

REPORT

# BACK TO BASICS

TOWARDS A SUCCESSFUL  
AND COST-EFFECTIVE  
INTEGRATION POLICY



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last 20 years, immigration policy – determining who can *enter and stay* in the UK – has risen up the political agenda, with policy changes that affect student migration, migration for work, family migration and settlement rights. What happens to migrants *after they arrive* in the UK – integration policy – has been afforded less attention. Yet integration is crucial – for the wellbeing of individual migrants and their families, and as an important part of equipping the UK to cope with migration levels that are likely to remain high by historical standards in the medium term. The consequences of failures in integration – including unemployment, educational underachievement and social segregation – can reduce the benefits of migration to the UK, increase costs to the public purse, and fuel community tensions by exacerbating negative public perceptions about migration and migrants.

Many migrants integrate successfully – into the workplace, in educational institutions and into their new neighbourhoods. Other migrant groups are less successful, particularly in relation to their labour market experiences, and often there is considerable variation in the economic and social aspects of integration within migrant groups. Integration experiences across the UK are also varied – some communities thrive with diversity and change and welcome newcomers, while others struggle to cope.

Being in work is an important outcome of successful integration. It also drives integration, as the workplace is the most important space in which (adult) migrants meet and interact with others. At 66.4 per cent of the working age population, migrants have a slightly lower employment rate than the UK-born population, the latter standing at 71.3 per cent.<sup>1</sup> There is little evidence to suggest that these inequalities will lessen over time, as there is evidence to show that some children of migrants are under-achieving at school. New analysis of GCSE examinations highlights the very diverse educational experiences of children with a migrant background, with some groups performing better than the average in England and others significantly less well.

In early 2012, the government published *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, a strategy paper from the Department for Communities and Local Government.<sup>2</sup> While this policy paper affirmed social mobility and shared values as being preconditions of integration, it also had many omissions, in particular in relation to improving the labour market outcomes of migrants. Crucially, too, no coordinated programme of work is attached to it. Previous governments have also found it difficult to pursue effective integration policy – although the UK's record on integration is a relatively positive one, successful integration in the UK has not, in general, been a product of public policy.

While integration often happens without intervention from the state, there is a role for policy, particularly with respect to groups and communities who are at risk of being left behind. Current UK policy is failing both migrant groups with less successful integration trajectories, and communities where integration is not working; and it is not learning lessons from groups and communities where integration has been successful.

Over the last 15 years, the majority of government integration policy has focused on refugees, with much less consideration given to the experiences of other groups. Integration policy needs to give attention to all groups of migrants, in particular to short-term migrants, family migrants and irregular migrants. If integration policy is to meet

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1 Labour Force Survey data, quarter 3, 2012

2 The strategy paper covers England only, as local government is a devolved power.

3 IPPR | Back to basics: Towards a successful and cost-effective integration policy

its objectives, long-term commitment by all relevant government departments, and all political parties, is also needed.

Given the pace of recent immigration, and likely future trends, we need a new approach to integration policy. It needs to be based on a new political consensus about the aims of integration policy and about what ‘successful integration’ looks like, from the perspective of migrants and wider society. Integration policy requires clear aims and objectives, as well as an understanding of the processes and outcomes it is trying to achieve – a vision for an integrated society. Despite the sometimes polarised media and political debates about integration, there is a good deal of consensus about these questions among the UK public, including among migrants themselves, with widespread agreement that English language fluency is crucial for integration, set alongside respect for the rules and norms that govern all of us.

In order to develop *policy* at a national and local level we need a common understanding of integration that emphasises positive participation in society, but takes a broad view of what this means in practice. Integration may most simply be seen as a person or group of people **possessing the opportunities and skills needed to ensure social inclusion and long-term wellbeing**. It is both a process and an outcome.

This definition of integration may seem to be at odds with dominant public and media understandings of integration, which often focus on the outcomes of integration (or more often, the outcomes of failed integration, such as persistent residential segregation), rather than the processes by which integration occurs in practice, and which usually emphasise the social and cultural aspects of integration rather than the economic aspects. Public understanding of integration tends to centre on the view that the process comprises migrants becoming more like ‘us’. This is true, to some extent, but these shared social and cultural values do not develop without social interactions and practical support, and integration also requires communities to fulfil their side of the bargain. The workplace, the school, the college and other local public spaces are places where all sectors of society can meet, mix, negotiate and develop shared values. Ensuring that migrants can meet and mix in these places is central to integration. If basic structures such as ensuring that migrants can work and study are in place, less tangible conditions necessary for socially integrated and cohesive communities, such as ‘belonging’ and ‘Britishness’ are more likely to emerge. Social inclusion is thus central to integration.

Much past and current policy has confused integration and social cohesion, but there is a difference, although the two are clearly related. Integration is about migrant individuals/households and their relation to wider society (although it is important to emphasise that integration is a two-way process – wider society must play a role as well as migrants themselves). Social cohesion is about the relations between all groups of people, not just migrants but also others, and usually refers to specific places: nations, cities, towns or neighbourhoods. Integration may be a pre-condition for social cohesion, but it is not sufficient to guarantee it – problems of social cohesion may signify problems of integration, but may be caused by other issues. Similarly, social cohesion may help to promote integration by making communities more welcoming and providing opportunities for social inclusion, although some highly cohesive communities may also struggle to accommodate newcomers.

## The role and limits of public policy

The state has a limited capacity *directly* to influence everyday social interactions and determine who we meet and mix with in everyday life. Debates about cultural values also tend to be inconclusive and rarely translate into effective public policy interventions (although they may be both substantive and politically important). Given these observations, the main aim of integration policy should be **to remove barriers to integration and to build the economic and social structures that underpin integration**. Ensuring that migrants can work and providing, through imaginative neighbourhood planning and the provision of public services, spaces and contexts where all sectors of society can meet and mix are two ways that the state can do this. Poverty and inequality compromise integration, for migrants themselves and the communities in which they live. Unequal societies are far more likely to be segregated. Conversely, failures of integration can increase inequality and poverty among vulnerable groups. A second aim of integration policy should be **a reduction of levels of inequality and social segregation**, for example, by reducing educational underachievement among some migrant groups.

The state has clear responsibilities towards migrants – to uphold their rights and to provide opportunities and structures to enable integration. But migrants, as with any other members of society, also have responsibilities. These responsibilities are clear in current policy: learn the language and obey the law.

## From principles to policy and practice

The challenge for government is how to translate all this into policy and practice. This needs to be led from the very top of politics, but must also be based on local leadership – much integration policy is necessarily rooted in local communities and neighbourhoods. This report points towards some possible areas for government action. These will be explored in more detail through IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research, which will also further consider the role of the voluntary sector and communities themselves.<sup>3</sup>

While many migrants do not aspire to remain in the UK in the long term, a proportion of them do, and the process of **settlement and naturalisation** provides a logical point in time to promote integration. While the previous government used the settlement and naturalisation process to incentivise integration, through the citizenship test and English language requirements, the direction of current government policy is less coherent. As well as introducing a revised citizenship test, it has also restricted access to settlement and naturalisation (in large part due to its overall objective of limiting net migration, including by limiting the ability of migrants to settle), limiting the scope of these two processes to aid integration. There is a need for greater clarity about the aims of settlement and naturalisation.

Overall, a move towards 'contractual' or 'earned' citizenship has the potential to incentivise integration by making residency and naturalisation contingent on fulfilling obligations such as achieving fluency in English. But for **short-term migrants** (for example, overseas students) and those groups unlikely to take up UK citizenship (for example, EU migrants) settlement and naturalisation requirements cannot be used to incentivise integration – other mechanisms are needed.

For short-term EU migrants, the workplace can be an important space in which integration takes place and reducing labour market segregation is one way of promoting integration

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3 See <http://www.ippr.org/research-project/44/10524/everyday-integration>

among this group. But this group often possesses the least amount of fluency in English and often have little incentive to learn the language. We need a debate across Europe about our mutual responsibilities to learn the language of the countries in which we reside, and about appropriate strategies and expectations for the integration of short-term, intra-EU migrants.

**English language fluency** is central to integration. It empowers migrants and enables them to deal with day-to-day life. It also facilitates communication with those who live around them and helps them find work. Despite increases in funding for adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at the turn of the century, the UK's record in helping migrants learn English is distinctly chequered.

We need to invest in ESOL, but spending money on this ensures savings in the long term. Given the fiscal conditions, there is space for looking at different approaches to funding ESOL, for example, a loan system with classes funded up-front and money recouped once a person has secured work above a certain income threshold. But we also need to improve the quality of teaching and ensure it gets to those who most need help. More high-quality initiatives for those who work long hours and those with little prior education are needed. Additionally, the government could look at increasing the English language learning content of some vocational courses, for example, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in social care, and include English language in licence to practice requirements for public sector workers. This would also better support the labour market integration of migrants.

English language learning needs to begin immediately on arrival in the UK. In England, regulations bar some groups of migrants from claiming fee concessions for ESOL courses. For example, non-EU family migrants cannot claim a fee concession until they have one year's legal residence. Excluding spouses and other family migrants from fee concessions runs contrary to promoting integration and we suggest that non-EU family migrants should be allowed to claim fee concessions immediately on arrival in the UK.

One constant strand across the complex landscape of migrant integration is **social deprivation** – among migrants and in the communities where they live – and it is a major barrier to integration. Migrant integration cannot be advanced without interventions to combat poverty and the decline of neighbourhoods. If deprivation is to be reduced, the poor labour market outcomes of some migrant groups must be addressed. Measures that could help include incorporating those organisations with expertise and success in welfare-to-work support for migrants as equal partners in the work programme. It is also important to ensure that migrants (and others) get long-term support, for example, through job clubs that provide formal and informal support, and to acknowledge the cultural aspects of job seeking in the UK.

While being in work supports integration, the type of work that migrants do, as well as their levels of pay, can also affect the process of integration. Migrants who largely work with other migrants have fewer opportunities to mix outside their communities. **Reducing labour market segregation** should be an objective of integration policy.

**Narrowing achievement gaps in education** should be an aim of integration policy. Undertaking outreach with specific communities to ensure that young children take up the free early education offer would enable the youngest children to start compulsory education with some fluency in English. School sites could be used to deliver support to migrant families (and others) in much the same way that some Sure Start children's



centres do. Providing better careers advice for 13- to 19-year-olds who lack cultural knowledge about the UK education system and job market may also help reduce the educational and labour market segregation experienced by young adults. It is also essential that school admissions procedures do not increase segregation by social class and ethnicity.

Many newly-arrived migrants end up living in privately-rented accommodation, often in deprived neighbourhoods experiencing high levels of population churn. This impacts upon migrants' capacity to integrate as well as broader social cohesion. Greater consideration needs to be given to **regulating the private rental sector**, ensuring higher-quality accommodation with greater security and length of tenure.

While there has been broad debate about social cohesion, the role of **public space** and public services in promoting this condition has received little consideration in the UK, particularly at a local level. National and local government needs to give more thought to how the built environment and public services can support the mixing of people. Local authority planning departments need to be involved in debates about segregation and social cohesion. Planning regulations and land use strategies need to be used to ensure that there are places where different groups of people can meet and interact.

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion gave some emphasis to 'integration hubs' – places and spaces where different groups of people meet and where support services can be provided for them. Such integration hubs can include children's centres, colleges, community centres, schools and parks. The recommendations of this commission should be revisited in relation to integration hubs.

This report sets out some areas where government can act to promote integration. Ultimately though, integration happens in communities, in everyday life. The kind of policies discussed here may be necessary for successful integration, particularly of vulnerable groups and in disadvantaged communities, but they are certainly not sufficient. IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research is exploring new 'bottom-up' approaches to integration that we hope will take the debate in a new direction.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Immigration policy – determining who can enter and stay in the UK – remains at the top of the political agenda. Since the 2010 election the Coalition government has made a number of high-profile policy changes in its efforts to meet the Conservative's election pledge to bring net migration down to less than 100,000, including a cap limiting the number of skilled workers coming to the UK each year, plus policies aimed at cutting the numbers of student migrants and those coming to the UK through family migration routes. While the government published *Creating the Conditions for Integration*<sup>4</sup> in early 2012, there has been less focus, from both government and the media, on what happens to migrants *after* they arrive in the UK.

The role of central and local government in integration feels neglected. Yet integration policy matters, arguably, as much as immigration policy: to migrants themselves, to the communities in which they live, and to wider society. The failures of integration – unemployment, welfare dependency, educational underachievement, social and economic segregation – have the potential to damage society and increase costs to the public purse. Perceptions that migrants have not integrated – economically and culturally – can also exacerbate negative public attitudes about immigration, with polling data showing much greater public concern about integration since 2002. The shortcomings of integration policy also have the capacity to expose other shortcomings of government, particularly in relation to housing and employment policy. Neglecting integration serves no-one's interests.

This paper primarily focuses on the integration of migrants – individuals and households from migrant communities – rather than the broader issues of social cohesion. The paper provides background to the *Everyday Integration* project being undertaken at IPPR. This research focuses on the processes of integration in the everyday lives of individuals and the communities in which they live.

This background paper sets out the case for a progressive integration policy. It examines understandings and definitions of integration, and analyses past and present government policy on the issue. It also reviews the evidence of migrants' experiences of integration, in the labour market, in education and in the communities in which they live, before making some suggestions for the future direction of government policy on integration, within the current fiscal climate. These suggestions will be explored in more detail in IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research.

