article

Managing superdiversity? Examining the intercultural policy turn in Europe

Leila Hadj Abdou, leila.hadj-abdou@univie.ac.at
University of Vienna, Austria

Andrew Geddes, a.geddes@sheffield.ac.uk
University of Sheffield, UK

This article combines a theoretical discussion of interculturalism with an analysis of intercultural policy programmes in European cities (Barcelona, Dublin, Vienna). It contributes in two ways to scholarship on superdiversity and migrant integration: first, by reflecting upon the potential of intercultural policies to respond to superdiverse societies. Second, by engaging with the dominant idea driving the adoption of intercultural policies in Europe: the idea that (super)diversity has to be harnessed for economic ends. The article indicates the need to take the dynamics of the political economy, and issues of inequality more into account in scholarly debates about immigrant integration and superdiversity.

key words political economy • cities • immigrant integration • urban governance

Introduction

This article critically assesses an 'intercultural policy turn' evident in many European cities. It identifies the drivers of this turn and asks whether an intercultural policy approach to immigrant integration is an adequate response to the growing reality of superdiversity in urban spaces. The article is in conversation with the rich scholarship on immigrant integration in Europe in the political and social sciences (for example, Martiniello and Rath, 2010; Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx, 2016).

Integration is about 'imagining what the state can actively do to "nationalize" newcomers and re-constitute the nation-state under conditions of growing cultural diversity' as Favell (2010, 376–7) has poignantly pointed out. This cultural diversity has become an increasing phenomenon (Faist, 2009) which policymakers in Europe have struggled to come to terms with.

The growing diversification of society is particularly evident in cities: places where international migrants mostly settle. An increasing number of cities are not only ethno-culturally diverse, but they have become superdiverse spaces and home to people who vary not only as with regards to their ethnic, national, religious and linguistic backgrounds, but also with relation to age, gender, migration status, as well as varying degrees of transnational ties (Vertovec, 2007), resulting in a complex

composition of society. Population groups are not only different from each other but also exhibit significant internal diversity.

Given that cities are the 'cradles' of diversity, rising diversification has not only posed a challenge to national governance actors but has also drawn the attention of local policy makers. It has often been city governments, who have taken the lead, introducing and implementing immigrant integration policies and institutions, in many cases in the absence of national guidelines or policies.

Particularly since the 2000s, we have seen the adoption of an 'intercultural' policy approach to immigrant integration by European cities. This intercultural policy turn was reinforced by a recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to adopt an 'intercultural approach to integration and diversity management, to foster this approach at the local and regional level, and to take it into consideration when revising and further developing national migrant integration policies' (Council of Europe, 2015c).

This article will explore what this intercultural turn implies in relation to the phenomenon of urban superdiversity. It asks whether the intercultural policy approach has the ability to take into account not only the rising diversity of the city populations but also the diversity within this existing diversity. Moreover, this article aims to understand what the intercultural policy turn means for socio-economic inequalities. Inequality is constitutive of superdiverse spaces, but is rarely addressed in (scholarly) debates (Back, 2015). While superdiversity is often viewed as an enriching feature of urban societies, its rise is also indicative of socio-economic inequalities. Superdiversity is more than a mere societal or demographic fact that is often (although not solely) linked to international migration. It is the blending of different ways of life, practices, identities and experiences but it is also the myriad of intersecting social categories, such as 'illegal/legal alien' and third country national. These categories are (re)produced in the interactions between discourse, policy and everyday practices, and determine the access to rights and entitlements which in turn shape the socio-economic opportunities of individuals (compare Carmel, 2013, 242; Boucher, 2014). As such, immigration policies play a key role in the production of superdiversity. How governance actors respond to their diverse population once they are settled through immigrant integration measures can further entrench or alleviate social and economic inequalities.

In order to address the question of whether an intercultural policy approach can adequately respond to superdiverse societies, we will discuss the different theoretical strands of interculturalism that immigrant integration policies are based upon, outlining their underlying premises and concepts.

To assess the implications of this policy approach in terms of inequality, we will reconstruct the drivers of the intercultural policy turn in Europe and identify the dominant ideas that triggered the spread of this approach. We will look at the Intercultural Cities programme by the European Commission and the Council of Europe as well as at immigrant integration policy documents of three different European capital cities: Barcelona, Dublin and Vienna to reveal the major drivers of the intercultural policy turn. These three selected cities differ significantly from each other regarding their international position, national contexts and immigrant demography as well as their immigration history, but all follow an intercultural policy approach.

By examining the intercultural policy turn this article makes two contributions to debates about superdiversity.

- One of the major claims of Vertovec's seminal article (2007) on superdiversity is the need to rethink policies dealing with immigrant communities. By examining the potential of the intercultural policy approach to address the phenomenon of superdiversity the article first aims to support these reflections.
- Second, we aim to introduce a political economy perspective to the discussion about immigrant integration policy models and the superdiversity debate. Questions of political economy and shifts in production are largely absent from analytical accounts of immigrant integration and diversity studies (compare Menz, 2013, 112; Hiebert et al, 2014, 7). These processes, however, as we will show, matter greatly if we are to understand the dynamics of stratification and socio-economic inequality that typically characterise superdiverse societies.

The article pursues the following arguments: we argue that the dominant intercultural concept of difference that has influenced the intercultural policy approach in Europe is in principle attuned to address the societal complexity of which superdiverse urban spaces are composed. Interculturalism is predicated on the idea that differences are dynamic and fluid and highlights differences within groups, which is actually very much reflective of the reality of superdiversity. Yet, at the same time, we find that the major driver of the intercultural policy turn is economic interests. Intercultural policy programmes are predominantly focused on the economic utility of migrants and their (super)diversity. Such a strong focus on the utility of migrants, we conclude, presents the danger of reproducing inequalities inherent in superdiverse societies.

