the adoption of civic integration policies may complement [it]”² - reaffirming Britain’s commitment to pluralism rather than undermining it.

Although sustained large-scale migration has created a more ethnically diverse Britain, an ethnically diverse society doesn’t necessarily mean a well-integrated one. Evidence suggests that migrant groups in Britain are often leading parallel lives from those in host communities. When measured in terms of mixing between minorities (grouped as a whole) and white Britons, segregation is worsening, with Britons becoming increasingly isolated

¹ Rinus Penninx, “Integration: The Role of Communities, Institutions, And the State” (2013). <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/integration-role-communities-institutions-and-state>

² Félix Mathieu, “The failure of state multiculturalism in the UK? An analysis of the UK’s multicultural policy for 2000–2015”. *Ethnicities* (2017): 17, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796817713040>

from minorities in urban areas³. Segregation in terms of racial groups is also worsening, and fewer people across all races are mixing together outside work than they were two years ago⁴. Segregation is particularly acute in several domains, including in workplaces and residential areas⁵. Educational segregation is particularly striking. While schools can help to remedy segregation, the opposite is occurring. In fact, a quarter of all state primary schools across England and forty percent of state secondary schools are “unrepresentative of the ethnic makeup of their local community to the point that they are in effect contributing to social segregation”⁶. In some cities and towns, this segregation has reached alarmingly high levels: in Leicester, for example, 89% of secondary schools are now ethnically segregated⁷.

The topic of integration has gained some attention in the policy arena since 2000. For example, the Blair and Brown Governments produced a number of strategy documents concerned with integration between 2000 and 2010. Following riots in northern English towns and cities in 2001, Blair’s Labour Government developed a community cohesion agenda led by the Cantle Report⁸. This agenda was initially concerned with established ethnic minority communities, rather than recent migrants. Nonetheless, in 2006 Blair departed from New Labour’s characteristically laid-back approach to multiculturalism by setting out the duty of immigrants to integrate into British society⁹. This agenda was further broadened in 2007 (at which point Britain was experiencing an influx of migrants from Eastern and Central Europe), when the former Commission on Integration and Cohesion published a notable report concerning integration¹⁰. In response, the government created some additional resources and guidance for local authorities and service providers. Yet initiatives and speeches were not followed through with effective or coordinated action at a local, regional or national level, in spite of an upsurge of migration from the new EU member states¹¹.

More recently, the topic of integration has been moving up the policy agenda. For one, the EU referendum highlighted many Britons’ anxieties about immigration and segregation. Two recent policy developments have further contributed. The first is the publishing of the Casey Review¹², originally commissioned in 2015 by then Prime Minister David Cameron. This provides a review of UK integration policy and has been praised as a “lengthy, evidence-based report”¹³. However, the report has also been criticised for its inattention to the role that white British ‘avoidance’ of interaction with other ethnicities and races plays in driving segregation between white Britons and ethnic minorities as a whole¹⁴, as well as for its focus being predominantly on the integration of Asian Muslim communities¹⁵. The second policy

³ Ted Cantle and Eric Kaufmann, “Is segregation on the increase in the UK?” *Open Democracy* (2016). <https://www.opendemocracy.net/wfd/ted-cantle-and-eric-kaufmann/is-segregation-on-increase-in-uk>

⁴ The Challenge, “British Integration Survey 2016” (2017) <http://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TCN-British-Integration-Study.pdf>

⁵ Anushka Asthana, “Britain becoming more segregated than 15 years ago, says race expert”, *The Guardian* (2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/23/britain-more-segregated-15-years-race-expert-riots-ted-cantle>

⁶ Richard Bell, Nick Plumb and Dr Rachel Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”, *APPG on Social Integration* (2017): 43

⁷ The Challenge, “British Integration Survey 2016”

⁸ Ted Cantle, “Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team” (2001). <http://tedcantle.co.uk/pdf/communitycohesion%20cantlereport.pdf>

⁹ Philip Johnston, “Adopt our values or stay away, says Blair” (2006). *The Telegraph*. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1536408/Adopt-our-values-or-stay-away-says-Blair.html>

¹⁰ Commission on Integration and Cohesion, “Our Shared Future” (London: 2007).