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4 Department of Communities and Local Government 2012

## 2. THE NATURE OF IMMIGRATION INTO THE UK AND HOW THIS IMPACTS ON INTEGRATION

This paper is about *migrant* integration and a starting point is to define this group of people and look at specific demographic and social characteristics that may affect their experiences of integration. The paper uses the term ‘migrant’ to describe people born overseas. The 2011 Census indicates that the proportion of the UK population born overseas now stands at nearly 13 per cent. Table A1 in the annex gives population estimates of the main country of birth groups present in the UK in 2011 and shows the growing diversity of migrants’ countries of origin.

### Migration routes and integration

Understanding migrants’ experiences of integration requires knowledge of the different pathways migrants use to enter the UK, and the different immigration statuses they have as a result. This is because immigration status affects entitlement to services which are important for integration, for example, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for adults. It also has the potential to affect migrants’ own attitudes to integration: for example, research suggests that migrants on short-term work visas may be more reluctant to invest time in learning English and developing social networks in their new neighbourhoods (Rutter *et al*, 2008a).

### Migrants from the EEA and Switzerland

Table A1 shows that migrants from the **European Economic Area** (the EU member states plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Switzerland are the largest overseas-born group in the UK. They comprise migrants from pre-2004 EU states such as Ireland and Portugal, as well as migrants from the new member states who joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, of which the largest group are those born in Poland. Citizens of these EEA countries do not require visas to travel to the UK. They also have many of the same work and social rights as UK citizens, but still face some restrictions on claiming benefits and right of residency<sup>5</sup> in the UK, crucially, they have to fulfil EEA worker status. Nationals of Bulgaria and Romania, both of which joined the EU in January 2007, still have restricted rights to work in the UK and will do so until the end of 2013.

A distinct category of EEA migrants are those who were born outside the EEA, but who travelled to the UK having previously been resident elsewhere in the EEA. This type of onward migration to the UK has increased in the last 10 years, with Somalis who have moved to the UK from the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavian countries being the most widely documented case (Van Hear and Lindley 2007). Many of these onward migrants previously arrived in other EEA countries as asylum-seekers, or with work visas. They tend to have similar prior educational and employment profiles to those who have come directly to the UK from outside the EEA and may have a different set of needs in relation to integration.

While the majority of migrants from EEA countries come to the UK to work, it is important to note that those who move to the UK from these countries may do so for other reasons. Family reunion or family formation as well as student migrants account for some of the migration flows from EEA countries.

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<sup>5</sup> Under Article 6 of EC Directive 2004/38/EC, all EEA nationals and their family members, plus Swiss nationals and their families, have the right to reside in another EEA country or Switzerland for an initial three-month period. Article 7 of the same directive gives these nationals and their family members, further rights of residence, dependent on them fulfilling conditions as a qualifying person, granting them EEA worker status.

### Migrants from outside the EEA

Migrants from outside the EEA come to the UK for a number of reasons: work, study, family, and to seek asylum. The UK's **work and student visa** schemes have been subject to substantial recent changes, most significantly with the introduction of the tiered points-based system from 2008, and then the immigration 'cap' and related reforms from 2010. The system now comprises:

- Tier 1 – for highly-skilled migrants. Changes to this tier were introduced in 2012, effectively shutting this route down apart from a small number of wealthy investors and those with 'exceptional talent in sciences and the arts'.
- Tier 2 – a scheme for skilled workers with a job offer or those filling gaps in the UK labour market. In early 2012 this tier became a time-limited status, with rights of residency in the UK capped at six years unless a minimum income threshold or certain other criteria were met (Cavanagh 2012).
- Tier 3 – for low-skilled temporary workers, although this scheme has never been opened.
- Tier 4 – student migration (see table 2.1).
- Tier 5 – youth mobility and other schemes.
- Domestic workers in private households. This scheme saw changes in 2012 and in future it may be closed.

Table 2.1 gives data on the numbers admitted to the UK or applying for an extension in 2011 through work visa routes.

**Table 2.1**  
Work visa and student migration to UK, 2011

	Out-of-country applicants, 2011	Dependents of out-of-country applicants, 2011	In-country extensions, 2011	Dependents of in-country extendees
Tier 1	8,650	14,143	66,403	Not available
Tier 2	38,054	28,312	18,216	13,539
Tier 3	–	–	–	–
Tier 4 (students)	236,961	24,373	102,683	16,734
Tier 5	36,604	1,316	647	153
Domestic workers (excludes those in diplomatic households)	16,187	245	6,159	490

Source: Home Office Control of Immigration Statistics 2011

For domestic workers and for Tier 4 and Tier 5 migrants, residency in the UK is usually temporary in nature and rarely leads to settlement or naturalisation (Home Office 2010). In the past a significant amount of Tier 1 and Tier 2 migration to the UK was of a permanent or semi-permanent nature, with about a third (29 per cent) of migrants admitted under the predecessor schemes of Tier 1 and Tier 2 being granted UK settlement rights: the right to reside and work in the UK without restriction (Cavanagh 2011b). The Coalition government has moved to be more selective in relation to granting settlement rights to work visa migrants as well as students and family migrants.<sup>6</sup> While some commentators argue that this is a legitimate policy shift, short-term migration can pose challenges to integration which are discussed later.

<sup>6</sup> See Damian Green, Written Ministerial Statement, 15 March 2012

Non-EU student migration flows are diverse and include young people entering the UK to study in independent schools and private colleges, smaller numbers into further education colleges, as well as a much larger number who study in the UK's universities, as undergraduates or post-graduates.<sup>7</sup> Most student migration is temporary in nature, with around 15 per cent staying permanently (Cavanagh and Glennie 2012). As such, it can also present a challenge for integration, although in some respects students enjoy more favourable conditions to integrate through language fluency and a generally supportive context on university and college campuses.

Migration for **family formation or reunion** has remained steady over the last five years and in 2011 some 45,697 entry clearance visas were issued to family migrants wanting to come to the UK. Since 2010 adults coming to the UK as family migrants have had to pass pre-entry English tests to gain a visa, a change that aims to promote their integration in the UK. Rules governing the settlement of family migrants in the UK were changed again in 2012, bringing family migration into line with other migration routes and requiring five years of residency before settlement is granted, setting the pre-entry English test at a higher level, and requiring sponsoring family members in the UK to demonstrate specific levels of income.

**Asylum-seekers** comprise a distinct category of migrants arriving in the UK, with their treatment governed by international humanitarian law<sup>8</sup>, as well as domestic legislation. Numbers of asylum claimants rose from around 20,000 to 25,000 per year in the mid-1990s, to a peak of over 80,000 per year in 2002 – before falling back to mid-1990s levels from 2005 onwards (Hatton 2011). In 2011, 19,804 asylum applications<sup>9</sup> were lodged in the UK.

Asylum-seekers are a diverse group of people who come from many different countries of origin. Because of this extremely varied background in relation to their countries of origin, asylum migration has played a major part in increasing the 'super-diversity' of the UK's migrant population.

In 2011, 25 per cent of initial asylum decisions resulted in the applicant being granted refugee status, and a further 8 per cent resulted in grants of humanitarian protection or discretionary leave to remain. The remaining 67 per cent were refused.<sup>10</sup> However, over recent years only a small proportion of those refused asylum have been removed from the country or left voluntarily. About half of those initially refused asylum appeal the decision, with 26 per cent of appeals being allowed in 2011 – arguably evidence of poor-quality initial determination processes. Even if there is no appeal, the government often finds it difficult to remove individuals seeking asylum. In part this has been due to administrative ineffectiveness by the UK Border Agency, but there are other reasons which include the costs and difficulty of returning individuals to many countries. At times, too, the UK government has suspended returns to particular countries, while making no attempt to resolve the cases of asylum-seekers whose application has failed. As a result, these individuals and families remain in limbo for years: not legally entitled to remain in the UK, nor removed.

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7 See data from the UK Council for International Students, <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk>

8 The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol

9 Principal applicants only

10 Home Office Immigration Statistics

This problem has persisted for at least two decades. Periodically, the UK government has implemented one-off exercises to grant leave to remain for people who have been in this situation for a long period and are unlikely ever to be removed. The most recent of these exercises, known as the ‘asylum legacy’ programme, ran from 2007 to 2011 and took in 450,000 people. It is important to note that these clearance exercises are not blanket amnesties for irregular migrants, as all cases have been subject to individual review and, in some instances, led to rejection of the case.

Despite these one-off exercises, and despite the fact that the decision and appeals process sped up after 2000, the asylum system still contains a large number of individuals in limbo, and indeed is still routinely adding to these numbers every year. A 2012 report from the Home Affairs Select Committee estimated that, as of 31 March 2012, there were 21,000 unresolved asylum cases in their initial stages, 80,000 individuals in the asylum ‘controlled archive’, and a further 101,5000 untraceable individuals remaining from the 2007–2011 asylum legacy programme (Home Affairs Committee 2012). These groups present a particularly difficult challenge for integration. They are not, in the main, allowed to work, and not entitled to many kinds of support which would assist their integration. They tend to be concentrated in poor housing in disadvantaged areas, particularly in London and some of the UK’s other major cities. The government’s response is that any support for them to integrate would encourage them to remain, when they ought to be returning home. While this makes sense in policy terms, if in reality a large proportion of these people will in fact end up staying, there is a strong case to be made for better integration of this group.<sup>11</sup>

**Programme refugees** are a distinct category of refugees. In the recent past certain nationalities – Vietnamese and Bosnians – have been admitted to the UK via refugee settlement programmes where refugee or other immigration statuses are granted overseas, usually through the offices of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Small numbers of programme refugees – about 750 per year – still come to the UK through the Gateway Protection Programme, which is dependent on local authorities offering housing and integration support. Those refugees on the Gateway Protection Programme, usually receive orientation and integration support programmes before and after arrival in the UK, although there is considerable debate about the effectiveness of these programmes (Collyer and de Guerre 2007, Refugee Council 1991).

### **Other groups**

A further group of international migrants comprise **British nationals** and those with **ancestry visas** who move to the UK. Some 4,352 out-of-country ancestry visas were granted in 2011, most often from Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Most migrants who come through this route are short-term migrants to the UK. Return migration of British nationals is on a larger scale, with an estimated 88,000 British nationals migrating back to the UK in 2011. This group includes returning ‘lifestyle migrants, those who have previously moved overseas to work as well as those who have had little contact with the UK and have few support networks in the UK (Rutter and Andrew 2009). Despite the difficulties faced by some in this group, British nationals are often forgotten in contemporary integration policy.

The above categorisation also leaves out one very important group: irregular migrants, and the UK-born children of irregular migrants, who are arguably one of the least-integrated

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<sup>11</sup> This is also a pressing argument for better asylum determination procedures and a more realistic policy towards irregular migration.

groups in the UK. This group of people mostly comprises visa over-stayers, refused asylum-seekers (see above) and smaller numbers of clandestine entrants, as well as their UK-born children. There is a degree of uncertainty about numbers, but estimates based on 2007 population data suggest between 373,000 and 719,000 irregular migrants in the UK, including many UK-born children (Greater London Authority Economics 2009, Sigona and Hughes 2010).

Irregular migrants survive by working in the formal economy with cloned identities or false documents, or by working in the informal economy. They often rely on compatriots for work contacts. Many of them live a hand-to-mouth existence in conditions far removed from those experienced by most people in the UK (Datta et al 2006, Finch and Cherti 2011). Irregular migrants are far less likely to become integrated than regular migrants: a combination of the places they tend to work, and their fear of being found out, make them less likely to mix with UK-born people. They are also not entitled to services which promote integration, for example subsidised ESOL and employment training.

Since 2007, a proportion of irregular migrants have secured legal residency in the UK through the asylum legacy programme. Community leaders have suggested that the recession has prompted greater return migration among some groups, for example to Australia, Brazil and Russia.<sup>12</sup> However, irregular migration is likely to remain a major challenge to integration – and one that is difficult to resolve (Finch and Cherti 2011).

### Other demographic characteristics of migration relevant to integration

While country-of-birth and immigration status are two aspects of diversity within migrant populations in the UK, there are other demographic characteristics that have the potential to impact on migrants' experiences of integration. These include the gendered nature of migration flows, residential segregation and the distribution of migrant populations within the UK, the scale of migration flows, and so-called 'super-diversity' and 'super-mobility'.

Most migrants, whatever the routes by which they come to the UK, tend to be young adults on arrival: in 2011, 87 per cent of immigrants to the UK were aged 16–44 years.<sup>13</sup> The concentration of migrants aged 16–44 means that work and the workplace is a significant domain or location for integration.

The historical tendency for migrants to be mainly male has started to change: in 2011 some 45 per cent of immigrants into the UK were female.<sup>14</sup> About half of recent migrants are either single or had no dependent children on arrival in the UK (Rendall and Salt 2005). There is some qualitative research that suggests that, for migrants, having dependent children facilitates the building of new social networks (Spencer 2006).

### Geographical distribution of migrants within the UK

How migrant populations are distributed across the UK also has the potential to impact on their integration. Most post-second world war migrants ended settling in urban areas, largely as a consequence of the availability of work in urban areas. During the 1980s, there was much less primary immigration into the former industrial cities in the Midlands and northern England. Instead, most primary immigration flows – both asylum and labour migration – were into London and the south east. The highest proportions of migrants in the UK – both recently arrived and longer settled – still live in greater London and the

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<sup>12</sup> Interviews undertaken by author, 2009

<sup>13</sup> ONS Long-term International Migration data, 2011. For a discussion of the demographic profile of recent migrants see Rendall and Salt 2005.