The article has three major sections; in the next section we will briefly explain how we define an intercultural immigrant integration policy approach based on previous scholarship. We will show how this approach differs from other policy approaches, and describe the emergence of the intercultural policy paradigm. In the second section, we will discuss the different theoretical strands of interculturalism on which the intercultural policy model is based. In the final section we will look into the drivers of the intercultural policy approach in Europe.

Interculturalism and Immigrant integration policy types

Integration is a rather poly-semic term (compare Phillimore 2012, 526). However, as Mahnig (2001, 127) has argued, it is exactly this extensibility of this term that makes it politically successful. It allows for different and adaptable conceptions about the relationship between the societies of settlement and the immigrant population which can range from equal opportunities to assimilation. A major strand of sociological research has emphasised that integration implies the development of a sense of belonging, with some renegotiation of identity by both newcomers and the local population (Phillimore, 2012, 527).

In policy terms Alexander (2007) provides the most comprehensive typology of immigrant integration models developed so far by distinguishing between five distinct policy approaches: transient, guest worker, assimilationist, pluralist/multicultural and intercultural. Transient and guest worker policies are typical for early phases of immigration. Once immigrants are seen as a permanent feature of the society, we

can see that authorities are either demanding assimilation or are supporting the right of immigrant minorities to remain different, as in pluralist/multicultural policies (Alexander, 2007). An intercultural policy approach in turn puts a special emphasis on the need for interaction between individuals across different 'ethno-cultural communities' (Alexander, 2007, 210). An intercultural approach to immigrant integration is alert to the potential dangers that the reification of ethnic identities might hold, and to the constraints that ethnic communities may place on their individual members (Alexander, 2007). Consequently, an intercultural policy approach does also highlight differences within ethnic groups (based on gender, class etc) (Alexander, 2007). Interculturalism ideally aims to encourage and enable individual migrants to choose freely between multiple identities. This policy approach shies away from pure ethnic-specific policy measures, and particularly encourages inter-ethnic activity (Alexander, 2007, 214). While pluralist, multicultural policies would often employ affirmative policies, interculturalism would aim to minimise ethnic-based measures (Alexander, 2007, 212). Interculturalists would, for instance, grant the freedom to women to wear headscarves in schools and public places but would at the same time avoid reaffirming the status of Muslim women as a distinct group, through special legal provisions.

This typology corresponds to an ideal type, in practice the boundaries between the different approaches are certainly much more fluid. A defining feature of the intercultural approach as noted before is, however, that instead of targeting specific groups (communities) such as in multiculturalism, policies adopted in the framework of an intercultural approach aim at the entire population (compare Van Breugel et al, 2014, 4).

Scholarly debate on immigrant integration has lately tended to be caught up in a discussion over the merits of multiculturalism versus interculturalism and vice versa (Meer and Modood, 2012; Cantle, 2013). The debate basically centres on the idea that an unfit multicultural policy model has to be replaced by an intercultural one, and the opposing idea that interculturalism does not add much to the central tenets of multiculturalism (Levrau and Loobuyck, 2013, 607). We essentially share the diagnosis by Meer and Modood (2012) that much of the critique of multiculturalism is based on a misreading of multiculturalism. While acknowledging the important contributions these debates make, we take a different perspective, taking into account the fact that interculturalism has already become an increasingly relevant policy approach.

In order to understand this approach in more depth, it is useful to have a look at the concept's genealogy. This will eventually help us to understand, if, and if so to what extent, the intercultural policy is actually attuned to the superdiverse composition of today's societies.

Interculturalism emerged across Europe as a policy tool in the 1980s when the Council of Europe began to encourage policy makers to adopt an intercultural approach to immigrant integration (Caponio and Ricucci, 2015, 21). The policy approach was initially based on a rather narrow idea of intercultural dialogue rather than a more comprehensive understanding and set of policy measures (compare Caponio and Ricucci, 2015). The policy approach acquired more prominence in the wake of the Europe-wide discursive backlash against multiculturalism at the turn of the twenty-first century. Central to this backlash was the fear of (especially Muslim) sectarianism (Alexander, 2007, 210) that was reinforced in the wake of the 2004 murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in 2004, and the 2005

London terrorist bombings (Alexander, 2007). Interculturalism's increased presence in Europe is thus closely linked to a politicised debate on multiculturalism (Lewis and Craig, 2014). Notwithstanding the fact that most European governments (with the notable exception of the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden) never officially pursued multicultural policies, multiculturalism was somewhat paradoxically blamed for the perceived failure of immigrant integration. Multiculturalism was held responsible for causing separation and the ghettoisation of migrant communities. This diagnosis promoted the idea that more contact between different groups is needed, which became a key component of the intercultural policy paradigm. By playing the 'multiculturalism-failure card' it was also possible, though, to ignore questions of inequality, discrimination and oppression (Lewis and Craig, 2014, 23). With multiculturalism's failure established as a 'widely recited truth' – an argument repeated so often that it is seen as true (Lentin and Titley, 2011) – national governments were able to use it to legitimise the restriction of further immigration. Integration rhetoric, thus, became part of the repertoire of immigration control.

At the level of immigrant integration itself, however, we can actually see in many aspects a continuation of multicultural policies across Europe, despite a 'rhetorical trope' of the failure of multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2016, 159). This rhetorical strategy can be understood as a conscious – although as electoral trends suggest largely unsuccessful – attempt by policy makers to undercut the increasing support for populist, anti-immigrant opposition parties in Europe (compare Kymlicka, 2016, 163). By employing this strategy policy makers aimed to establish a narrative that underlined 'don't take your frustration [out] on minorities; your objection is not to diversity, which is a good thing, but to the extreme multiculturalist ideology, that we have now safely put behind us' (Kymlicka, 2016, 163). While multicultural policies often continued to be implemented in practice, this (discursive) contestation of multiculturalism also enabled the establishment of the intercultural policy approach.