¹¹ Sunder Katwala, Jill Rutter, Avaes Mohammad and Steve Ballinger, “Integration: from national rhetoric to local reality”, *British Future* (London: 2017)

¹² Louise Casey, “The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration”, *Gov UK* (London 2016)

¹³ Eric Kaufmann, “Majority avoidance: one of the few holes in Casey’s strong report (Kaufmann)” *Integration Hub*, (2016)

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ Matthew Taylor, “Casey report criticised for focus on UK Muslim communities”, *The Guardian* (2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/dec/05/casey-report-criticised-for-focus-on-uk-muslim-communities>

development is the publishing of the APPG on Social Integration's report¹⁶. The report affirms much of the evidence provided within the Casey Review, but puts forward more concrete recommendations than those of the Casey Review. In doing so, it demonstrates a greater appreciation of the structural issues surrounding integration - including stark disadvantages for ethnic minority groups in employment, housing, education and health - as well as the societal and cultural ones¹⁷.

Sleepwalking into segregation?

Segregation in Britain is not equally dispersed. Whilst some of the most integrated areas are relatively affluent towns in the South East of England, including Amersham, Loughton and Potters Bar, several of the most segregated areas are less prosperous and clustered in the North East of England, such as Bradford in Yorkshire and Boston in Lincolnshire.¹⁸

Bradford's largest minority community is the Pakistani community, who comprised 20.4% of the city's population in 2011¹⁹. The 2001 Bradford riots, in which hundreds of Asian youths fought white extremists and police, brought the long-simmering tensions around race relations in the city to the forefront. Yet little seems to have improved since then, as white and ethnic communities in Bradford continue to grow more segregated from each other²⁰. Moreover, several Bradford wards have seen a rapid decrease in the proportion of white British residents over the last twenty years. Toller, for example, was 45.9% white British in 1991 and only 10.4% white British twenty years later²¹. Educational segregation in Bradford is also an issue, with primary school children in Bradford experiencing some of the highest levels of educational segregation in the country²².

Boston is listed as the most segregated area in England and Wales on Policy Exchange's 'Integration Index', four places above Bradford²³. Boston has the largest proportion of Eastern Europeans in the UK. 2011 census data showed that 10.6% of the town's population are from one of the 'new' EU countries, such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia or Romania²⁴. This represents a massive increase in the number of Eastern Europeans recorded as living in the town, from less than 1,500 to over 8,000 in just ten years²⁵. Many residents have been disturbed by the lack of integration that has accompanied this rapid pace of change, leading to comments that "it's supposed to be called integration but there's no integration... They don't shop in our shops and we don't shop in theirs"²⁶. Many Bostonians also feel that a lack

¹⁶ Richard Bell, Nick Plumb and Dr Rachel Marangozov, "Integration not Demonisation"

¹⁷ Gemma Catney, "Segregation and inequalities: what should we take from the Casey Review?", *Manchester Policy Blogs* (2017)

<http://blog.policy.manchester.ac.uk/posts/2017/01/segregation-and-inequalities-what-should-we-take-from-the-casey-review/>

¹⁸ Policy Exchange, "Integration Index" (2016)

<https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/integration-index.pdf>

¹⁹ City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, "Ethnicity in Bradford" (2017) <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/media/1285/201701-briefing-2011-census-ethnicity-in-bradford.pdf>

²⁰ Cattle and Kaufmann, "Is segregation on the increase in the UK?"