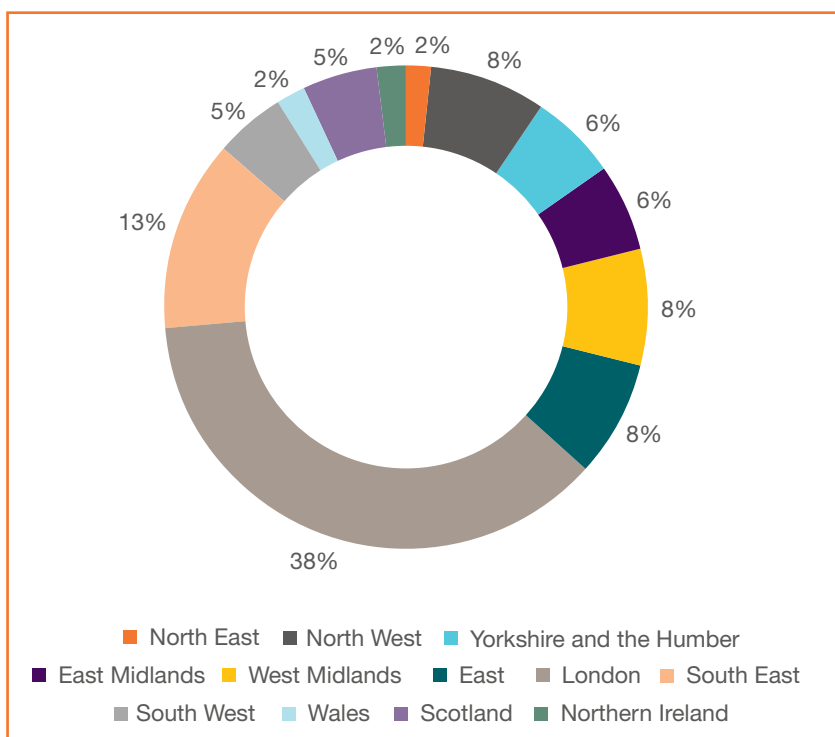
<sup>14</sup> *ibid*



south east of England (see figure 2.1). Despite this, there have been some recent changes in the dispersal of migrants across the UK.

Since 1998 many asylum-seekers have been dispersed through the UK, firstly by local authorities and then by the UK Border Agency, which has followed a policy of commissioning accommodation for them outside greater London and the south east. The arrival of asylum-seeking populations in northern England and Scotland has, in some cases, prompted local concerns over integration as well as the development of integration strategies by some local authorities in response (IPPR 2007b).

**Figure 2.1**  
Overseas-born population by UK region and nation, 2010–2011



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey July 2010–June 2011

There has also been a shift to the countryside with significant proportions of recent EU migrants settling in rural areas where they are often employed in intensive agriculture, hospitality and the food processing sectors (Commission for Rural Communities 2007, Pollard et al 2008). Here population sparseness may present integration challenges, for migrants themselves as well as those who provide services for migrants. For example, delivering English language classes to rural, highly-dispersed populations of migrants can be difficult (Audit Commission 2007).

While non-metropolitan parts of the UK have had less of a tradition of receiving migrants, their arrival in these areas has often been met with a desire by local government to promote their integration and ensure broader social cohesion (Zaronaite and Tirzite 2006). The generous response of some rural local authorities to new migrants (as well as northern local authorities towards asylum-seekers) stands in contrast to the laissez-faire attitudes of some London local authorities towards asylum-seekers in the 1990s (Rutter 2006). Migrants' 'novelty value' may, in the short-term at least, promote greater planning by local authorities into services that aid integration.



### **Residential segregation**

It is still important to remember there is considerable variation in the settlement of migration within regions and local authorities. Interest in residential segregation has grown in recent years, partly as a consequence of a speech by Trevor Phillips, then chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, suggesting that we are ‘sleep-walking into segregation’ (Phillips 2005). However, research on trends in segregation has been beset with controversy as there is no clear consensus about how to measure it. For example, in the UK, French migrants are concentrated in one city – London – but within London are widely dispersed. Other groups such as Bangladeshis are widely dispersed across the UK, but within particular cities tend to be concentrated in enclaves. Which is the most residentially segregated group? These examples highlight some of the complexities of defining and measuring residential segregation (Simpson 2005, Johnston et al 2005, Phillips 2005). Thus, alleging that we are becoming more or less segregated is inherently open to dispute, because there is no clear way of measuring it.

Research shows that migrant populations that tend to cluster together are those who depend on each other for work or housing (Phillips 1998). But residential segregation also has the potential to inhibit integration as the dependence of migrants on each other can lead to labour market segregation, or disincentivise the learning of English. Thus residential clustering might be seen as outcome of poor economic integration, as well as a cause.

While residential segregation may often inhibit integration, its absence is not necessarily evidence of successful integration. It is possible for different groups to live side-by-side, while not mixing with each other in social spaces. Indeed, many of the debates about social mixing and segregation among migrants have failed to articulate what is meaningful social interaction between different groups and what non-segregated societies might feel like.

### **Scale of migration flows**

There is also a contested debate about whether large-scale migration flows inhibit integration. This was an issue that was debated in the Migration Impacts Forum in 2006–07 after the arrival of large numbers of migrants from the new member states of the EU (see chapter 4). At present, too, government policy is premised on the view that reducing net immigration will make the task of integration easier (Pickles 2013). In absolute terms, very large-scale migration flows into a particular area can make the task of integration challenging for institutions such as schools. But the relationship between the scale of immigration and integration is not a simple one, as can be seen by looking at the integration experiences of migrants living in London, the region that has seen greatest immigration in recent years. In London many of the indicators of integration such as rates of employment and school examination results are consistently higher than other regions and nations of the UK (Gidley and Jayaweera 2010). Evidence from the Citizenship Survey and the Community Life Survey shows that the vast majority of people in London (88 per cent in Q3 2012) feel that they live in a neighbourhood where people from different backgrounds get on with each other.

Reducing migration flows is no guarantee of integration; groups present in small numbers can manifest low levels of integration, as can be seen by looking at the experience of refugees settled in parts of northern England (IPPR 2007b). A more considered analysis is needed; the scale of migration flows has the potential to both support or to limit integration, as table 2.2 indicates, alongside the characteristics of migrants themselves and conditions in receiving areas.

**Table 2.2**  
Relationship between the size of migration flows and integration

	Large-scale migration flows	Small-scale migration flows
Factors that may support integration	<p>Dense social networks among migrants that help in finding work</p> <p>A high-profile priority issue for public services and local authorities to act where integration is seen as being less successful</p> <p>Greater likelihood community organisations to help in process of integration</p>	<p>Less dependence on compatriots for employment, housing and so on</p> <p>Greater incentives to learn English</p>
Factors that may limit integration	<p>Dependence on compatriots and fewer incentives to mix outside national/ethnic group</p> <p>Less of an incentive to learn English</p> <p>Larger pressures on services such as ESOL classes</p>	<p>Fewer social networks</p> <p>Less of a priority issue for social policy interventions delivered by public services and third sector</p>

### Super-diversity and super-mobility

Super-diversity and super-mobility are two further demographic factors that have the capacity to affect integration. In the past, UK migrant and minority populations comprised a small number of large communities, predominately from the UK's former colonies. Today many parts of urban Britain manifest super-diversity where different nationalities and ethnic groups live side-by-side, different not only in their country of origin, but also their immigration status, length of time in the UK, qualifications and skills.

Super-diversity requires a wide range of policy responses in relation to integration and demands much more knowledge by frontline workers. For example, the Afghanistan-born population of the UK includes significant numbers of long-settled and highly educated refugees, but also newer arrivals who are predominantly young males with much less education. Supporting the integration of these two groups requires different responses. Super-diversity can also make it difficult to pick up on patterns of inequality as the broad ethnicity categories that we use to monitor labour market performance and educational achievement do not pick up on emerging patterns.

Super-mobility is another integration challenge. In the past, much international migration to the UK was permanent or semi-permanent in nature. Today there is much more short-term and circular migration. Most immigrants spend less than four years in the UK: of all the migrants who arrived in the UK in 1998, only a quarter were here in 2008 (Finch et al, 2009). Students and EU migrants are particularly likely to be short-term migrants.

There is limited and sometimes contradictory evidence on the links between integration and return and onward migration. Temporary migrants may be less likely to invest in integrating in their new communities. Some studies have also suggested that migrants who remain in their host countries are those who are the best integrated; they have the strongest roots in the host country and therefore have the most to lose by leaving.<sup>15</sup> Other studies indicate that those who the least economically successful are most likely to stay because they still have to achieve their migration objectives (Cassarino 2004). Overall, however, there is very little research about how integration experiences affect the propensity to return or move to a third country. Nor has integration policy ever considered the long-term objectives of migrants.

<sup>15</sup> See discussion in Finch et al 2009.

Temporary migration may also impact on integration policy as some of the usual levers for integration – the obligations of settlement and naturalisation, engagement in local civil society organisations – may not apply to super-mobile migrants who remain in the UK for short periods of time and never take up British citizenship (Rutter et al 2008a). It is also much harder to organise and deliver services such as English language classes where migrants move frequently. Super-mobility may also have a negative effect on migrants' sense of local belonging and on their desire to engage locally.

### 3. DEFINING INTEGRATION

While there is a consensus among policymakers about who is a migrant, ‘integration’ is a contested term. One of the challenges of implementing integration policy is that the term means different things to different people. While the term is primarily used to describe relations between migrants and wider society, it is also used in the context of minority ethnic populations. This paper is primarily concerned with the integration of migrants, although much of the discussion is also relevant to British-born minority communities.

Integration is a recent addition to the lexicon of the policymaking community in the UK. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees first used the term in the mid-1980s, describing local integration as one of the long-term solutions for refugee displacement. Soon after, integration for migrants (not just for refugees) was articulated as a policy objective of the EU, and by a number of its member states – though not the UK. Until 2000 the term ‘settlement’ was preferred by both non-governmental organisations and local government to cover policies that aimed to improve the social and economic participation of migrants, as integration was felt to have connotations of the assimilationist policies of the 1950s and 1960s. However, by 2000 integration came back into use, notably in *Full and Equal Citizens*, the first refugee integration strategy published by a UK government (Home Office 2000). At this point NGOs and local government started to use the term as well, although some lingering resistance to it remained. Yet the reintroduction of the term ‘integration’ brought no real clarity over the concept. Indeed, *Full and Equal Citizens* offered no definition of this condition.

#### Theoretical approaches

In subject matter, the most important definitional differences are between those who focus on **economic integration**, and those who focus on the **social and cultural aspects of integration**. The boundary between the two is not always sharp: for example, proficiency in English will be of concern to those interested in economic integration *and* those interested in social and cultural integration; but they are likely to focus on them in different ways.

A related distinction is the different **domains** in which integration takes place: the economic domain of the workplace, the socio-spatial domain of the community and neighbourhood, the political domain of trade unions, political parties and civil society organisations and the cultural domains of faith, sporting and other associative circles (Ager and Strang 2004, Entzinger 2000, Gans 1992). Brubaker et al (2008) argue that integration as a process takes place in ‘everyday’ domains, with this thinking influencing IPPR’s *Everyday Integration* project. Other studies have also analysed the differential integration of migrants in different domains. A migrant may be integrated within one domain, for example, the workplace, but less integrated within another domain such as the neighbourhood, a condition termed ‘bumpy integration’ by Gans (1992).

The majority of academic literature on integration focuses on the social and cultural aspects of integration, often dwelling on ‘identity’, and is sometimes remote from live questions and debates in public policy. It includes research about acculturative change – what happens when two ‘cultures’ interact with each other and the impact this may have on individuals and integration.<sup>16</sup> Berry’s and Bourhis’s models attempt to conceptualise integration (see table 3.1), but their work has been criticised as static and not accounting for shifting and multiple identities (the latter presently the subject of policy debate, especially since 2001, when there has been more concern about the possibility of being British and Muslim).

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<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Berry 2001 and Bourhis et al 2001.

Other models of integration that are based on identity acknowledge change over time and fall into two conceptual categories:

- staged approaches to identity and integration
- non-staged conceptualisations of identity and identity: segmented assimilation theory and multiple identities.

Staged approaches to the study of identity stress the processual nature of integration, placing emphasis on temporal dimensions of it (Al-Rasheed 1993, Griffiths 2002). For example, Harrell-Bond and Voutira (1992) argue that refugees go through three stages in the process of integration, involving physical segregation as refugees in a new host country. This is followed by a stage of liminality where old forms of social stratification and cultural norms break down and finally reincorporation – either into the home country, as a juxtaposed community or into a new hybrid identity.

However, all staged studies of identity and integration assume a more or less linear pathway towards eventual integration into the host society or return to the home country, a condition challenged in studies of multiple and shifting identities and the impact of them on integration, which have developed in the context of accounts of globalisation. The globalised subject is an individual with multiple, shifting identities, perhaps with sometimes contradictory components, a person whose identity is socially, spatially and historically defined (Cohen 1997, Hall 1991, Hall 1992). For example, a person may feel British and Muslim and Somali, with gender and occupational identities also playing a part and with the different components of a person's identity expressed in different times.