In sum, the spread of intercultural policies in Europe was strongly related to the growing perspectives that: a) previous policies have put too little emphasis on one crucial point, namely that interaction between people from different backgrounds matters in order to strengthen social cohesion; and, b), that it is potentially problematic to categorise people first and foremost through an ethnic and cultural lens, assuming that these backgrounds tend to be stable and that they generally predetermine people's behaviours and beliefs (compare Zapata-Barrero, 2015, 4–5). These are two of the fundamental premises upon which an intercultural policy rests. Interculturalism as a policy approach, thus, was born from and propelled by a critique of multicultural policy approaches and is seen by its proponents as more than a re-labelling of existing terminology associated with multiculturalism.

The intercultural concept, upon which intercultural policies are built, emphasises both the necessity of and potential for interpersonal exchange and encounters to create cohesion and a sense of community as opposed to co-existence. It is based on the assumption of commonality rather than difference, and in that sense seeks to foster interaction based on shared commonalities (Zapata-Barrero, 2016, 157).

For interculturalism, identity is dynamic and fluid. It highlights differences within groups, and consequently focuses on individual practices and preferences rather than fixed and ascribed group identities. This perspective is based on the idea that people are not determined by a single culture, language or ethnicity, as well as the normative claim that people should be free to decide their cultural practices, and their religion

and so on, regardless of the circumstances into which they were born (Zapata–Barrero, 2016, 158). Intercultural policies consequently aim to encourage and enable people to choose freely between multiple identities and to live their overlapping identities, as proponents of interculturalism stress (Alexander, 2007, 210).

The fact that an intercultural policy is (theoretically) based upon a de-essentialist conception of culture and identity makes it attuned to the reality of superdiversity, which is characterised by hybrid identities and backgrounds. However, in focusing on individual choice and individual people, rather than groups, interculturalism also risks overlooking processes of 'othering' and 'racialisation'. Asserting that identity is 'no longer fixed and ascribed and is increasingly dynamic and chosen' as proponents of interculturalism such as Cantle (2015, 83) have done, overestimates the agency of individuals and potentially downplays constraining dynamics and institutionalised structures that are inherent to processes of 'othering', and which are the basis of persistent inequalities in (superdiverse) societies. This undue focus on agency is in turn a result of the evolution of the intercultural concept, that is, its development in opposition to multiculturalism.

Different conceptual strands of interculturalism

While the intercultural policy approach and the concept it is based upon has some fundamental characteristics, which we have outlined above, it would be misleading to conclude that there is only one strand of interculturalism. Instead, it is more accurate to speak of *interculturalisms* rather than interculturalism. Zapata–Barrero (2016) was the first to provide a systematic and comprehensive description of the concept by distinguishing between three different strands of interculturalism: contractual, cohesive and constructivist.

A *contractual strand* developed in the specific context of Quebec, Canada. It is rooted in the concern of the French-speaking (minority) population to maintain its language and 'culture' in a majority English-speaking nation while being characterised by increasing immigration and diversity. In Bouchard's words (2011, 445), this type of interculturalism seeks to articulate the tensions between continuity of the foundational culture and the diversity brought in by past or recent immigration. While it concerns itself with the interests of the 'majority culture' and its desire to perpetuate and maintain itself, it does not disregard the interests of minorities and immigrants (Bouchard, 2011, 438–9). On the contrary, it aims to consolidate both aims – that is, the protection of the majority language and culture and respect for the rights of minorities and immigrants – through mutual adjustments and accommodation. Bouchard (2011) views majority cultures as foundational. He acknowledges, however, that they are not static or homogenous, but are diverse in themselves. Bouchard thus chooses to speak of two kinds of diversity: the diversity within groups and the diversity cleavage between minorities and majorities (Bouchard, 2011, 446).

Despite this acknowledgment of the fluidity and diversity of identity, this strand of interculturalism remains deeply entrenched in a minority/majority dualism that seems to accentuate differences rather than dissolving them. Ultimately, the contractual perspective appears to promote 'some sort of reconciliation between a national minority, and a diverse minority' (Zapata–Barrero, 2016, 164). Interaction is conceptualised in 'vertical terms between a founding majority culture and a diverse

culture of minority newcomers' (Zapata–Barrero, 2016), while the majority culture remains the guiding norm.

Given that it is embedded in such a majority/minority dualism, it is doubtful that this strand of interculturalism can be sensitive to the effects of superdiversity and the challenge it poses to policy makers (and scholars alike), that is, not to think and categorise people in distinct (ethno-cultural) groups.

In contrast, a *cohesive strand* is not guided by the idea of a majority norm and is thus not concerned by its preservation. Its major aim is the creation and fostering of social inclusion and community cohesion and the overcoming of segregation and societal divisions. A major contributor to this strand of interculturalism is the report into the causes of riots in northern English towns in the summer of 2000 (Cantle, 2001), which put the challenge of communities living 'separate lives' onto the UK government's political agenda.

For the cohesive strand, interculturalism aims to create relationships between people in order to tackle exclusionary processes of 'othering'. Its vision is to establish mixed communities that share common places, collaborate with each other, and learn from one another. Interaction is conceptualised in horizontal terms. It is seen as multi-dimensional and complex, without any pre-categorisations of the population (Zapata–Barrero, 2015, 10). The cohesive strand thus moves away from the contractual approach's dichotomous understanding of the population as comprising a majority norm and a diverse minority of immigrants (Zapata–Barrero, 2015).

Proponents of this strand of interculturalism explicitly refer to the reality of superdiversity, in which a governmental 'tick box approach' to identity has become increasingly inadequate (compare Cantle, 2013, 6). In this cohesive incarnation, interculturalism both reflects upon the transformation of society in an age of superdiversity and sees itself as a programme supporting that change, 'in which majority and minority cultures think of themselves as dynamic and outward looking, sharing a common objective of growing together and overcoming institutional and relational barriers in the process' (Cantle, 2013, 11).