²¹ *ibid*

²² Integration Hub, "Education" (2017) *Integration Hub*. <http://www.integrationhub.net/module/education/>

²³ Policy Exchange, "Integration Index"

²⁴ Helen Pidd, "Census reveals rural town of Boston has most eastern European immigrants", *The Guardian* (2012)

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/dec/11/census-boston-eastern-european-immigration>

²⁵ Emily Dugan, "Migrants in Britain a decade on: They came, they worked, they stayed in Lincolnshire", *The Independent* (2014)

www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrants-in-britain-a-decade-on-they-came-they-worked-they-stayed-in-lincolnshire-9275661.html

²⁶ *ibid*

of integration is exacerbated by a lack of provision in the area, giving the impression that immigration into the town has become “overwhelming”²⁷. The anxieties surrounding the lack of integration between white British and Eastern European residents in the town were made apparent by the town’s overwhelming support for ‘Leave’ in the EU referendum, which was the highest of anywhere in the UK²⁸.

Bedford offers an interesting comparison to Bradford and Boston with regards to integration. According to the 2011 census, 28.5% of Bedford’s population are from a BME background, above the UK average²⁹. Bedford also has a sizeable Central and Eastern European population, larger than average for British regions³⁰; the largest number of residents born outside the UK in the town are from Poland³¹. Bedford has a slightly higher gross average annual wage than both, about £2,500 higher than Bradford’s and £3,000 higher than Boston’s; although this figure is still firmly below the UK average³². Bedford’s economic and ethnic demographics do differ from those of Bradford and Boston. Although Bedford is different to Bradford and Boston in these senses, the town still offers some important lessons about tailoring integration policies at a local level, which can be applied to other areas.

Schools and leisure centres in Bedford have illustrated that small adaptations to existing provisions at a local level can markedly improve the integration of minority ethnic and foreign national communities. For example, one school in Bedford which had a large number of students for whom English was an additional language replaced parents’ evenings with day-long ‘independent learning days’. By removing typical barriers to parents’ engagement with teachers, this modification led to a dramatic increase in parents’ attendance at such events³³. These sorts of provisions contribute to integration through the establishment of ‘weak-ties’ between different ethnic groups, where people make acquaintances with whom they interact in a light way. This approach is likely to be successful in places where a lack of integration stems primarily from a lack of social interaction, as in Bradford.

Bedford’s approach to integration also shows the importance of a strong and viable community sector, in which stakeholders actively support the council’s diversity strategy, and local community projects help to supplement grants and funding where local authority provision falls short³⁴. This is reflected by the work of local groups such as the ‘Faith community group’, which has built links between local Muslim, Sikh and Christian communities and liaises with local schools. Lastly, Bedford’s emphasis on promoting integration through local initiatives shows the importance of a devolved approach. This means tailoring integration policy at a local and regional level, and local groups working alongside local government.

²⁷ Richard Bell, Nick Plumb and Dr Rachel Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 39

²⁸ Daniel Dunford and Ashley Kirk, “Revealed: The most eurosceptic and europhilic areas in the UK”, *The Telegraph* (2016) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/24/revealed-the-most-eurosceptic-and-europhilic-areas-in-the-uk/>

²⁹ Bedford Borough Council, “Statistics and Census Information” (2017).

https://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census.aspx

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ Local Stats, “Bedford Census Demographics United Kingdom” (2017) <http://localstats.co.uk/census-demographics/england/east-of-england/bedford>

³² James Ball, “Wages throughout the country: how does your area compare?” (2011) *The Guardian* <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/nov/24/wages-britain-ashe-mapped>

³³ Chris Murray, “Come Together: Lessons from Bedford On Reaching Out To Britain’s Most Isolated Minorities”, *IPPR* (2017)

³⁴ *ibid*

Lessons from our European neighbours

Several of Britain's European neighbours provide broader lessons about successful integration policies. The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) is an independent review of 38 states' integration policies, mainly comprised of OECD states. It is led by the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB), and the Migration Policy Group (MPG). In the 2015 Index, the UK is ranked as 15th, having fallen 6 places since 2010³⁵. This is mainly the result of changes to the UK's family reunion policies, which have made family reunion far more difficult, alongside the UK stopping its weak targeted measures for labour market integration at a time when most North European nations were strengthening theirs³⁶. The Index also highlights that the UK's overall targeted integration efforts have been weakened under austerity³⁷, as funding for provisions such as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) has been dramatically cut.