**Table 3.1**  
Varieties of intercultural strategies in immigration groups and in the receiving societies

	Cultural maintenance = Yes	Cultural maintenance = No
Contact participation = Yes	Integration	Assimilation
Contact participation = No	Segregation	Marginalisation

Source: Summarised from Berry 2001

### Policy-focused definitions of integration

A further body of more policy-focused literature has also attempted to define integration, with this writing being categorised as follows:

- **Rights-based:** where integration is defined as the possession of civil, political and social rights. The Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)<sup>17</sup> takes this approach, and compares the rights afforded to different groups of migrants in developed countries. The natural extension or development of a rights-based approach is one that stresses *opportunities* and/or *capabilities*, that is, the substantive freedoms that people have to ensure their wellbeing (Nussbaum 2000, Sen 1989). The capabilities approach has been influential in development policy, where it has influenced the Human Development Index. Significantly, a capabilities approach places a focus on wellbeing and on the freedoms that people need to achieve wellbeing, a condition that has been neglected in most writing about integration.
- **Outcome-based:** here integration is defined as equality, or perhaps more usefully the elimination of unacceptable degrees of inequality and segregation, on various indicators – employment rates, educational attainment, political participation, and so on.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.mipex.eu>

- **Participation-based:** where integration requires not just access to, but also social inclusion and participation in the labour force and workplace, civil society institutions the social sphere of the neighbourhood and so on (Ager and Strang 2004, Zetter et al 2002). An extension of a participation-based approach is one that stresses social inclusion.

Again, the boundaries between the three are not always sharp: when a rights-based approach starts to examine whether migrants are actually exercising their rights, rather than merely possessing them, it is in effect moving into either an outcome-based or participation-based approach. But the differences are significant: the participation-based approach, for example, is the only one which really allows integration to be seen a *process* – something which many working with migrants and receiving communities feel is important.

To unpack the differences a little more, let us consider again the phenomena of the over-representation of some migrant populations in particular sectors of the UK labour market – for example, West Africans in the social care sector. A rights-based approach would not regard this over-representation as a problem in itself. An outcome-based approach to integration would focus on how average employment rates, income levels, and other indicators are affected by the over-representation of these groups in these occupations – if these occupations are low-paid, that will clearly be a problem on an outcome-based approach. Finally, a participation-based approach would worry about the fact that the working practices associated with these occupations limit opportunities to participate in the social sphere of the neighbourhood.

The above example shows that the search for the correct focus or approach to integration is challenging. We need to combine a focus on economic, social, and cultural aspects – including wellbeing – and an understanding of outcomes and participation in order to build a full picture of integration.

While rights to work, education and so on, affect migrants' integration trajectories, possessing these rights does not guarantee they will be exercised; and even if they are exercised, that does not always guarantee a pathway to prosperity or wellbeing. However, this does not mean that rights are not important in themselves (as a comparison with other debates, including feminism, should make clear). Rights underpin integration, but they do not comprise integration. Participation and social inclusion matter more, particularly participation in the workplace, in education and in the social, cultural and political spheres of the locality. A fundamental challenge of a successful integration policy is to have some consensus of what integration comprises. Drawing on the above approaches, a simple definition for integration is **possessing the opportunities and skills needed to ensure social inclusion and long-term wellbeing** and should be seen as both a process and an outcome.

This definition of integration may seem to be at odds with dominant public and media understandings of integration, which often focus on the outcomes of integration (or more often, the outcomes of failed integration – for example, persistent residential segregation), rather than the processes by which integration occurs in practice; and which usually emphasise the social and cultural aspects of integration rather than the economic aspects. Public understandings of integration tend to centre on the view that the process comprises migrants becoming more like 'us'. For example, 2013 research on public understandings of integration by the thinktank British Future highlighted personal adoption of a British national identity as core to public views about

integration.<sup>18</sup> Examples of this included being proud of national anthems, flags and fully participating in national celebrations.

These shared social and cultural values are an important part of the integration story, but they do not develop without social interactions and practical support, and integration also requires communities to fulfil their side of the bargain. The workplace, the school, the college and other local public spaces are spaces and places where all sectors of society can meet, mix, negotiate and develop shared values. Ensuring that migrants can meet and mix in these places is central to integration. If basic structures such as ensuring that migrants can work and study are in place, less tangible conditions necessary for socially integrated and cohesive communities, such as ‘belonging’ and ‘Britishness’ are more likely to emerge. Social inclusion is thus central to integration.

### The relationship between integration and cohesion

Alongside integration sits another condition used in much writing about migration: *social cohesion*. Again a contested term, there is some consensus that social cohesion, as a condition involves:

- the relationships between community members and their inclusion in the economic, educational, social and civic activities of a particular area – sometimes a nation, but more often a neighbourhood
- the absence of large inequalities in relation to income, housing conditions, and so on
- a sense of belonging to a locality
- trust, shared values and reciprocity between members of the community
- the development of social capital in communities (Griffiths et al 2005).

In the UK, notions of social cohesion influenced the urban regeneration policies of the 1997–2001 Labour government. But since 2007, social cohesion has taken on new meanings that emphasise race, religion and immigration. As is argued later, policymakers often confuse integration and cohesion. But there does appear to be a clear difference: integration is about individuals and households from migrant or minority ethnic groups and their relation to wider society. Social cohesion is about the relations between all groups of people, not just migrants but also others, and usually refers to specific places: nations, cities, towns or neighbourhoods.

Integration may be a pre-condition for social cohesion, but it is not sufficient to guarantee it – problems of social cohesion may signify problems of integration, but may be caused by other issues. Similarly, social cohesion may help to promote integration by making communities more welcoming and providing opportunities for social inclusion (although some highly cohesive communities may also struggle to accommodate newcomers).

Clearly, securing integration and social cohesion are both important and both require attention. But integration is unlikely to be advanced as a policy priority if there is no clarity about it and if it is confused with, and subsumed within, discussions about social cohesion.

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18 <http://www.britishfuture.org>



## 4. A LEGACY OF INTEGRATION POLICIES

Integration policy is as old as the modern state and it is worth reviewing past policy, both in order to understand the historical context of current policy, as well as learning lessons from the past.

### 1900–1950: contrasting approaches

Nearly 100 years ago, under another Coalition government, over 250,000 Belgian refugees arrived in the UK, in the wake of an advancing German army. Initially a non-governmental organisation – the War Refugees Committee – assisted the Belgian refugees. But by late 1914, government took responsibility for them, with the Local Government Board (LGB) being the lead department (Cahalan 1982). Among its policies, the LGB encouraged host communities to set up Belgian Refugee Committees to assist in the resettlement of the refugees. (There were 2,500 such committees of volunteers by 1916 and there has not been such broad public engagement in the integration of migrants since then). The ‘integration’ programme was led by senior civil servants, and at ministerial level by Walter Long, whose political epitaph largely comprised the successful integration of the Belgians.

By contrast, there was little government involvement in the settlement of 4,000 unaccompanied Basque children who had been displaced by the Spanish civil war, nor in the integration of the refugees who fled Nazi-occupied Europe – with one major exception. Government did play a major role in the integration of over 200,000 Polish nationals, many of them ex-combatants, who arrived in five migratory waves during and after the second world war (Sword 1989). A high level Treasury committee took over integration policy in 1946 and Poles were dispersed around the UK to jobs in mining, agriculture, manufacturing and the new service industries. The Polish Resettlement Act 1947 was essentially legislation about integration: it provided a legal framework for the settlement of Polish refugees, moving responsibility for Polish affairs from the Treasury to various government departments.

There are interesting lessons to be learned from these first 50 years of the 20th century. There was a considerable amount of planning for the settlement of Belgians and Poles, much less so for other groups of arrivals. But the Belgians and Poles were popular with the public: the latter were portrayed in the media as brave ex-combatants who could not return to an oppressive communist regime (ibid). Arguably, sympathetic public perceptions afforded governments the political space to implement coherent and well-planned integration programmes. Crucially, too, there was political leadership and very clear policy objectives.

### 1950–1990: from assimilation to multiculturalism and beyond

In the second half of the 20th century, integration policy falls into a number of distinct phases. In the first phase, during the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of immigration was from the UK’s former colonies, using the provisions of the British Nationality Act 1948 and work visa migration. The Act gave British citizenship rights to residents of the UK’s remaining colonies. In a 14-year period up to the ending of this concession in 1962, some 250,000 people used its provisions to move to work in the UK (Holmes, 1988). Initially there was little by way of coherent policy responses to these new arrivals, although there was a dominant view that new migrants needed to be assimilated into the ways and norms of majority British society.



A 1949 Royal Commission on Population stated that immigrants needed to be:

**‘...of good human stock and not prevented by their religion or race from intermarrying with the host population and becoming merged in it.’**

Royal Commission, 1949, cited in Saggar et al 2012

But racial discrimination was rife in the 1950s and there was also considerable discrimination in the housing market. It soon became obvious that these new migrants were finding it difficult to ‘assimilate’ into the majority of British society, even if they tried hard to do so. The 1960s saw a move away from crude assimilation towards policies now termed ‘multiculturalist’, which recognised the legitimacy of cultural diversity. Multi-faith religious education in schools was introduced at this time and there was the first extensive public funding of community organisations working with specific groups of migrants. It is important to note that, while the shift to a multiculturalist approach was clearly discernible, there was no explicit or coherent agenda, and there was – and arguably still is – no consensus about what it comprises. However, Roy Jenkins, home secretary, provided one view of multiculturalist policy as:

**‘...not a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.’**

Roy Jenkins, cited in Rose and Deakin 1969

The majority of integration policy in this period was built around multiculturalist social policy and anti-discrimination law (Saggar and Somerville 2012). This legislation included the Race Relations Act 1965, followed by the Race Relations Act 1968, which made it illegal to refuse housing, employment, or public services to a person on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin. The latter legislation also created the Community Relations Commission, a predecessor organisation of the Commission for Racial Equality and eventually the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Anti-discrimination legislation was further strengthened with the Race Relations Act 1976.

By the mid-1980s, multiculturalism began to attract increasing criticism. The riots in Brixton and elsewhere, and persistent high unemployment which disproportionately affected some minority communities<sup>19</sup> led many to feel that the structural inequalities experienced by Britain’s migrant and minority ethnic populations were not being addressed by multiculturalist social policy. Multiculturalism was replaced by a new discourse of anti-racism. Activists called for minority groups to unite as British blacks to fight racism. Lacking supportive leadership at national level, the anti-racist movement tended to be led by local authorities or figures from outside politics and policy, including many academics.

The anti-racist movement was a coherent, and in many ways an effective social movement which probably had its greatest impact in education and public sector employment practices.<sup>20</sup> These changes were not as radical as some of their equivalents in the US under affirmative action programmes, but they had a lasting effect: for example, the present day ethnic monitoring categories date from this period. It is interesting to note that, during this period, there was comparatively little contact between the anti-racist movement and NGOs working to promote refugee integration. ‘Race equality’ was considered to be a

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19 See Rex and Tomlinson 1979

20 For examples of the writing of anti-racists see Troyna 1987.

different process to that of refugee integration or migrant integration more widely (Rutter 2006). This may have been because anti-racism, too, invoked essentialist and reified notions of 'race' that struggled to accommodate the varying experiences of migrant and minority ethnic groups such as Irish Travellers, Cypriots, Iranians and Vietnamese.

The anti-racism movement, too, left another and more destructive legacy in that it became associated with so-called 'loony left' local authorities, usually explicitly defining themselves in opposition to Conservative government at national level. As a consequence: many within politics are still nervous at being identified with anything associated with 'race' equality – and this still extends to aspects of migrant integration, despite the differences between the two.

### The 1990s: the rise of asylum and a new focus on social exclusion

Immigration into the UK increased in the 1990s, mainly as a result of increased asylum arrivals. Asylum grew as an issue of public concern which, together with relentlessly hostile media coverage, forced first the Conservative government and then its Labour successor to act. But their focus remained narrowly on asylum-seekers, rather than migrants in general; and the primary focus until 2000 to reduce the inflow of asylum-seekers, rather than on the integration of those who would remain. This policy objective was to be achieved in three ways:

- Building barriers to deter the would-be asylum-seeker – for example, visa requirements, carrier sanctions and more rigorous border control
- Restricting the social citizenship rights of asylum-seekers – for example, restricting access to housing, work and benefits as a deterrent
- Making the asylum determination process speedier and more efficient.

There was one major exception to the otherwise exclusive focus on stemming asylum flows: the Bosnian and Kosovar programme 'refugees' who were admitted to the UK in the 1990s. These groups received considerable amounts of integration support – there are parallels here with the Belgian and Polish refugees earlier in the century, where public sympathy created the space for government to take a more interventionist approach to integration. Unfortunately, despite considerable investment, the eventual labour market outcomes of these groups were often poor – as with the Vietnamese refugees a decade earlier (Refugee Council 1991).

Apart from guidance governing the Bosnia Programme, no policy on migrant integration was issued by the Home Office in the years between 1990 and 1996. The lack of consideration given to integration policy at national level in the UK during this period was in striking contrast to other countries in Europe, where there was growing national debate about the integration of 'unassimilable' minority ethnic groups (Lutz et al 1995).

The three years following Labour's 1997 general election victory saw little consideration given to migrant integration, despite a greater debate about inequality, poverty and social justice. Policymakers at the time were giving much consideration to 'social exclusion',<sup>21</sup> a newly-coined term to describe multiple social disadvantage. Debates about social exclusion initially had little direct influence on thinking about migrant integration, but had a less tangible effect in that social exclusion framed the thinking about inequality and vulnerable groups at a local government level – particularly in the periods of the first Labour administration of 1997–2001.