Finally, a *constructivist strand* as Zappata–Barrero (2015) calls it, adopts a different approach to the contractual and the cohesive strands – focused primarily on the challenges associated with diversity – to look instead at the benefits that diversity brings for society and individuals alike. Here diversity is seen as a resource that must be managed positively in order to harvest its potential. Interaction is regarded as an instrument to liberate the positive potential of diversity, with development understood as resulting from the interaction of diverse people (Zapata–Barrero, 2015, 12). According to Zapata–Barrero (Zapata–Barrero, 2015) this version of interculturalism provides a subversive element, since it challenges existing societal conventions, and demands structural change to transform public space and to change institutional routines. As such he claims (Zapata–Barrero, 2015), the constructivist strand is not simply a reaction to superdiverse societies, but constitutes an active thinking-through of the positive role superdiversity does and could play in transforming societies. Transformation is not seen as a potential threat for a majority culture, as in the contractual strand, or as a potential source of societal conflict (the cohesive strand), but a desired outcome which helps to spur creation and innovation. The subversiveness proclaimed in theoretical considerations about this strand, however, might not be so subversive after all. The leitmotif of intercultural policies, which are

based on this constructivist strand is primarily one of economic utility, as we will demonstrate in the next section.

The concept–policy gap

Before turning to the discussion of this economic–utility argument, we should note that although the concept of interculturalism has spread rapidly in the past decade in policy circles, a gap prevails when it comes to concrete policy formulation. One of the major proponents of interculturalism in Europe, Cantle (2013, 15), openly admits that relatively little thought has been given to the implications of the concept in policy and practice. The problem is especially pronounced when it comes to the implementation of interculturalism.

In this vein, Caponio and Ricucci (2015) observe a broad range of degrees of commitment to intercultural policies. While some local governments in Europe do take concrete measures and utilise interculturalism as a way in which to foster social inclusion, others adopt the discourse of interculturalism while neglecting concrete policy measures (Caponio and Ricucci, 2015, 26). In some cases, therefore, interculturalism is merely used as a label. Others adopt an appreciative rhetoric of (super)diversity and interculturalism but implement only soft and piecemeal measures, such as supporting the celebration of ethnic festivities. As such, they exhibit what Caponio and Ricucci call a 'folkloric interculturalism' (Caponio and Ricucci, 2015). While cities with a longer history of immigration tend to exhibit a proactive, substantial type of interculturalism, those with a recent immigrant experience are more likely to adopt a symbolic or folkloric type of interculturalism (compare Caponio and Ricucci, 2015, 31).

In addition to underlining the varying levels of commitment to interculturalism of local governments, these developments suggest that in practice many governments continue to ignore the complexity of (super)diversity. Policies such as 'folkloric interculturalism' actually reproduce the very idea of fixed and static identities (mostly centred on ethno-cultural categories) that scholars of interculturalism and superdiversity alike have contested.

Research into the implementation of policies (Schiller, 2017) shows that even in cases where local governments have actually adopted a differentiated understanding of diversity, when it comes to implementation they maintain a rather narrowly defined target group approach, which reifies simplified categories of difference.

This indicates that the concept of superdiversity and the related ideas underlying interculturalism as a political programme 'may well overstretch the cognitive and practical capacities of policymakers and practitioners', who already struggle to come to terms with simpler concepts and categories of diversity in practical terms (Vertovec and Meissner, 2015, 552).

The drivers of interculturalism in Europe: economic utility and security

As already noted, a 'contractual' strand was evident in Canada while in Europe intercultural policy approaches have comprised 'cohesive' and 'constructivist' components. The European intercultural turn is driven by a sense of diversity as a potential source of social conflict (a view embodied in the cohesive strand of

interculturalism) and by the constructivist idea that migrants are beneficial to the economy. As we show in the following, interculturalism can be understood as primarily utilitarian, addressing economic interests as well as security concerns. In this sense, interculturalism serves as a solution to the conflict between economic interests and public resistance to migration. To put it differently, interculturalism aims to address a core issue of immigrant societies: the disjuncture between economic and political interests that Hollifield (1992) has pointedly framed as the 'liberal paradox' of open markets and closed political communities. This utilitarian perspective, in turn, has implications for the inequality dimension of superdiversity.

The strong presence of 'cohesive' and 'constructivist' elements becomes clear, when we look at the Intercultural Cities programme. Intercultural Cities is a joint programme by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. The programme was initiated in 2008 and is a key tool for the diffusion of intercultural ideas (Council of Europe, 2008, 2015a). It emerged from three developments: the Council of Europe's White Paper on intercultural dialogue adopted in 2008; the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue; and the policy solutions for urban development produced by the British think-tank Comedia (Council of Europe, 2009, 19–20).

The intercultural city is defined according to the programme as follows:

> The intercultural city has a diverse population including people with different nationalities, origins, languages or religions/beliefs. Most citizens regard *diversity as a resource, not as a problem, and accept that all cultures change as they encounter each other in the public space.* The city officials publicly advocate respect for diversity and a pluralistic city identity. The city actively combats prejudice and discrimination and ensures equal opportunities for all by adapting its governance structures, institutions and services to the needs of a diverse population, without compromising the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In partnership with business, civil society and public service professionals, the intercultural city develops a range of policies and actions to encourage greater *mixing and interaction* between diverse groups. *The high level of trust and social cohesion help to prevent conflicts and violence*, increase policy effectiveness and *make the city attractive for people and investors alike* (Council of Europe, 2009, emphasis the authors).