Sweden, meanwhile, tops the 2015 MIPEX³⁸. Sweden has been a country of net migration since the 1950s, and the Swedish public have generally positive attitudes to immigration (as do Brits, beyond debates over net migration)³⁹. Sweden sets a precedent with its labour market integration and targeted education policies. In Sweden, general access to the labour market is favourable for migrants. Moreover, migrants have access to general and targeted support; for example, study grants are available for migrants who are working or looking after children⁴⁰. Overall, there is a strong focus on helping new migrants to learn Swedish and assisting them into employment, for example through vocational training and subsidised work-placement programmes. This promotes integration through helping migrants into employment. Sweden's educational policies also help to foster integration between migrant and host communities⁴¹. Schools and municipalities have the responsibility to assist new migrants, including through providing extra academic support where needed, and to guarantee them high-quality access to learning Swedish as a second language. Immigrant pupils also benefit from rights and measures to learn about their own culture and native language, and to appreciate wider cultural diversity (ibid). These measures provide useful examples of 'best practice' which the UK can learn from in developing its own integration policies.

Portugal, ranked second on the 2015 MIPEX⁴², has a GDP per capita that is about half of Sweden's⁴³, and its government is less politically progressive. Despite this, Portugal has similarly impressive labour market integration policies⁴⁴. The government has continued to invest in active labour programmes, which have positively impacted integration. Migrants benefit from targeted support to pursue jobs, training and recognition procedures, and expanded targeted employment programmes. Portugal has also set a precedent with its 'one-stop-shop' model, which has been replicated across Europe. These 'one-stop-shops' bring together services from relevant institutes and offices, e.g. for legal advice, housing,

³⁵ Thomas Huddleston, Ozge Bilgili, Anne-Linde Joki and Zvezda Vankova, "Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015" (2015) <http://www.mipex.eu/>

³⁶ ibid

³⁷ ibid

³⁸ ibid

³⁹ ibid

⁴⁰ ibid

⁴¹ ibid

⁴² ibid

⁴³ CIA World Factbook, "Sweden" (2017) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sw.html> and CIA World Factbook, "Portugal" (2017) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/po.html>

⁴⁴ Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki and Vankova, "Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015"

qualifications and labour market integration, and are part of a wider network of local centres for integration support⁴⁵. Portugal's successful policies show that it is not just the wealthiest and politically progressive European states which can adopt such policies. Its labour market integration policies provide an important template for a British national integration strategy.

Germany has similar per capita levels of immigration to the UK⁴⁶, yet it is ranked five places higher on the 2015 MIPEX⁴⁷. Immigrants to Germany benefit from a particularly wide range of targeted employment support, which encourages labour market integration⁴⁸. Germany has a 'National Action Plan on Integration' (NAPI), which has set out a framework for local involvement, with integration plans drawn up at the local and regional levels⁴⁹.

Several German municipalities have therefore formulated their own integration strategies, including Berlin. Berlin's coordinated integration strategy "envisions integration as a bilateral process in which immigrant organisations play a key bridging function between immigrant minorities and the host society"⁵⁰. This provides a useful template of how a UK national integration strategy could be formulated with a focus on developing coordinated strategies at a local and regional level, involving local government and other relevant stakeholders. Germany also places a strong emphasis on German language acquisition and labour market participation, as reflected by national initiatives such as job-specific language training⁵¹. Benefits for migrants granted residence rights are also tied to actively seeking employment and learning German⁵². This emphasis on language acquisition is an approach which the UK could do well to learn from, especially since learning English is integral to integration in Britain⁵³.

Policy Recommendations

1. Implementing a national integration strategy with a 'devolved' approach at its core

This report has already drawn attention to the importance of tailoring integration efforts to the local and regional levels. A single government strategy (pursued at a national level) to facilitate the integration of immigrants into British society and improve community cohesion is unlikely to be effective. This is because it will not reflect the extent to which integration challenges vary on a geographic basis. This is something which has been consistently flagged up by successive pieces of research even since the Cantle Report, yet this still hasn't been led to tangible and concrete government action. Although each local council tends to have its own approach to community cohesion, this certainly falls short of a national integration strategy which involves devolving power to regional and local government.