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21 When individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001).

There was also a revived debate about race equality in the first Labour government, promoted by the publication in 1999 of the Macpherson report into the murder of London teenager Stephen Lawrence (Macpherson 1999). The report led to a review of race equality legislation and passage of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This placed an obligation on public bodies to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good community relations. However, this legislation has rarely been used to support the integration of new migrants, with one study concluding:

**‘Refugees, asylum seekers and white migrants are not considered by many public authorities to fall within the remit of “race relations”. This is largely because of a widely-held view among public authorities that ‘race relations’ involves established ethnic minority communities, but not new European immigrants. The findings of our research show that this simplistic ‘black and white’ perspective on race relations is out of step with the UK’s new diversity and the tensions arising from it that tend to divide communities in increasingly complex ways.’**

IPPR 2007b

The failure of the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote integration is further evidence of the continued legacy of racial essentialism in public policy.

### 2000–2005: integration on the agenda<sup>22</sup>

At the start of the decade, the policymaking community remained narrowly focused on issues around asylum inflows. The Home Office did start to combine their attempts to reduce the asylum numbers with a more positive approach to the integration of those who remained, publishing a refugee integration strategy in 2000 (Home Office 2000). At the same time it set up Asylum Consortia (which later became Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships) and the National Refugee Integration Forum, both of which aimed to promote integration. Led by the Home Office, the National Refugee Integration Forum brought together government departments and non-governmental organisations, but this was hampered by the low level of involvement from civil servants outside the Home Office and eventually disbanded in 2006 (Rutter 2006). The difficulties faced by this forum to bring about a more coordinated response to the integration of refugees highlighted the large numbers of government departments and non-departmental government bodies involved in integration policy and the difficulties of inter-departmental working – an issue discussed later in this paper.

But although asylum numbers remained high, the focus of government attention soon broadened out beyond asylum. This was not due to any proactive rethink by policymakers, but was a response to external shocks, in particular, civil disturbances in northern cities in 2001, the September 11 atrocities, as well as growing media and public concern at rising levels of immigration.

The first external shock was the riots in Bradford and Oldham in the summer of 2001. The publication of the Cantle and Ouseley reports into these disturbances identified housing, employment and educational segregation experienced by British Muslims in many of the UK’s cities (Bradford Vision 2001, Cantle 2001). The September 11 terrorist attacks led to a sudden concentration of interest in overseas terrorist groups, and the related but distinct phenomenon of growing religious extremism in the UK. These two sets of events created a great deal of soul searching about ‘Britishness’ and the attachment of young

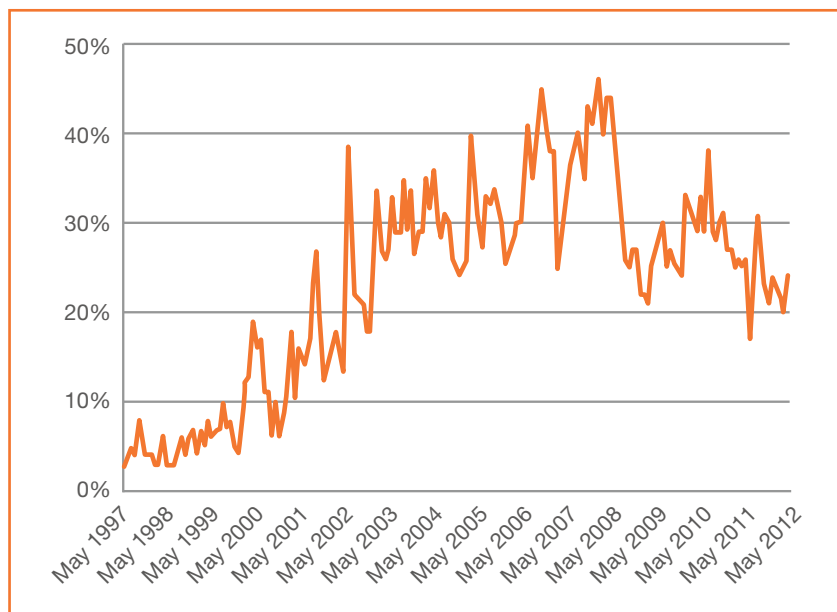
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22 For accounts of immigration policy after 2000 see Finch and Goodhart 2010, Somerville 2008, Spencer 2011.

Muslims in this country to its institutions. This time also marked the start of a major shift away from multiculturalism, with the UK's tolerance of diversity 'blamed' for causing social segregation, the alienation of young Muslims and thus the rise in religious extremism.

Over and above all of this, there was growing public and political concern about levels of immigration. Since 2000, public concern about immigration has risen across the developing world, but the change has been particularly marked in Britain (figure 4.1).<sup>23</sup> Polling data since then shows that immigration has never dropped out of the top five public issues. Undoubtedly, this has limited the political space for interventions to support integration, while at the same time providing an even stronger argument for effective integration policies.

**Figure 4.1**  
Percentage of people citing 'race relations and immigration' as one of the top issues facing the country, 1997–2011



Source: Ipsos MORI Monthly Tracker, <http://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-immigration-overall-attitudes-and-level-concern>

At this time, the majority of Labour ministers shared a conviction that immigration for work and study was good for the UK economy. Of course, they were also aware of voters' concerns, but they believed that the public's disquiet and anger was directed not at immigration itself but at various high-profile issues associated with it, for example, operational scandals such as failures to remove foreign national prisoners. Labour's leadership believed that if these problems were tackled, public concern about immigration would drop away to manageable levels. They therefore adopted a consciously 'balanced' approach: tough on dealing with unfounded asylum applications but also offering support to migrants trying to integrate into their new home. Such a balanced approach was articulated in *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with diversity in modern Britain*, the 2002 immigration white paper (Home Office 2002).

The 2002 white paper paved the way for the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 which introduced the legal basis for citizenship ceremonies involving an oath of allegiance and pledge to the UK, as well as a citizenship test, to be taken by applicants for

23 See the most recent Transatlantic Trends: Immigration for comparative figures: <http://trends.gmfus.org>

naturalisation in the UK. The first ceremonies were held in 2004. From 2005, all applicants for naturalisation have had to sit and pass a 'Life in the UK' citizenship test, or pass an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course with a citizenship component in the teaching.<sup>24</sup> Both the ceremonies and tests aimed to foster among migrants a greater sense of attachment to the UK, as well as provide greater incentives to learn English. The incentive to learn English was later applied more widely across the immigration system, including introducing language tests before entry in some categories.

Funding for adult ESOL was also substantially increased at this time, with spending tripling in the period 2001–2004. However, central government did not address issues of quality in ESOL provision, nor the lack of progress among many students. A further refugee integration strategy was published in 2005, which led to the Home Office funding an advice service to those granted refugee status or leave to remain in the UK (Home Office 2005).

### 2005–2010: immigration in the spotlight

After 2005, two further external shocks challenged the approach taken previously by the Labour government: the terrorist attacks in London in July 2005; and increasing concerns about high levels of immigration from the new member states of the EU. As already noted, migrants from the new member states were different from previous groups of migrants in that they were free to move to the UK, outside the Home Office remit of border control. The vast majority of them came to work and did not need much support in finding employment. Those working on integration inside government had largely based their policy thinking on refugees and the arrival of eastern European labour migrants prompted a rethink of integration policy. As a result, the years 2005 to 2010 saw the greatest amount of activity on migrant integration of any government since the 1960s. Unfortunately, this high level of policy activity often lacked coherence, with many initiatives cutting across each other, and some being started but never followed through.

Almost all integration policy was driven by the UK government at this time, although broader debates in Europe about 'unassimilable' groups did continue to influence policymakers. The institutions of the EU had little impact on integration policy in the UK, although the 1999 Tampere summit established the European Refugee Fund, which aimed for a greater sharing of the financial responsibility for supporting refugees. This fund now sits alongside the European Integration Fund and in the UK both are administered by the UK Border Agency and support projects that aim to improve the integration of migrants. Integration policy did receive a boost in the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon, which gives EU policymakers a solid legal basis for developing measures to 'support' member states in their national strategies on immigrant integration. Informal ministerial meetings on integration took place in Potsdam (2007) and in Vichy (2008).<sup>25</sup>

One of the first policy changes relating to integration was a significant reorganisation of governmental responsibilities in May 2006, when the parts of the Home Office that dealt with race and faith, were moved into the new Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). However, some responsibilities for integration remained with the Home Office, including refugee integration, and funding of the Regional Strategic Migration

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24 In 2007, this requirement was extended to those applying for permanent residency in the UK.

25 Arguably, a more significant EU intervention, from a UK perspective, was the 2010 Zaragoza conference, which saw heated debate on integration between the French and Spanish governments and the rejection of a French proposal for EU-wide integration contract. This conference recognised the poor labour market outcomes of many migrants in Europe and the central importance of employment in promoting integration. It also resulted in the Zaragoza Declaration, which called on the European Commission to develop some common European indicators of integration, a measure that is being taken forward in the Stockholm Programme.

Partnerships, as well as running the now defunct Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration. Integration policy across government, therefore, remained fragmented.

The new structures in CLG were then focused on two different integration challenges: religious extremism, of growing importance since September 11 but particularly after 7/7; and the challenges posed by migration from the new member states of the EU. In the period from 2006 up to the election in 2010, CLG's work on these issues included:

- servicing an Independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion, which reported in 2007
- running the Migration Impacts Forum, attended by key local government personnel
- managing the Migration Impacts Fund, which channelled additional monies to local public services to help them cope with the impact of migration
- developing a proposal to set up a non-departmental government body with responsibility for migrant integration, an idea that was never followed through (CLG, 2008b).

The period after 2005 also saw more concern about the direction of 'multicultural' policy in the UK, a view that had started to be articulated after 2000 and has been taken up by some within the Coalition government. Across Europe, both politicians and public intellectuals articulated a view that too much emphasis had been placed on the value of cultural diversity and its institutionalisation through the education system.

Multiculturalism, too, was felt by some commentators to undermine enlightenment values; by others, to undermine support for the welfare state (see Wessendorf 2009). Critics of the UK's multiculturalist policies have often suggested that single group organisations accentuate cultural difference and increase social segregation, as well as threatening a shared national identity (ibid). These concerns were translated into public policy on two occasions: once in 2007 when Hazel Blears, secretary of state for communities and local government, urged local authorities to cut back on their translation and interpreting services; then in 2008, when CLG published *Cohesion Guidance for Funders*.

Ostensibly a public consultation, this document outlined the department's thinking about the public funding of organisations that worked with a single ethnic or religious group. It articulated a view that only community organisations that tried to promote links with other sectors of the community – by promoting 'bridging capital' – should attract public funding (CLG 2008a). The publication of this document was interpreted as a signal that the state intended to cease funding the majority of these organisations. Unsurprisingly, there was much lobbying and a large response to the consultation. The furore that attended the publication of *Cohesion Guidance for Funders* portrayed support for migrant integration as something that could be delivered either by mainstream organisations, for example, JobCentre Plus, or by community organisations, and not by both. In reality, as outlined in the policy recommendations, there are a range of ways that migrants needs are met, by both mainstream state services and by non-governmental organisations, and sometimes together.

Hazel Blears' views about translation and interpreting services were interpreted as an attack on multiculturalism: that state support for diversity absolved migrants of the need to learn English. This was unfortunate, as Blears raised important issues. Expenditure on translation and interpreting is considerable within the public services; research undertaken in 2012 suggested that the NHS alone spends £23 million a year on translation and interpreting, with comparable amounts spent by the police (Gan 2012).



While interpreters are essential in some situations – in courts, for example, there could be considerable savings in written translation costs. Local authorities and health authorities could collaborate much more than they do when commissioning written translated material. Additionally, there is little understanding of how migrant and minority ethnic groups use translated material, with a number of commentators arguing that some of it is of little use in promoting integration (Rutter et al 2008b).

Overall, the period 2005–2010 was marked by the generation of a great deal of policy, but little coherence and follow-through. In that five-year period, integration rarely attracted much interest in itself. More often it was linked to other high-profile issues such as religious extremism, or overall immigration numbers. This linking of integration with other issues meant that integration policy was subsumed into four other policy areas discussed below:

- social cohesion
- migration impacts on public services
- security policy and the need to combat religious extremism
- naturalisation policy and a renewal of Britishness.

### Integration through social cohesion

In the UK, notions of social cohesion influenced the urban regeneration programmes of the 1997–2001 Labour government, which emphasised reducing income inequalities and social exclusion in deprived communities. But since 2001, and to a greater extent after 2007, social cohesion has taken on new meanings that emphasise race, religion and immigration. Other components of cohesive communities, such as limiting income inequality, have been given less emphasis. Importantly, debates about social cohesion have come to dominate and overshadow integration policy.