On the one hand, diversity management, through intercultural policies, is thus viewed as a means to restrict the potential costs that (super)diversity may bring, that is, the possibility of conflict and disintegration (compare Council of Europe, 2009, 29). On the other hand, interculturalism is seen as a tool to unleash the so-called 'diversity advantage' which, properly managed, is seen to represent an opportunity for cities.

This 'diversity advantage' idea enshrined in intercultural policies has significant implications as regards the dimension of socio-economic inequality which is constitutive of superdiverse societies, and we will hence now elaborate on this concept in more depth.

Interculturalism and the diversity advantage

The diversity advantage idea is strongly related to the argument prevalent in EU policies, that today's global economy is increasingly knowledge-based, and that innovation is a key factor in competitiveness (Bodirsky, 2012, 2). Competitiveness relies on human capital capable of producing and contributing to innovation. Economies that want to be successful have to form and attract creative minds. As culture (arts, human development and lifestyles) is central to creativity, policy-makers must foster it. This includes support for creative and cultural industries, openness to immigration ('of the right kind', that is, of creative, highly skilled, immigrants) and diversity-sensitive integration of immigrants (Bodirsky, 2012). In other words, creating and maintaining a cosmopolitan flair in the city, through successful management of diversity, is seen as a crucial factor that brings competitive advantage, and, in consequence, more jobs. A strong influence on the establishment of the diversity advantage perspective in Europe has been Florida's (2004) concept of the 'creative class', that is, creative human capital that is constitutive of the creative sector. The creative class, according to Florida (2004), is attracted by places that are open to diversity and characterised by cosmopolitan flair, which nourishes their creativity.

Also influential in that regard was the book *Intercultural City* (Wood and Landry, 2008) that emphasises that culture can best flourish, and, in turn, stimulate creativity and innovation in an intercultural environment of openness and exchange. Wood and Landry (2008) therefore advocate replacing multiculturalism, which is seen as a policy that separates groups from each other, with intercultural policy measures that foster cultural mixing.

In sum, a constructivist approach to interculturalism in cities is viewed in these accounts primarily as a tool of economic revitalisation and growth. Accordingly, the Intercultural Cities programme is guided by the idea that 'one of the defining factors that will determine, over coming years, which cities flourish and which decline will be the extent to which they allow their diversity to be their asset, or their handicap' (Council of Europe, 2009, 22).

It is important to note at this point though, that the diversity advantage idea, which builds the basis of the constructivist component of the intercultural policy approach in Europe, entails two different visions as regards the role of culture. On the one hand, culture is seen as the basis for the stimulus of innovation by the creative class, that is, highly-skilled immigrants and natives who produce commercial products, consumer goods and knowledge. In this role, culture is constructed as an individual property, which becomes most productive in a stimulating environment of inter-cultural exchange. On the other hand, culture has the role of creating and maintaining this stimulating environment. While cities often cannot control migration directly, local governments are expected to work towards creating an attractive, diverse city environment, one to which the creative class wants to migrate, to live and be productive in. Those different concepts of culture, as Bodirsky (2012, 7) emphasises, refer to a particular class constellation in the knowledge economy and in the neoliberal city, where the labour of workers in the low-paid third sector is at the service of the highly-skilled employees in the knowledge and finance economy. This factor is also mirrored by the geography of the superdiverse city, which is often clustered along homogenous socio-economic class positions (Faist, 2009, 179). The existence of superdiversity consequently does not imply that segregation has vanished. On

the contrary, we witness the ongoing existence of segregation in many cities across the globe. Continuing segregation is one aspect of the socio-economic inequality dimension of superdiversity. In other words, while the diversity advantage idea is countering segregation along ethno-cultural lines it is at the same time reproducing class inequality, which is a central aspect of superdiverse societies in urban spaces.

A 'diversity advantage' in European cities

The idea that there can be a significant economic advantage for cities that promote their diversity, has gained foothold in many European cities. London is an often cited example. Successive mayors have adopted more positive and open positions on immigration in contrast to the more control-oriented approach of national government (Gidley, 2011). In 2012 when the Conservative Party suggested an annual limit on economic migration to the UK, London's Mayor at the time, Boris Johnson, urged the government to let the 'best and brightest' come to the UK (*Guardian*, 4 October 2012). When responding to coalition government proposals to 'cap' immigration and in pro-immigration statements that contradict his later role as the chief advocate of the 2016 anti-immigration Brexit campaign, Johnson (2012, 2) stated that:

> Migrants support productivity and economic growth through innovation. Contact with people from different backgrounds and experiences of alternative work practices contribute to both process and product innovation. Migrants also facilitate trade relations with their home countries, through their language skills, market awareness, network and social capital. They provide labour market flexibility and mitigate the demographic challenges of the UK.

London is a rather unsurprising example in that regard. It is, though, important to note, that this diffusion of the 'diversity advantage' idea goes well beyond 'global cities' such as London. We have selected three exemplary cities that significantly differ from each other regarding their international position, their national contexts, their immigrant demography as well as their immigration history, to illustrate the point that the 'diversity advantage' idea has been embraced by city governments across Europe and has led to a certain convergence when it comes to immigrant integration policies, that is, the adoption of intercultural policies. In the following we will refer to official integration policy documents in Barcelona, Dublin and Vienna. The intercultural policy approach in these cities is consistent with the constructivist strand of thinking that we identified earlier, but also includes strong elements of the cohesive strand.