⁴⁵ Eurofound, "Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals" (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015)

⁴⁶ Wikipedia, "List of countries by net migration rate" (2017)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_net_migration_rate

⁴⁷ Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki and Vankova, "Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015"

⁴⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹ Eurofound, "Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals"

⁵⁰ Els de Graauw & Floris Vermeulen, "Cities and the politics of immigrant integration: a comparison of Berlin, Amsterdam, New York City, and San Francisco" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42:6 (2016): 994
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1126089>

⁵¹ Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki and Vankova, "Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015"

⁵² Thorsten Severin and Holger Hansen, "Learn German or lose benefits, Berlin tells migrants in new law" *Reuters* (2016)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-security/learn-german-or-lose-benefits-berlin-tells-migrants-in-new-law-idUSKCN0XB02S>

⁵³ Sarah Spencer, "Integration", *Migration Observatory* (2011)

The first recommendation of this report is, therefore, that the government develop such a national integration strategy. This strategy would devolve power to local and regional government, for example the newly elected metropolitan mayors and the Mayor of London. They would then be responsible for tailoring and implementing policies to promote integration at the local and regional levels. This would also involve a collaborative approach between local government and relevant local stakeholders, such as community faith groups and charitable organisations. As social integration is connected to immigration, substantive immigration policy powers should also be devolved to the constituent nations and regions of the UK, in turn “creating a regionally-led immigration system and placing a statutory duty on all local authorities to promote the integration of immigrants”⁵⁴. As part of this devolved approach to integration, new roles should also be created, including a ‘deputy mayor for integration’ in each metropolitan region. Each deputy mayor would “add support to the [metro] mayor’s role as a public champion of integration, and lead an Office for Integration and Citizenship to help catalyse action”⁵⁵.

The necessity of a devolved approach to integration is illustrated by the widely different integration challenges which affect Bradford and Boston. In Bradford, there is insufficient social and geographic integration between the white British and South Asian (predominantly Pakistani) communities, where many of the latter group have long-standing roots. In Boston, the town has experienced a rapid influx of Eastern European migrants since 2004 and an extraordinary ‘churn rate’, as many of these migrants only stay for a short period of time before moving on. This has led to massive social divisions between the white British and Eastern European communities. The different challenges which each of these places face undoubtedly requires different approaches to promoting integration. In Boston, “strengthening the regulation of local housing and labour markets or investing in the increased provision of public services”⁵⁶ is likely to help to alleviate the resentment from some British residents of Boston towards Eastern Europeans, through increasing provision of jobs and public services. In contrast, the pronounced patterns of social segregation in Bradford requires measures which are more distinctly “aimed at boosting social mixing and fostering a cross-community dialogue”⁵⁷.

The same is true at a regional level. The issues impacting integration in the West Midlands are different from those impacting integration in, for example, Greater Manchester, and a national integration strategy ought to reflect that. This devolved approach has been pursued by other European states, including Sweden and Germany. In Sweden, municipalities are responsible for overseeing the educational policies aimed at fostering integration⁵⁸, while in Germany, strategic integration plans are drawn up at both the regional and local levels, with municipalities and cities creating their own strategies⁵⁹. In several European countries, a devolved approach to integration is coupled with the use of welcome centres or ‘one-stop-shops’⁶⁰. The UK should replicate this model, providing welcome centres in local areas with typically high numbers of new immigrants. These would encourage the integration of new migrants from the earliest possible point, by informing them of their rights and duties, and

⁵⁴ Bell, Plumb and Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 5

⁵⁵ Katwala, Rutter, Mohammad and Ballinger, “Integration: from national rhetoric to local reality”: 4

⁵⁶ Bell, Plumb and Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 40

⁵⁷ *ibid*

⁵⁸ Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki and Vankova, “Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015”

⁵⁹ Eurofound, “Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals”

⁶⁰ Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki and Vankova, “Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015”

offering them “joined-up access to public services, language classes and cultural orientation initiatives”⁶¹.