Analysis of CLG’s publications between 2005 and 2010 shows integration being confused with social cohesion and seen as groups of people getting on with each other (CLG 2008a, 2008b). As a consequence, conditions such as labour market participation, income and housing inequalities experienced by migrants were lost as a policy objective. Spencer highlights this shift in meaning, citing an interview with an officer from the UK Border Agency (UKBA):

**‘[Integration] is seen as people getting on, as a subset of cohesion. It is a slightly different focus from the UKBA perspective. We recognise that integration takes place at different levels. We have a sharp focus on language and knowledge of life in the UK, and a stronger focus on support for the individual, whereas CLG are looking at the big picture, and the big picture is cohesion.’**

Spencer 2011

This confusion with social cohesion is partly a consequence of the pre-eminence of the work of Robert Putnam, the US political scientist. He had considerable intellectual influence over policymakers in CLG at this time. Much of Putnam’s work focused on social capital which he saw as ‘networks, norms and trust’ (Putnam 1995). From the late 1990s, Putnam had been studying social capital and trust within ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in the United States (Putnam 2001, 2007). He concluded that greater diversity is associated with less trust between and within ethnic groups. Putnam’s conclusions were disputed by those who argued that it was the characteristics of areas that were diverse that caused lower levels of trust, rather than diversity in itself, thus

confusing cause and effect (Saggar et al 2012). Nevertheless, many within government<sup>26</sup> still hold the view that diversity is the primary problem in areas of low social cohesion, rather than the innate characteristics of these areas – economic deprivation and transient population (ibid). This conclusion meant that CLG’s work on ‘integration’ was conflated with social cohesion and tended to focus on the social aspects of it.

### Integration through migration impact policy

After 2005, many in local authorities began to voice concerns about the impact of migrants from the new member states of the EU. Local authorities were concerned that the usual methods of calculating mid-year population estimates – the Annual Population Survey and the International Passenger Survey – undercounted EEA migrants, thus impacting on the allocation of revenue funding from central government. The geographical dispersal of EEA migrants to areas that had not seen much immigration in the past, was also felt to put strains on public services. Additionally, three-year budgets for local authorities were introduced at the same time as the arrival of EEA migrants. While three-year budgetary cycles provide funding certainty for local authorities, they cannot cope with rapid population change.<sup>27</sup> Thus, much of CLG’s work on migration between 2005 and 2010 focused on managing the impacts of migration on public services.

As noted above, CLG serviced the Migration Impacts Forum. While primarily concerned with the impacts of migration on public services, this forum did discuss integration on many occasions. The government also introduced two funds to help manage the impacts of migration on public services in England.

The Exceptional Circumstances Grant, administered by the Department for Education, provided local authorities with extra funding where their overall school pupil numbers or the numbers of pupils with English as an additional language increased by more than 2.5 per cent between the January and autumn school census dates. While this fund remained in place until after April 2011, the level of population change required to trigger its payment was set very high. (In its final year of operation, just four local authorities in England qualified for payments through the Exceptional Circumstances Grant.)

The Migration Impacts Fund was a larger grant of £50 million, funded out of visa fees and presented as additional funding for local services that incurred no extra cost to the UK taxpayer. Like the Exceptional Circumstances Grant the overall policy objective was to make the funding mechanisms for public services more responsive to short-term changes in population, by providing small amounts of additional funding. It was used to fund a wide variety of activities, for example, ESOL classes. The Migration Impacts Fund attracted criticism at the time, as being too small, as being ‘window-dressing’ and not focusing enough on broader community impacts. However, some final evaluations of the fund suggest that many of the activities it funded were successful in helping the integration of new migrants (Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Migration Partnership 2010). The fund was eventually abolished by the Coalition government in 2010.

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26 Author interviews, 2011 and 2012

27 An author interview with a senior government adviser suggests that central government – responding to concerns over immigration – was prepared to reopen the three-year budget settlements to take account of recent migration, but local authorities, whatever their public pronouncements on the issue, privately did not want to do so; what they wanted was additional monies on top of the three-year settlement.



## Integration through security policy

The atrocities of September 11 and 7/7 provoked much research into the causal factors of religious extremism.<sup>28</sup> This research has concluded that there are many factors associated with support for religious extremism and these factors operate at different levels. They include factors intrinsic to individuals, those related to the local community as well as national political, economic, social and cultural conditions. The 2010 Citizenship Survey sheds further light on personal vulnerabilities and local factors. It has shown that support for all kinds of violent extremism is more prevalent, not only among the young, but among lower socioeconomic and income groups. It has also shown that people who distrust parliament, who believe that ethnic and faith groups should not mix, and who see a conflict between being British and their own cultural identity are all likely to be more supportive of violent extremism. Support for extremism is significantly associated with a perception of discrimination and the experience of racial or religious harassment.

As a consequence of these emerging research findings, addressing grievances, working for improved socioeconomic outcomes, securing greater support for liberal values and the institutions of the British state and enabling greater social mixing between Muslim populations and the wider community became a policy objective of government through the first Prevent strategy, published in 2008 (HM Government 2008). This strategy was part of CONTEST, the government's wider counterterrorism strategy and built on pilots set up in 2007. In 2008, £12.5 million were set aside for local partners to deliver the Prevent strategy, with monies targeted at areas with larger Muslim communities.

From its inception, the 2008 Prevent strategy was subject to many criticisms. It was argued that it criminalised whole Muslim communities, alienating them and decreasing their support for institutions such as the police. Local programmes were varied in their approach and the activities that they undertook. This was compounded by a lack of guidance and oversight from central government (Home Office 2011b). A particular challenge for local partners was how they might support the promulgation of liberal values and support for the British state (ibid, Husband and Alam 2011).

However, there remain two legacies of the 2008 Prevent strategy on broader integration. First, due to the high-profile nature of Prevent and the salience of violent extremism as an issue, delivering the Prevent strategy dominated local authority thinking about migrant integration in the period 2008–2010. In some local authorities, integration was – and remains – largely equated with curtailing support for violent extremism among Muslim communities (Husband and Alam 2011). As a consequence, the integration of non-Muslim migrant and minority groups was neglected in many areas. Second, one of the explicit aims of Prevent was to build support for liberal 'British' values and the institutions of the British state. These explicit social and cultural aims, set alongside the conflation of integration policy and Prevent, did much to shift the focus of integration policy towards social and cultural aspects and away from the economic aspects of integration.

## Integration through settlement and naturalisation policy

From 2000 onwards, settlement and naturalisation policy have also been used to promote integration, through the English language requirements needed to secure settlement or naturalisation, the citizenship test and citizenship ceremonies. These obligations are an embodiment of 'contractual' or 'earned' citizenship, an approach that was favoured by government in the period 2006–2010 (Kelly and Byrne 2007).

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28 See for example Briggs 2012

While a move towards contractual citizenship can promote integration, the 2006–2010 period was characterised by a lack of clarity about the aims of naturalisation policy and about the extent to which naturalisation should aid integration. At much the same time as applicants for British citizenship became obliged to show competency in English and sit the citizenship test, the government introduced new measures that made the acquisition of settlement and citizenship a more difficult process. The fees charged for naturalisation increased substantially. The qualifying period for an application for settlement (thus naturalisation) also increased for work visa migrants. Critics argue that lengthening the period that people wait for settlement or citizenship can impact on their integration, as those without the certainty that settlement or citizenship provides may decide not to put down roots in their local communities (Cavanagh 2011b). More fundamentally, Rutter et al (2008a) argue that there is no clarity in naturalisation policy as to whether it should ‘raise the bar’ and make the process of naturalisation harder and more selective, or whether the aims of naturalisation policy should instead focus on integration.

## 5. INTEGRATION UNDER THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

The Coalition government came to power in 2010, inheriting the same context in relation to public opinion on immigration as did the previous Labour government. However, the Coalition had a clear sense that their predecessors had failed on integration policy. In particular, ministers argued that the Labour government had allowed immigration to be too high, and that this had hindered integration. Additionally, it was argued that the previous government had pursued a policy of ‘state-sponsored multiculturalism’, failing to tackle religious extremism, and exacerbating different ethnic and religious groups to live ‘parallel lives’. This diagnosis was articulated in a speech made in Munich in 2011 by prime minister David Cameron.

**‘In the UK, some young men find it hard to identify with the traditional Islam practised at home by their parents whose customs can seem staid when transplanted to modern Western countries. But they also find it hard to identify with Britain too, because we have allowed the weakening of our collective identity. Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. We have failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We have even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values’.**

David Cameron, Munich Security Conference, 5 February 2011<sup>29</sup>

Soon after, in a foreword to a revised Prevent strategy, published in June 2011, the home secretary made the claim that ‘we will do more than any government before us to promote integration’ (Home Office 2011b). The pledge to cut net migration was one of the key components of the new policy framework: fewer permanent immigrants would mean fewer integration problems. While high level of immigration can pose particular challenges to integration, the previous historical review shows that level of immigration is not closely related or simply correlated with integration challenges. The 1980s, for example, historically a period of low net migration, saw poor labour market participation among migrants (Rutter et al 2008a). It is also worth noting that reduced net migration does not necessarily equate to reduced gross immigration, and that the net migration target has led the government to encourage temporary migration rather than permanent migration – something that, as discussed above, poses particular challenges for integration.

A second component of the government’s approach to integration was the commitment to abandon multiculturalism and adopt a more assimilationist approach, with many references to ‘Christian Britain’. Another component was the broader commitment to devolve responsibility for integration policy to local government and civic society – the localism agenda. Finally, like most other areas of social policy, integration policy under the Coalition government has taken place against the background of public spending cuts.

But in the first 18 months of the Coalition, beyond these broad commitments, there was very little detailed discussion of integration policy and little by way of political leadership. Additionally, parts of the previous framework designed to support integration were dismantled – without anything being put in their place. First, in 2010, the Migration Impacts Fund was scrapped, with the government arguing that it was an inefficient use of public money. The Refugee Integration and Employment Service, an advice service commissioned by the UK Border Agency and delivered by NGOs, was another victim of cuts and ceased to operate in 2011. The civil service team within the Department for Communities and

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<sup>29</sup> <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference/>

Local Government that dealt with migration – including migrant integration – was effectively disbanded, leading to a loss of migration expertise within Whitehall.

Next were changes in the remit of the Strategic Migration Partnerships, regional bodies tasked with coordinating local responses to migration. Until recently, the majority of the partnerships' work focused on coordinating support for asylum-seekers as well as promoting broader integration. The remit of the partnerships has now shifted away from integration and is now aligned more closely with UK Border Agency objectives of compliance and asylum return, although they remain funded until 2014.

In April 2011, the Department for Education announced changes to educational funding and merged the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant into the Pupil Premium, while at the same time removing most ring-fencing to school spending in England. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant was a source of funding to local authorities that was mostly dispersed to schools to provide support for children whose first language was not English. Many educationalists argue that the loss of the ring-fence and the change in the funding mechanism – previously to local authorities, now directly to schools – will impact on more isolated groups of migrant children whose needs are not seen as a priority by their schools.

Despite the Coalition's policy stance of continuing its predecessors' emphasis on the importance of migrants learning English, spending on adult ESOL – some £183 million in the 2010/11 academic year – has also been cut.<sup>30</sup> ESOL funding has also seen an overall 4.3 per cent cut, experienced by all further education courses. There have been some cuts specific to ESOL which include the withdrawal of all funding from workplace-based ESOL and a specific cut of 17 per cent for ESOL courses.<sup>31</sup> These cuts also have to be seen alongside proposals to restrict ESOL fee concessions. A 2010 announcement from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills proposed fee concessions for only those actively seeking work, thus excluding groups such as economically inactive spouses or the long-term sick. The government has now retreated from the fee concession change – twice – by letter to colleges giving them the discretion to grant concessionary fees. However, these discretionary waivers are not being applied consistently and future policy remains uncertain.

While it would be unreasonable, in the broader fiscal context, for initiatives supporting migrant integration to be immune from funding cuts, some of the policy changes advanced by the government seem to be a false economy. The Refugee Integration and Employment Service could have been incorporated into the Department for Work and Pensions' Work Programme and retained its expertise. The changes to ESOL funding have the potential to increase interpreting and translation costs, as well as impacting – negatively – on the ability of some migrants to find work.

Alongside spending cuts, has come a commitment by the UK Border Agency to meet the net migration target, reduce backlogs and increase the removal of groups such as foreign national prisoners. This has resulted in the UK Border Agency de-prioritising refugee integration, an issue for which it still maintains responsibility. A refugee integration working group was reconstituted in 2012, but has a very narrow remit that excludes much inter-departmental working.<sup>32</sup> This policy 'lockdown' means that the UK Border Agency is unlikely to take the lead on pushing for better cross-departmental working on integration.

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30 ESOL courses vary in price, but full-fee courses tend to be too expensive for those on low or modest incomes. A typical full-fee of about 40 hours' tuition costs £300–£500 over one term.

31 For an analysis of these cuts see <http://www.niace.org.uk>

32 Author interview, January 2013

## Creating the conditions for integration

While the Coalition government did make some broad interventions on integration in its first 18 months, there was little by way of detail until the publication in February 2012 of *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, a strategy paper from CLG.<sup>33</sup>

While this policy paper affirmed social mobility and shared values as being preconditions of integration, there is a great deal that is missing. While work is a significant driver of integration, and while some migrant groups have low levels of labour market participation, there is little mention of how welfare-to-work initiatives delivered through the Work Programme should meet the specific needs of migrants. Neither does the integration strategy address poverty and the divide between low-income migrant groups and the rest of society.<sup>34</sup> No central government programme of work is attached to *Creating the Conditions for Integration*. At the time of writing, there are few plans for CLG to work with local public services to take this agenda forward, apart from a fund of £6 million from the department that aims to promote innovation in ESOL teaching (Pickles 2013).