Dublin, one of Europe's relatively recent immigrant cities, joined the Intercultural Cities programme in 2012. In 2008 Dublin city council published a policy document on immigrant integration that underlined its commitment to an intercultural policy approach and highlighted that:

> Internationalisation, and the resulting human diversity, is recognised as significant in promoting the urban quality of life needed to attract and retain workers and firms in the knowledge economy, the creation of a visitor experience that fuels the visitor economy, a potential spur to entrepreneurship

and creativity and innovation through the interaction of different cultures, intellectual frameworks, and customers revealing the potential to create wholly new products, experiences, and services out of the interaction between different peoples. (Dublin City Council, 2008, 8)

Barcelona, also a member of the Intercultural Cities programme, was one of the first European cities to adopt an intercultural policy plan in 1997 (Zapata-Barrero, 2017, 248). While initially, the policy exhibited more elements of a contractual strand, since 2010 until today, the constructivist strand, in particular the diversity advantage idea has become the central element of the city's intercultural policy (Zapata-Barrero, 2017). In its 2010 Intercultural Policy Document the city government stated:

in the context of globalization and greater interdependence at all levels the cities that are most dynamic and generate most opportunities will be those that are capable of converting the potentialities of diversity into a factor of social, economic and cultural vitality. Barcelona cannot afford to squander the potential represented by diversity in a context in which the circulation of ideas, creativity and innovation applied in all spheres becomes a true factor of attraction, dynamism and competitiveness. (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2010, 5)

In addition to this constructivist policy component, Barcelona is guided by a strong concern for social cohesion. A major element of the integration policy of the Catalan capital was the Intercultural Dialogue Programme (2008–12) promoting debates and engaging a wide range of actors in order to facilitate 'coexistence' (*convivencia*) (Zapata-Barrero, 2017, 253). Another core policy instrument of the city was its 'Intercultural Mediation Service', which was meant to provide an institutional mechanism to prevent social conflicts (Zapata-Barrero, 2017, 255). The concern of avoiding conflict and prevent ghettoisation is also essential in the intercultural approach in Dublin. A major focus of the City Council has been in organising fora of cultural exchange (Hadj-Abdou, 2014).

The adoption of an intercultural policy approach is not restricted to members of the Europe-wide Intercultural Cities programme. The diversity advantage principle has also guided the more recent integration approaches of cities with a longer history of international immigration, such as Vienna. Vienna is pursuing in many respects an intercultural policy approach (Caponio and Ricucci, 2015, 29) since the beginning of the 2000s. In 2001 the city decided to adopt a new immigrant integration policy under the label of diversity. In line with the cohesive strand of interculturalism, the introduction of the policy was legitimised as being a measure to prevent the segregation of immigrant groups. It avoids viewing immigrants and the autochthonous population as homogeneous groups, but instead stresses the diversification of society and its individual members (MA 17, 2012, 2). While the policy rejects a focus on ethnicities, its central unit is the individual (MA 17, 2012). The official philosophy of the city's integration policy, moreover, stresses the potential of a diverse society and defines diversity as a crucial factor for global economic competition. It identifies the city's policy response to its immigrants as an opportunity to brand the city as open and cosmopolitan, and thus increase the city's appeal as a business location (MA 17, 2012, 1).

These three policy examples exhibiting constructivist components of interculturalism in combination with cohesive components are by no means exhaustive but they are indicative of the increasing spread of an intercultural policy approach across Europe.

Diversity advantage and the superdiverse city

As described above, these developments have been strengthened through the Intercultural Cities programme in the 2000s, but its roots date as far back as the 1980s, and are closely related to shifts in the global economy and modes of governance. Particularly significant is the emergence of 'entrepreneurialism' in urban governance. As the power of nation states to control multinational flows of finance and capital declined, investment increasingly took the form of negotiation between international finance capital and local powers trying to maximise the attractiveness of the local site as a lure for capitalist development and increased consumption (Harvey, 1989, 5). This rise of the 'entrepreneurial city' brought a defining focus on the political economy of place – that is, the construction of urban facilities (such as industrial centres), and the amelioration of local conditions, in order to upgrade the city's image (Harvey, 1989, 7). Since then, local governments have been driven by a new priority: the city must be seen as an innovative, exciting, creative and safe place in which to invest, live, visit and consume (Harvey, 1989, 9). The entrepreneurial city, hence, includes marketing techniques and methods in their administration and governing philosophy (Kavaratzis, 2004).

At the same time economic competition, formerly played out between nation states, now more often takes place directly between cities. This growing competition, driven by increased capital mobility, has also led cities to try to establish themselves as 'brands'. Openness to diversity and immigration increasingly serves as such a brand; or to refer again to the Council of Europe, 'migrants…add a boost to…the local economy, they give a cosmopolitan brand…What is true in business can also be true for cities' (Council of Europe, 2009, 26-28).

In other words, the rise of the 'entrepreneurial city' has facilitated the re-interpretation both of diversity and its management. This has played a crucial role in the spread of interculturalism.

There is a potential benefit of this re-interpretation. It actively reflects the increasing superdiverse reality of urban spaces. Moreover, through an emphasis on the utility of migrants and the positive value of superdiversity, this value can be made manifest as part of the social imaginary of people as Vertovec (2012, 305) has underlined.

In cases, however, where policy makers are exclusively and narrowly focused on branding a city and creating an image to serve the economy, instead of taking a more comprehensive policy approach that looks for substantial change and inclusion of different groups in the fabric of the city, the danger is of reproducing inequalities. The image of a city is just one side of the coin, and often there is plenty of 'rot beneath the glitter' (Harvey, 1989, 14). A primary focus on branding puts image over substance, whereby access to rights, and economic opportunities for less privileged groups, potentially become sidelined. Key players of the intercultural turn are realising this potential pitfall of interculturalism, as is suggested by a recent publication by the Council of Europe. The publication stresses the need for 'inclusive democracy', and adds that 'embracing diversity is not a gimmick for city branding but a philosophy of governance and policy-making' (Council of Europe, 2015b). However, in order

to achieve an inclusive democracy, advocates of interculturalism have also to consider that the strong focus on the city and neighbourhood level prevalent in the intercultural approach is largely suppressing the role that the nation state plays in relation to dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. While cities have indeed increasingly become the relevant players of the global economy, the nation is certainly still relevant when it comes to the access of rights as well as the production of 'otherness'. The problem, as Kymlicka (2016, 172) has put it, is that 'rather than diagnosing the problem in terms of the deep structures of liberal–democratic nationhood as they are institutionalised in the nation-state and sedimented in state sponsored national identities, interculturalists tend to diagnose the problem as one of individual capacities and dispositions to interact across ethnic and religious lines'.