2. Addressing the role of education and housing

Although a national integration strategy should take a devolved approach, there are still several areas which the government should focus upon in general. Two of these areas are improving education and housing, with the intention of fostering integration. In many parts of Britain, residential areas are deeply divided along ethnic lines. Meanwhile many schools are unrepresentative of the ethnic makeup of their local community and are therefore exacerbating social segregation⁶². Yet schools have the potential to help alleviate residential segregation. If this is to be done, educational policy interventions must be pursued which are aimed at “shaping the social infrastructure of our communities so as to encourage social mixing between immigrant and host communities”⁶³. This requires the government to work “with schools’ providers and local communities to promote more integrated schools and opportunities for pupils to mix with others from different backgrounds”⁶⁴, for example through “reforming practice within education authorities, academy chains and schools”⁶⁵.

A national integration strategy must also address those housing issues which contribute to social segregation patterns. This is one of the main drivers of segregation in Boston, for example. Despite the low local rates of pay, the town has the highest rents in the East Midlands. This is largely driven by young and single migrant workers who find short-term employment and so only stay in the town for short periods of time. These workers often live alongside several house/flatmates, exceeding the normal residency of the properties they live in. Moreover, since some landlords only let the migrants renting these properties access them at certain times of day, this has led to some Bostonians complaining about them hanging around (often drinking) on the street during the day⁶⁶. This has deepened social segregation, not least by making many of the British residents feel resentful about being ‘priced out’ of the town by newcomers. Since rogue landlords are clearly exploiting new Eastern European migrants to Boston, it seems apparent that a national integration strategy must include measures to more effectively regulate the housing market; although the exact content and implementation of these measures should be largely decided by local government. At a local level, such measures would involve local councils working alongside other local organisations, such as housing associations, to provide information and assistance to migrants and other members of the community. Such collaboration could also enable the adoption of measures such as example a selective landlord licensing scheme, specific to local areas⁶⁷.

3. Improving labour market integration policies

Labour market integration should be another area which a national integration strategy pays particular attention to. This should be combined with a devolved approach, to allow a focus on policy that meets the particular context. In Boston, for example, policymakers should start by taking action to increase economic opportunity for long-time residents. They must also act

⁶¹ Bell, Plumb and Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 47

⁶² Integration Hub, “Education”

⁶³ Bell, Plumb and Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 43

⁶⁴ Casey, “The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration”: 17

⁶⁵ *ibid*

⁶⁶ Bell, Plumb and Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 39

⁶⁷ Murray, “Come Together: Lessons from Bedford on Reaching out to Britain’s Most Isolated Minorities”: 5

to “regulate the labour market so as to stamp out exploitation and reassure residents that they are not being undercut by immigrant workers”⁶⁸. In contrast, in Bradford, where only 65% of the working age population are employed⁶⁹, measures to improve the labour market opportunities of the Pakistani Asian community are of particular importance in fostering social integration. This means tackling the cultural and social barriers to employment in this community which disproportionately affect women. It also means tackling the broader structural barriers which many young Muslims face with regards to employment, through targeted measures such as establishing “mentoring and other support programmes for young (school-aged) Muslims”⁷⁰.

Between 2010 and 2014, the government weakened its targeted labour market integration policies, for example by cutting funding for the Adult Skills Budget. During this time, many other European states were ramping up these policies. For example, Germany created a coordinated network which aims to help adult migrants integrate into the labour market: the IQ Network. This network involves stakeholders at various levels of government, with consistent coordination between these levels. This enables diversity in coordination instruments at a regional level, and migrants’ organisations and NGOs are able to coordinate sub-regional networks, with possible partners including trade unions, municipalities, universities, employment agencies, charity organisations and more⁷¹. The IQ Network, which has been rolled out in a series of phases, has created “68 counselling centres helping 14,700 people from 145 countries of origin, two-thirds of who[m] were women”⁷². A British national integration strategy should combine measures to improve labour market integration with a devolved approach to the formulation and implementation of these policies, as is the case in Germany.