*Creating the Conditions for Integration* appears to be a manifestation of the government's 'localism' agenda. Ostensibly advanced as a means of giving power back to local communities, many progressive commentators have highlighted the inconsistency of localism (Cox 2010). Central government's desire to intervene on local issues appears to be as strong as ever – where it wishes to be. At the same time, there seem to be few examples of central government empowering local communities to act and respond to local conditions. Rather, localism, as seen by Coalition government, appears to comprise an end to ring-fenced funding, the retraction of regulations and guidance and the withdrawal of political leadership from central government. This would not matter so much if there was a real desire within local government to advance migrant integration policies. However, strategy documents from many local authorities – for example, housing strategies, children and young people's plan – no longer mentioned migration in any detail. This is in contrast to the period 2006–2010 when many local authority strategies acknowledged the presence of migrants and some did more. Arguably, the controversy attached to immigration has made it difficult for local authority leaders to stand up for interventions that are seen as helping migrants. Mentioning migrants had become a taboo in many arenas and integration has slipped of the agenda of the majority of local authorities.

At the same time, politicians have continued to highlight the need for migrant and minority communities to aspire to 'British' values, something that was articulated *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, as well as in recent debates about the revised Citizenship Test.<sup>35</sup> This is not a new trend; during the last decade, politicians of all parties have become more interested in the cultural aspect of integration – and the related question of Britishness. For example, Gordon Brown called for a civic Britishness, not based on 'blood, race and territory' but based on specific values such as a commitment to tolerance and social justice. Most recently, leader of the opposition, Ed Miliband, called for a renewal of both English and British identity in a speech made in June 2012:

**'The essence of English identity is not found with the grandeur of public office or in Westminster and Whitehall, but in the courageous**

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33 The strategy paper covers England only, as local government is a devolved power.

34 See Rutter 2011

35 In July 2012, home secretary Theresa May announced changes to the Citizenship Test that would put 'our culture and history at the heart of the citizenship test' in order to improve community cohesion and integration.

**communities across our land, wherever people come together to struggle to improve their lives and the lives of others.'**

Miliband 2012a

Miliband's speech took Britishness away from abstract notions of identity and focused more on its practical application. He, among others, defined Britishness as an active, participatory identity, rather than simply an emotional bond.

Much of the debate around the renewal of Britishness distinguishes between two very different forms of national allegiance: ethnic/cultural and civic. Ethnic nationalism promotes an idea of biological ancestry that links an individual to the nation and its customs, history and traditions. Obviously immigration threatens a model of Britishness based on ethnicity and common ancestry. Cultural nationalism places more emphasis on common historical and cultural references. Civic nationalism stresses a belonging to the nation on the basis of citizenship rights, shared political values, common civic institutions and a shared language (Fenton 2007). In principle, both cultural and civic nationalism are consistent with immigration to the extent that migrants can be expected 'play by the rules' of civic institutions, and (at least to some extent) understand and adopt important aspects of British culture over time. But any attempt to build an integrated and cohesive society based on values faces a dilemma: whether to opt for universal values (democracy, tolerance and so on), which are more inclusive but less distinctively British, or whether instead to opt for a distinctive set of values which will necessarily find it harder to attract consensus.

Present government policy struggles with this dilemma. *Creating the Conditions for Integration* talks about 'democracy, rule of law, equality of opportunity and treatment, freedom of speech and the rights of all men and women to live free from persecution of any kind.' Despite being referred to as 'British values', these could be signed up to by most democratic societies. On the other hand, ministers continue to talk about 'Christian values' (Pickles 2013) and changes to the Citizenship Test in 2013 place much greater stress on British cultural and historical references. While the study guide for the Citizenship Test has always included chapters on British history, until 2013 there were no historical questions in the test. These changes mark a move away from civic understandings of Britishness that stress values such as democracy and the rule of law, in favour of a more cultural understanding. Arguably, any attempt to foster cultural integration will always struggle to make progress if there is a lack of clarity and consensus in the general population about shared values, or national identity, as well as a lack of clarity about the role of the state in fostering or defining these values.

## 6. INTEGRATION: WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE TELL US?

As noted above, the evidence base on integration is poor, sometimes as a consequence of a lack of conceptual clarity about what integration comprises. The inherent complexity of integration presents challenges when analysing and presenting policy-relevant data. For example, male, India-born migrants in the UK have good labour market outcomes, but are much less likely to marry outside their religious and caste affiliation. Are they more or less integrated than someone who 'marries out' but is unemployed?

Cause and effect are confused in some studies of integration, as is structure and agency. For example, does living in a deprived city neighbourhood cause or drive poor levels of integration, or are the poor levels of integration in these places an outcome of high levels of migration? Or both?

Another facet of the poor evidence base is the lack of longitudinal data – a crucial gap given that integration is inherently a long-term process. An internal Home Office longitudinal study was begun in 2004, but then abandoned. A three-year survey about migrant integration was placed out to tender in 2008, but it was never progressed. The absence of longitudinal data in the UK is in contrast to most other developed countries, for example, Canada which has undertaken four longitudinal surveys of immigrants, starting in 1969 (Black et al 2003).

Some longitudinal data about migrants in the UK can be extracted from general datasets. The Lifetime Labour Market Database, an administrative dataset held by the Department for Work and Pensions, is a longitudinal dataset of 1 per cent of national insurance number-holders and dates back to 1978. Its size means that there is a large sample of migrants among the data (Dickens and McKnight 2009). By definition, however, it is restricted to the labour market experiences of migrants. Looking to the future, 'Understanding Society', the UK Household Longitudinal Study, begun in 2009, has great potential to provide useful data. Comprising 100,000 individuals in 40,000 households, it is the largest longitudinal study to date. Its large sample size means that it yields a large enough sample of migrants to enable a meaningful analysis of diverse migrant groups. But most of these datasets have so far been underexploited, from a migration perspective.

A further challenge to collecting evidence about integration concerns the categories used. Rarely do administrative datasets – for example, the School Census – ask questions about migration and length of time spent in the UK. Rather, quantitative analysis of administrative datasets usually uses the broad ethnicity categories used in the census. These broad categories aggregate diverse groups – for example, those of Nigerian and Somali origin into the category 'Black African', obscuring sharp differences in experiences of education, employment and other aspects of integration and producing an uninformative or even misleading overall average. Reports about integration from non-governmental organisations often use the governmental categories of immigration control – for example, looking at the integration experiences of refugees – again aggregating diverse groups of people.

Using country-of-birth categories to collect or analyse evidence on integration would be superior to these broad categories, but it does not highlight inter-generational trends in communities where an increasing proportion is born in the UK. Also, many argue that integration is a challenge for second and third generations in some communities. There are also considerable differences *within* communities in relation to educational achievement and labour market outcomes, which can be obscured by analysis that focuses exclusively on country-of-birth groups (Rutter et al 2008b).



All these ways of categorising migrants risk reinforcing a common assumption: integration outcomes are a result of events in the UK – ignoring the pre-migration experiences of the migrants. Yet the pre-migratory educational and employment experiences of migrants significantly impact on their labour market experiences in the UK. Social class is another factor which is usually ignored in studies of integration: in many accounts, migrants appear as a homogeneous and classless group, yet class is one of the factors most strongly associated with successful integration trajectories.

There is also a very limited evidence base when it comes to understanding what works in terms of successful integration interventions or practices, either in the UK or outside. Understandings of good practice tend to rely on anecdotal evidence from organisations that have the resources to promote their work. There is also very little research that has examined social returns on investment, a knowledge gap that is of particular significance at present when it would be useful to know what interventions were the most cost-effective. In the UK there is an almost total absence of good ethnographic studies about integration and cohesion and little tradition of using ethnographic research to inform public policy. IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research hopes to help to fill this particular gap in the evidence and yield new data about the experiences of migrants in communities and institutions such as schools, children's centres, workplaces and colleges (Cherti and McNeil 2012). Those quantitative studies that do exist often rely on interviewing local government officials and leaders of community organisations, who may have a vested interest in problematising integration and cohesion in order to secure funding for their organisations. Indeed, much research on refugee integration focuses on the institutions of integration and seldom analyses the experiences of migrants themselves.

While the evidence base on integration is often poor, it is important to use the evidence that exists in order to inform public policy. This evidence is discussed below. What emerges from it is that the UK's record on integration is a relatively positive one, with many migrants enjoying some measure of success in work and their new neighbourhoods. However, some groups, particularly refugees and family migrants, often experience greater integration challenges. While much integration happens without intervention from the state, there is a role for policy, particularly with respect to groups that face the greatest difficulties in achieving successful integration outcomes.

### **Migrants' own understandings of integration**

There have been a number of recent studies that have examined how migrants themselves understand integration. These qualitative studies show that migrants largely see integration in local or everyday terms rather than in terms of integration into a national culture or way of life. Labour market experiences and interactions in their immediate neighbourhood are other aspects of integration that are stressed in the studies that analyse migrants' own understandings of this process (Cherti and McNeil 2012, Korac 2003, Rutter et al 2007, Rutter et al 2008b, Wessendorf 2011).

Drawing from the work of Brubaker et al (2008), Cherti and McNeil (2012) argue that to understand integration we need to consider how migrants think about their own place within their new homes. They argue that the process of integration takes place in 'everyday' sites such as schools, shops and workplaces and in the realities of everyday life. Those concerned with integration need to account for the everyday concerns of migrants and the communities in which they live (ibid).



This raises an interesting tension, with migrants seeing integration as relating to everyday and local interactions while the public political and policy debates often focus on questions of identity and the national way of life. Migrants also tend to place greater emphasis on their own wellbeing as a component of integration, yet wellbeing as a desirable outcome of integration has largely been ignored by policymakers.

### Education, qualifications and skills of adults

A number of research studies have suggested that the two most important factors that determine whether a migrant will find work are fluency in English and a UK qualification (Dustmann 2003, Bloch 2004). Arrival in the UK with a higher level overseas qualification also confers an advantage in job-seeking, but less so than a UK qualification.

Overall, the overseas-born population is much more likely to possess a higher level qualification<sup>36</sup> than the UK-born population (IPPR 2007a). But there is considerable variation in qualification levels between *and* within national groups (see table 6.1). There are a number of country-of-birth groups where high proportions of adults have no qualifications at all, including those born in Ireland, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Italy, Somalia, Turkey, Portugal, Cyprus and Afghanistan. These are all groups who usually experience higher levels of unemployment and lower average earnings than the UK-born population.

Data from the Census 2011 suggests that 4.3 per cent of all households in England and Wales have no household members who speak English as their main language. This does not imply that no one speaks English at all, with census data also showing that just 1.6 per cent of all people over three years of age did not speak English well or at all. Recent estimates suggest that there may be as many as 600,000 people of working age in London alone who have limited competency in English (O’Leary 2008).

But this data indicates that there are some migrant groups whose participation in education and the labour market is impeded by poor levels of English. Short-term migrants from the EU and spouses who arrived in the UK before English language tests were introduced are groups least likely to speak and write fluent English. Poor English does not mean that migrants will be unable to find any work; rather, their employment opportunities may simply be restricted.

The last government responded to this challenge by tripling the budget for adult ESOL. New ESOL for work qualifications were introduced in 2007 to meet the needs of migrants already in employment. Despite these developments, there remain some long-term problems in the delivery of adult ESOL that have not really improved in the last 15 years. Regulations in England exclude some groups from concessionary fees until they have permanent settlement. The quality of some ESOL teaching is low and there is often limited progression for those who do attend classes (NIACE 2006). There are many parts of the country where it is difficult to find a class at the appropriate level. There is also very little provision in rural areas where many new migrants from eastern Europe now reside. Additionally, the present way of delivering ESOL – though classes located in further education colleges – does not reach those who most need support learning English – those working long hours and those with little prior education who may not feel confident enough to step inside a college. There is little evidence to show that colleges and local authority adult education services are developing alternative models of provision to meet the needs of those currently not being served by classes in colleges. Although, the recent announcement of a £6 million fund to promote innovation in ESOL teaching may help address this.

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36 Level 3 and above, the equivalent of A-levels and above.

## Labour market participation

Being in work drives integration as the workplace is the most important space in which migrants meet and interact with others (Spencer 2006). Labour market participation is also an outcome of successful integration. Those without work and without an income are much more likely to be excluded from the social interactions that promote integration.

The labour market experiences of migrants are as diverse as their qualifications profile. Migrants overall have a slightly lower employment rate than the UK-born population, but this is a statistic which masks significant variation across different migrant groups. Overall, some 71.3 per cent of the UK-born population aged 16–64 were employed in the period October to December 2011. Over the same period, the employment rate for those born outside the UK was 66.4 per cent. But among 16–64-year-olds born in Bangladesh and Pakistan, 51.1 per cent were in employment in the last quarter of 2011. In the same period, the employment rates for those born in the new members states of the EU was 81.7 per cent, and for those born in Australia and New Zealand it was 86.5 per cent.

One of the common factors associated with employment rates is the mode of entry into the UK: newly-arrived EU migrants and those arriving on work visas have high levels of employment; groups of migrants who arrive as asylum-seekers or spouses tend to have lower levels of employment. For example, over the last 10 years, the employment rate of the Somalia-born population has rarely been above 20 per cent of the 16–64-year-old population. Research on barriers to work among refugees suggests that limited fluency in English, employer prejudice, the absence of UK qualifications, childcare obligations, and the fear of loss of benefits all contribute to high levels of unemployment (Carey-Wood et al 1994, Bloch 2004). Job-seeking in UK requires cultural knowledge and research has shown that some groups are not familiar with the cultural aspects of job-seeking in the UK, for example, the specifics of applications and how interviews are conducted (Marshall 1991). The policy to disperse asylum-seekers outside London and the South East may have impacted on their ability to find work; many end up in areas where unemployment is already high (Rutter et al 2008b).