In sum, inequalities are deeply entrenched in the superdiverse city, and shape the opportunities of the bearers of 'superdiversity' in different ways and at different levels, including the national one. As emphasised above, the 'diversity advantage' image of a city strongly relies on '(super–)diverse spaces' able to create a cosmopolitan flair to attract innovative minds, as well as tourists and foreign investments. Some bearers of superdiversity, in particular those that primarily create the 'spectacle of the other' that provides cities with a cosmopolitan flair, are often confronted with high degrees of precarity at the labour market, or precarity in terms of their immigrant status. Other bearers of superdiversity, including high-skilled immigrants in the knowledge and finance economy, rely on the services of these workers in the low wage economy. These different interrelated class constellations (often accompanied by different types of migration statuses) are a central feature of superdiversity in urban knowledge economies, reproducing inequalities. Instead of focusing on erasing these inequalities, the entrepreneurial (intercultural) city proactively uses and reproduces 'the spectacle of the other' to market the city.

The question of how far policies can provide concrete guidelines to overcome inequalities, without being caught in rigid conceptions of difference, thus remains a challenge.

Conclusion

This article addressed the question of how well the intercultural policy approach to immigrant integration is suited to address the increasing reality of superdiversity, and examined the emergence and spread of this approach throughout Europe.

We have demonstrated that the Council of Europe and the EU have facilitated an intercultural policy turn across Europe. The underlying rationale of this turn is a strongly utilitarian one, which is characterised by an 'economy–security–social integration nexus'. Immigrant integration is strongly linked to facilitating migrants' utility, especially their economic contribution. Moreover, successful integration is expected to address questions of security and public order.

The dominant intercultural policy approach in Europe, as we have argued, is strongly led by the 'diversity advantage' idea, which identifies (super)diversity as a competitive advantage for European cities in an environment of globalised markets. In essence, immigrant integration policy, as is evident in the intercultural policy turn, becomes strongly related to the competitiveness of cities in relation to broader, supranational circuits of capital accumulation (Brenner, 2004, 203). In many aspects, the primary policy concern with (super)diversity is not equality but marketisation.

In sum, the implications of the intercultural turn and the ideas it promotes for superdiversity are multifaceted. The de-essentialist understanding of ethno-cultural difference inherent in the concept of interculturalism makes it well-placed to respond to the increasing demographic reality of superdiversity. Moreover, focusing on migrants' utility and the positive value of highly diverse spaces, as the intercultural policies do, has the potential to provide a sense of local identity and social cohesion. Yet, a dominant focus on utility may also inadvertently contribute to the reproduction of inequalities that are constitutive of the superdiverse city. It is hence crucial that immigrant integration policies do not lose sight of a rights-based approach, otherwise one of the greatest challenges of (super)diversity, namely social inequality, will remain unchallenged (compare Faist, 2009).

Resultantly, future research on superdiversity and immigrant integration has to further engage with issues of inequality. This article has indicated the need to take dynamics of political economy into account in research on immigrant integration and superdiversity.

Further scholarly effort has to be put into rethinking policies dealing with immigrant communities in times of increasing superdiversity (compare Scholten and Van Breugel, 2017, 13). The policy implementation gap also deserves further academic attention. Especially at the stage of implementation immigrant integration policies tend to continue to reproduce static ideas of 'us' and 'them', instead of taking into account the much more complex demographic reality of superdiversity.

References

Ajuntament de Barcelona (2010) PLA Barcelona Interculturalitat, www.bcn.cat/novaciutadania/pdf/en/PlaBCNInterculturalitatAng170510_en.pdf

Alexander, M. (2007) *Cities and labour immigration: Comparing policy responses in Amsterdam, Paris, Rome and Tel Aviv*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Back, L. (2015) Losing culture or finding superdiversity, www.discoversociety.org/2015/05/05/losing-culture-or-finding-superdiversity-2/

Bodirsky, K. (2012) Culture for competitiveness: Valuing diversity in EU-Europe and the 'creative city' of Berlin, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol 18, no 4, pp 455–73.

Bouchard, G. (2011) What is interculturalism, *McGill Law Journal*, vol 56, no 2, pp 435–68.

Boucher, A. (2014) Familialism and migrant welfare policy: Restrictions on social security provision for newly arrived immigrants, *Policy & Politics*, vol 42, no 3, pp 367–84.

Brenner, N. (2004) *New state spaces: Urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cantle, T. (2001) *Community cohesion: Report of the Independent Review Team*, London: Home Office.

Cantle, T. (2013) Interculturalism as a new narrative for the era of globalization and super diversity, in M. Barret (ed) *Interculturalism and multiculturalism: Similarities and differences*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, http://tedcantle.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/082-Interculturalism-as-a-new-narrative-for-the-era-of-globalisation-and-super-diversity-2014.pdf

Cantle, T. (2015) Implementing intercultural policies, in R. Zapata-Barrero (ed) *Interculturalism in cities*, pp 76–91, Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar .

Caponio, T. and Ricucci, R. (2015) Interculturalism: A policy instrument supporting social inclusion?, in R. Zapata-Barrero (ed) *Interculturalism in cities*, pp 20–34, Cheltenham and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar.

Carmel, E. (2013) Mobility, migration and rights in the European Union: Critical reflections on policy and practice, *Policy Studies*, vol 34, no 2, pp 238–53.