4. Increasing English language provision

Research has shown that learning English is strongly connected to labour market outcomes and is integral to the integration of migrants into British Society⁷³. This is reflected by the lack of integration in areas with proportionally high numbers of people who cannot speak English; for example, in Bradford, where, whilst “most people speak good English... for others poor English limits their ability to integrate”⁷⁴. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of Brits believe that someone must speak English in order to be considered British⁷⁵. It is therefore integral to social integration everyone who lives in this country for a significant period of time should be able to speak English. As a result, a national integration strategy must be underpinned by a government commitment to ensure that everyone has access to suitable English language provision, with an emphasis on the role of local government in providing this. Although attendance of ESOL classes shouldn’t necessarily be made compulsory, the government could replicate Germany’s approach, where the provision of certain benefits is tied to attending language courses; though this would undoubtedly require sufficient funding in place for those who may struggle to afford such classes.

⁶⁸ *ibid*: 41

⁶⁹ uSwitch, “Bradford ranks 1st worst places to live 2015” (2015) <https://www.uswitch.com/place-to-live/bradford/>

⁷⁰ Jacqueline Stevenson, Sean Demack, Bernie Stiehl, Muna Abdi, Lisa Clarkson, Farhana Ghaffar and Shaima Hassan: “The Social Mobility Challenges Faced by Young Muslims” *Social Mobility Commission* (2017): 61

⁷¹ Eurofound, “Challenges of policy coordination for third-country nationals”

⁷² *ibid*: 35

⁷³ Spencer, “Integration”

⁷⁴ Camilla Turner, “Legislation is needed to stop one ethnicity taking over a school, says Bradford superhead”, *The Telegraph* (2017) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/07/18/legislation-needed-stop-one-ethnicity-taking-school-says-bradford/>

⁷⁵ NatCen, “Being British Today” (2014)

If the government are to seriously commit to ensuring everyone is able to learn English, they will have to make a series of policy changes, add provision to existing programmes and provide additional funding. This means that the government must provide sufficient “funding for community-based classes and appropriate prioritisation of adult skills budgets”⁷⁶. Moreover, as the APPG for social integration’s report argued, the ability to learn English should be viewed as a right extended to all new migrants. As such, “the government should introduce a requirement that immigrants arriving in the UK without the ability to speak the language should be enrolled on [sic] ESOL classes”⁷⁷, which should also “provide new arrivals with an understanding of national and local customs”⁷⁸. In Sweden, language training is the responsibility of the municipality and is a mandatory requirement for all immigrants who are signed up to complete an ‘introduction plan’, which entitles new arrivals to benefits such as housing support⁷⁹. In Germany, migrants from outside the EU must also take part in an integration course which involves language training and cultural orientation, the attendance of which is monitored by regional immigration authorities⁸⁰. The German government heavily subsidises tuition and those in receipt of welfare payments can apply for exemptions. A UK integration strategy should therefore entail not only an increase in ESOL provision, but also the creation of a statutory duty on local authorities to coordinate ESOL provision in their areas.

Improving English language provision should also involve a focus on labour market integration. British Future are right to assert that the responsibility for migrants learning English does not just fall upon the government⁸¹. Employers should also be actively involved, especially since they are likely to benefit from increased English language provision. The government can encourage employers’ involvement by offering financial incentives for the provision of in-work ESOL programmes⁸². This has been the sort of approach pursued in Sweden, where policymakers have worked alongside trade unions and employers to develop workplace-based language mentoring. Participants are provided with skills and language training tailored to their professional background, often whilst they complete a work placement or work part-time. A national integration strategy should replicate this approach, tying in labour market integration policies with language acquisition and involving businesses and trade unions.

In order to fund the necessary increase in provision and ensure that those on low incomes are able to access English language classes, the government should consider pursuing a ‘student-loan’ type system, where repayment is contingent on earning above a certain income threshold⁸³. This could be accompanied by initial lessons being free, so that those without English are more encouraged to start attending the classes. The government should also consider using the Social Impact Bond model of financing, which is the model of funding used by the government’s £80m Life Chances Fund. Social impact bonds make returns conditional on achieving good results. In this scenario, good results would be an increasing number of migrants displaying English language proficiency, with returns conditional on this increase being by a certain percentage or figure. Moreover, the government could ensure

⁷⁶ Casey, “The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration”: 17

⁷⁷ Richard Bell, Nick Plumb and Dr Rachel Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 18

⁷⁸ *ibid*

⁷⁹ *ibid*: 68

⁸⁰ *ibid*

⁸¹ Katwala, Rutter, Mohammad and Ballinger, “Integration: from national rhetoric to local reality”

⁸² Richard Bell, Nick Plumb and Dr Rachel Marangozov, “Integration not Demonisation”: 18

⁸³ *ibid*

that a section of the Life Chances Fund - which is focused on helping children and young people - is granted to charitable organisations helping to improve the provision of English teaching for children and young people.

Conclusion

This report has highlighted the need to improve integration in the UK. For too long, there has been too little in the way of effective policy solutions aimed at improving integration. This is evident from the worsening rates of segregation between ethnic minorities and white Britons in many parts of Britain. Bradford and Boston provide two illustrations of this, but they also show that the issues concerning integration are diverse, often varying on a regional or local basis. In contrast, Bedford provides a useful set of lessons on targeting integration policy at a local level.

At a wider level, there is much that the government can learn from the approaches to integration of other European states, including Sweden, Portugal and Germany. Each of these states' approaches to integration provides useful lessons about which measures are effective, helping to inform a potential UK national integration strategy. At the heart of this national strategy should be a focus on devolving power, reflecting the way in which the precise issues affecting integration tend to vary from place to place. A national integration strategy must reflect this, through devolving power to local and regional government, including substantive power over immigration policy. Local government must also be actively encouraged to collaborate with other relevant local stakeholders, including housing associations, schools and community action groups.

There are several areas of focus which this national integration strategy should pay particular attention to, including housing and education. These are often two of the major realms in which segregation manifests, and two of the biggest drivers of social segregation patterns. However, it is important that this broader focus on housing and education is still combined with a devolved approach to tailoring and implementing integration policy. Labour market integration must be another key focus of this national strategy, since this is often an integral part of wider social integration. Again, this must be tailored and implemented with a focus on the local and regional levels, in order to reflect the different labour market issues impacting integration in different areas.

Finally, a national integration strategy must include a government commitment to ensuring that all migrants are able to learn English. This must be underpinned by increased ESOL provision first and foremost, and a statutory duty should be created on local authorities to coordinate ESOL provision in their areas. This focus on learning English should also be tied to a focus on improving labour market integration; businesses, trade unions and other relevant actors should be involved, and the government should offer financial incentives for those employers providing in-work ESOL programmes. This is likely to be the costliest policy recommendation. Nevertheless, there are a range of possible tools the government could use to finance this, including a 'student-loan' style system where ESOL learners pay back their loan once they reach a certain income threshold.

This report has emphasised the necessity of taking active steps to improve social integration, as a two-way process, between migrants and host communities. For too long,

too little has been done by successive governments to actively foster social integration. If social integration and community cohesion is to be improved, more must be done. This report has strived to outline what exactly that 'more' is.



55 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL

T: 020 7799 6677

E: info@civitas.org.uk

Civitas: Institute for the Study of Civil Society is an independent think tank which seeks to facilitate informed public debate. We search for solutions to social and economic problems unconstrained by the short-term priorities of political parties or conventional wisdom. As an educational charity, we also offer supplementary schooling to help children reach their full potential and we provide teaching materials and speakers for schools.

Civitas is a registered charity (no. 1085494) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales (no. 04023541).