Council of Europe (2008) The intercultural city: what it is and how to make it work, Document of the Intercultural Cities Programme DGIV/Cult/IC (2008)01

Council of Europe (2009) Intercultural cities: Towards a model for intercultural integration, Strasbourg, https://rm.coe.int/16802ff5ef

Council of Europe (2015a) The Intercultural Cities Programme, http://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/home

Council of Europe (2015b) The intercultural integration approach: Cities realising the diversity advantage, https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680493cae

Council of Europe (2015c) Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on intercultural integration, https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=CM/Rec(2015)1&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864&direct=true

Dublin City Council (2008) *Towards integration: A city framework*, Dublin: Dublin City Council.

Faist, T. (2009) Diversity – a new mode of incorporation, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 32, no 1, pp 171–90 .

Favell, A. (2010) Integration nations: The nation-state and research on immigrants in Western Europe, in M. Martiniello and J. Rath (eds) *Selected studies in international migration and immigrant incorporation*, pp 371–404, Amsterdam: University Press.

Florida, R. (2004) *The rise of the creative class*, New York: Basic Books.

Garcés-Mascareñas, B. and Penninx, R. (2016) *Integration processes and policies in Europe: Contexts, levels and actors*, Cham: Springer Open.

Gidley, B. (2011) *Migrants in London: Policy challenges*, www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/policy-primers/migrants-london-policy-challenges

Guardian (2012) Boris Johnson urges ministers to let 'best and brightest' come to UK, 4 October, www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/oct/04/boris-johnson-immigration-uk-economy

Hadj-Abdou, L. (2014) Revising the immigrant integration agenda in the city: A comparison of political responses to ethno-cultural diversity in Dublin and Vienna, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol 40, no 20, pp 1875–94.

Harvey, D. (1989) From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation in urban governance in late capitalism, *Geografiska Annaler*, vol 71, no 1, pp 3–17.

Hiebert, D., Rath, J. and Vertovec, S. (2014) Urban markets and diversity: Towards a research agenda, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 38, no 1, pp 5–21.

Hollifield, J. (1992) *Immigrants, markets and states: The political economy of postwar Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, B. (2012) Response from Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, to consultation by the Migration Advisory Committee on the level of an annual limit on economic migration to the UK, Official undated letter of the Mayor of London to the Migration Advisory Committee.

Kavaratzis, M. (2004) From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands, *Place Branding*, vol 1, no 1, pp 58–73.

Kymlicka, W. (2016) Defending diversity in an era of populism: Multiculturalism and interculturalism compared, in N. Meer, T. Modood and Z. Zapata Barrero (eds) *Interculturalism and multiculturalism: Debating the dividing lines*, pp 158–77, Edinburgh: University Press.

Lentin, A. and Titley, G. (2011) *The crises of multiculturalism: Racism in a neoliberal age*, London: Zed.

Levrau, F. and Loobuyck, P. (2013) Should interculturalism replace multiculturalism? A plea for complementariness, *Ethical Perspectives*, vol 20, no 4, pp 605–30.

Lewis, H. and Craig, G. (2014) Multiculturalism is never talked about: Community cohesion and local policy contradictions in England, *Policy & Politics*, vol 42, no 1, pp 21–38.

MA 17 (2012) *2 Integrations- und Diversitätsmonitor der Stadt Wien 2009 bis 2011*, (Second integration and diversity monitor of the city of Vienna), Vienna: City of Vienna.

Mahnig, H. (2001) Die Debatte um die Eingliederung von Migranten oder was ist das Ziel von 'Integrationspolitik' in liberalen Demokratien? (The debate about the integration of migrants or what is the goal of 'integration policy' in liberal democracies?), *Swiss Political Science Review*, vol 7, no 2, pp 124–30.

Martiniello, M. and Rath, J. (2010) *Selected studies in international migration and immigrant incorporation*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Meer, N. and Modood, T. (2012) How does interculturalism contrast with multiculturalism, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol 33, no 2, pp 175–96.

Menz, G. (2013) The neoliberalized state and the growth of the migration industry, in T. Gammeltoft-Hansen and N. Nyberg Sorensen (eds) *The migration industry and the commercialization of international migration*, pp 108–27, London and New York: Routledge.

Philimore, J. (2012) Implementing integration in the UK: Lessons for integration theory, policy and practice, *Policy & Politics*, vol 40, no 4, pp 525–45.

Schiller, M. (2017) The implementation trap: The local level and diversity policies, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, vol 83, no 2, pp 267–82, doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852315590204

Scholten, P. and Van Breugel, I. (2017) Mainstreaming in response to superdiversity? The governance of migration-related diversity in France, the UK and the Netherlands, *Policy & Politics*, doi: https://doi.org/10.1332/030557317X14849132401769, 1–16

Van Breugel, I., Mann, X. and Scholten, P. (2014) Conceptualizing mainstreaming in integration governance: A literature review, *Upstream Policy Brief* 1, Rotterdam: Upstream.

Vertovec, S. (2007) Superdiversity and its implications, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 30, no 6, pp 1024–54.

Vertovec, S. (2012) Diversity and the social imaginary, *European Journal of Sociology*, vol 53, no 3, pp 287–312.

Vertovec, S. and Meissner, F. (2015) Comparing superdiversity, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 38, no 4, pp 541–55.

Wood, C. and Landry, P. (2008) *The intercultural city: Planning for diversity advantage*, London: Earthscan.

Zapata–Barrero, R. (2015) Interculturalism: Main hypothesis, theories and strands, in R. Zapata Barrero (ed) *Interculturalism in cities*, pp 3–20, Cheltenham and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar.

Zapata–Barrero, R. (2016) Exploring the foundations of the intercultural policy paradigm: A comprehensive approach, *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, vol 23, no 2, pp 155–73.

Zapata–Barrero, R. (2017) Intercultural policy and multilevel governance in Barcelona: Mainstreaming a comprehensive approach, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, vol 83, no 2, pp 247–66.