Overall, migrant women are more likely to be in work than UK-born women and are less likely to work part-time (Rendall and Salt 2005, Dickens and McKnight 2009). But female employment rates are much lower in some migrant groups, particularly those from South Asia. Here a lack of qualifications, limited fluency in English, childcare obligations and cultural values about women's employment may all contribute to lower levels of economic activity (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2003).

There have been a number of welfare-to-work initiatives targeted at specific communities or groups such as refugees. These include training funded by the European Social Fund, the New Deal for Communities and mostly delivered by colleges and migrant groups. The UK Border Agency funded the Refugee Integration and Employment Service until 2011, providing employment-related advice for those granted refugee status or other leave to remain in the UK. While some of these targeted interventions have had good outcomes, a large number of them did not, even at times in the early 2000s when overall UK unemployment was itself low (Rutter et al 2008b)

Non-targeted interventions include support provided through JobCentre Plus and the new Work Programme. In the past, there have been many criticisms of mainstream welfare-to-work programmes in relation to their inflexibility and failure to meet the requirements of those with multiple social needs (Harker and Oppenheim 2007). It remains to be seen

whether the Work Programme will show greater flexibility, or will tap the expertise of organisations that work with migrants. So far there is little evidence to show that those with expertise in working with migrants are being involved in designing and delivering the Work Programme. Indeed, some recent research suggests that many third sector organisations feel that their participation in the Work Programme has been ‘window dressing’ and they have little real power to determine the content of welfare-to-work support (Rees et al 2011).

The effects of the recession on some migrant groups, including young migrants, is also an issue of concern. Recent analysis of the Labour Force Survey suggests that the employment rate among many migrant groups has fallen at a faster rate than the overall population (see table A1). Given the importance of labour market participation in ensuring integration, the absence of discussion of this issue in *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, the government’s 2012 integration strategy, was a major omission.

### Labour market segregation

While being in work supports integration, the type of work that migrants do, as well as their levels of pay, can also affect this process. Those migrants who largely work with co-nationals have fewer opportunities to mix outside their communities. There is considerable evidence of occupational segregation in parts of the economy – the health and social care sectors, hotel and catering, farming and food processing display some degree of occupational segregation in some regions (IPPR 2007a).

Labour market segregation has received recent scrutiny, partly as a consequence of emerging Labour party policy on migrant integration, with Ed Miliband identifying this as a priority area for action in his landmark speech on integration in December 2012 (Miliband 2012b). There has also been recent media coverage of alleged restrictive employment practices in the food processing sector and by some cafe chains (Davis 2012). But there has been comparatively little research into the causes of this form of segregation and, as a consequence, little policy response to it. A number of commentators would argue that, although an illegal practice, some recruitment agencies or employers are taking on migrants in preference to UK-born workers. An alternative view is that the real cause of labour market segregation is that jobs at the lower end of the income distribution cannot be filled by UK-born workers. Instead, the jobs that are available in certain sectors are those that are only attractive to migrant workers – often those who have no children and so no childcare costs. These jobs are usually low-paid, low-skilled, involve working outside normal office hours, often temporary, and lack career progression.

In reality the causes of labour market segregation are often more complex, a view supported by a recent statutory inquiry of the Equality and Human Rights Commission into the meat processing sector, following media debate about the low proportions of UK-born workers in this sector (EHRC 2010). The inquiry found evidence of the preferential treatment of migrants by a small number of employers and recruitment agencies. A stronger work ethic and easier communications where the workforce largely spoke one language were reasons that employment agencies took on migrant workers in preference to UK-born worker. However, the inquiry also found that the low wages of the sector – sometimes below the national minimum wage – and unpleasant working conditions deterred UK-born workers. The inquiry report stressed the importance of upholding employment rights in this sector. This would benefit the integration of individual migrants, but it may also result in making meat processing a more attractive form of employment to UK-born workers, decreasing ethnic segregation in this sector

and enabling the workplace to be a site of integration. The above example shows how integration policy easily overlaps with other policy areas, in this case, employment rights.

### Income and integration

Income levels are also an indicator of integration, as well as affecting the process of integration itself. Those on low incomes often have limited opportunities for social interactions in their local areas – simply because they cannot afford to visit leisure centres, cafes and other spaces of everyday integration (Datta et al 2006).

Research has highlighted the differential income levels of overseas-born populations. One study undertaken in 2007 indicated average gross hourly pay was higher than the UK-born population among those born in the USA, Australia, Uganda, Kenya, Italy and Jamaica. Those born in Turkey, Somalia and Poland had the lowest gross hourly pay (IPPR 2007a). As with all other social groups, migrants with lower-than-average incomes may have lower-than-average incomes because of unemployment, but also because they may be over-represented in low-waged jobs in industrial sectors that are traditionally poorly paid, for example intensive agriculture, or the social care sectors.

There is also much research to show that the income of significant numbers of migrants falls below the national minimum wage (Jayaweera and Anderson 2008). Indeed, migrant workers are vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace, with the most vulnerable being the most socially isolated from mainstream UK society, those who speak little English and those living in areas where there are no support organisations. The solutions for migrants who are at risk of in-work poverty and workplace exploitation are much the same as the interventions needed to end labour market segregation, for example the enforcement of the national minimum wage. It is important to note the success of the Gangmasters Licencing Authority, set up after the Morecambe Bay tragedy<sup>37</sup> in 2004, in enforcing the employment rights of agency workers in the agriculture, shellfish and food processing sectors, many of whom are migrants (Geddes et al 2007). More broadly, other measures to promote migrant integration – countering social isolation, support English language teaching – are likely to decrease vulnerability to workplace exploitation.

### School achievement and progression routes at 16

Concerns about the educational experiences of migrant children date back to the 1960s. However, central government does not collect data on the educational outcomes of specific migrant groups. In England, however, schools and local government have the option of using ‘extended ethnicity codes’ to collect data on educational achievement. Here broad ethnicity categories using in the census can be refined using extended categories.<sup>38</sup> These extended codes can be used as a proxy for migrant groups (although many of the children concerned will have been born in the UK). Table 6.1 (over) presents new analysis for England showing educational performance at 16 (in GCSE examinations) by extended ethnicity code.

While the table highlights differential educational achievement, it should be noted, that not all local authorities in England collect data using extended ethnicity codes; there are some local authorities with diverse populations that do not do so. Additionally, new guidance on school achievement data requires that local authorities submit data to the Department for Education using only four ethnicity categories – White, Black, Asian and Other, thus aggregating diverse groups and masking underachievement in some cases.

37 Here 21 Chinese cockle-pickers working for a British gangmaster were drowned by an advancing tide.

38 BNIG (black Nigerian) and BSOM (black Somalian) are the extended ethnicity codes for Nigerians and Somalis.

**Table 6.1**  
Percentage of children gaining 5 A\*–C grades at GCSE, 2003 and 2010–11 by extended and selected broad ethnicity code, mean difference from England mean

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Mean % difference from England mean, 2010–2011, including maths and English GCSE</b>	<b>Mean % difference from England mean, 2003, excluding maths and English GCSE</b>
Chinese	+38	+11
Sri Lankan Tamil	+32.5	+8
Iranian	+31.9	+5
Vietnamese	+31.5	No data collected
Indian	+29.9	+7
Nigerian	+21.8	+1.5
Ghanaian	+5.5	-0.8
Bangladeshi	+1.8	-9.3
Sierra Leone	+1.4	No data collected
<i>England mean</i>	<i>0 (56.9 of cohort)</i>	
White British/English	-2.3	+1
Italian	-2.8	-1
Pakistan (excluding Mirpur where specified)	-8.6	-11.3
Albanian and Kosovar	-12	No data collected
Turkish/Turkish Cypriot	-19.7	-23.6
Pakistan Mirpuri	-23	No data collected
Somali	-23.7	-22.3
White Eastern European	-23.9	No data collected
Afghan	-25	No data collected
Congolese	-35.3	No data collected
Yemeni	-41.1	No data collected
Portuguese	-45.9	-32.3

Note: This data was collected in April 2012 using Freedom of Information requests to all local authorities in England.

Table 6.1 suggests that some children from migrant and minority groups do well in public examinations at age 16, and others less so. The data also points to changes over a seven-year period which may be due to interventions to support particular groups, or, more likely, as a consequence of the introduction of the maths and English requirement into GCSE data. This analysis needs to be seen alongside 2012 GCSE statistics which, for the first time in five years, show a widening gap between the GCSE results of bilingual children and their peers.<sup>39</sup>

Further analysis of this data shows other important trends. There are often considerable differences between local authorities in the achievement of specific ethnic groups, pointing to heterogeneity within groups as well to the effectiveness of schools and local authorities in raising levels of achievement. There are big gender gaps in levels of achievement: girls do better at school than boys, although the size of these gaps differs between communities.

Analysis of school achievement data, as well a number of recent qualitative studies, shows many optimistic trends, however. London has the highest proportions of migrant children in its schools, yet secondary schools in London have performed better and improved at a faster rate since 2003 than elsewhere in the country (Ofsted 2010). Overall, children from migrant and minority groups tend to do better at school than white UK pupils from similar income groups.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.naldic.org.uk/eal-advocacy/eal-news-summary/260113>

Over the last 10 years there have also been some improvements in educational achievement among a few groups who were previously underachieving, for example, children of Bangladeshi ethnicity. Part-time universal nursery education has meant that many young children no longer start compulsory education at five years of age without speaking English. Reform of the school admission system has meant that migrant children no longer end up in such large numbers in unpopular schools that are rejected by longer-settled groups of parents. But it is important to note there is still significant educational underachievement in some migrant and minority communities. There has also been little progress in improving the educational experiences of children who have had little or no prior education before coming to the UK. Children who arrive in the UK late in their educational careers still find it difficult to secure school places or an appropriate education. In England, targeted funding for English language support in schools – the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant – ended in March 2011, with schools themselves now responsible for deciding the amount and type of English language support.

There is a considerable amount of research that examines the reasons for differential educational achievement among different ethnic groups. Earlier research largely attributed educational underachievement to institutional racism within the school system (see Gillborn 1995). Later studies have taken a more ecological approach and argued that there are usually multiple reasons for differential levels of achievement, some of which relate to the specific pre-migration and migratory experiences of migrant groups as well as the home environment.<sup>40</sup> These studies have given greater recognition to social class and parental education in influencing migrant children's educational achievement. Students' own dispositions and educational ambition also affect educational outcomes, with a study of Chinese school students suggesting that a pro-learning culture and resistance to dominant 'laddish' youth culture contributed to good educational outcomes (Archer and Francis 2003).

A number of studies from the US have also linked acculturation into dominant cultural forms to educational achievement. 'Segmented assimilation' theorists argue that the children of immigrants as well as children who migrated to the US at a very young age ('generation 1.5') may follow one of three assimilation trajectories. First, some immigrant children enjoy educational success at the same time as assimilating into the cultural forms of middle-class, white America. A second group of children experience downward social mobility. They do not succeed at school, because they assimilate into the cultural forms of the American working classes. Third, the children of immigrants may enjoy educational success at the same time as maintaining the social networks and cultural forms of their minority community (Portes and Zhou 1993). In the UK context, segmented assimilation theory has been rejected by most educationalists and there are many valid arguments for doing so. However, this body of work has forced a greater debate about young migrants' class positioning in developed countries, as well as the whole process of integration into dominant, anti-education 'British' cultural forms

Very few studies have looked at young migrants' experiences after age 16. Their rates of continued participation in education after 16 appear to vary considerably (Rutter et al 2008b, DfE 2011). There is some evidence to show that migrants (and UK-born ethnic minorities) are less likely to study on two-year A-level courses after 16, which may affect their choice of university and their eventual employment (Rutter et al 2008b). However, the most worrying trend is the high proportion of young people in some migrant

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40 See for example, Archer and Francis 2003, Rutter 2006



communities who are neither in employment or education. Data from the Office for National Statistics published in February 2012 indicated that, among young black males who were not studying, some 55.9 per cent of the 16–24 population was unemployed, compared with 24.9 per cent in the overall population.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, in the recession, those aged 16–24 from minority ethnic groups have become unemployed at twice the rate of those of white British ethnicity.

### The early years

Successive governments have made children's early years a policy priority. Any analysis of integration policy, therefore, needs to examine the success of mainstream interventions such as Sure Start and free early education in promoting the integration of migrant families.

In 1998 the government announced that all four-year-olds would receive some free early education. This extension of early education has been expanded by successive government. Today in England, all three- and four-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours' free early education, and by 2014 the 40 per cent most deprived two-year-olds in England will also qualify for it.<sup>42</sup> Free early education, mostly delivered in nurseries, has the potential to be of particular significance in migrant families with young children, as it means that children can enter compulsory education speaking some English.

The first Sure Start children's centres were also set up in 1998, offering childcare and a range of integrated support services. Today, children's centres provide a universal service for all families, as well as targeted support for specific groups. Statutory guidance stipulates that the additional support offered by children's centres must include health advice, parenting support and assistance for parents who want to get back into work (DfE 2010). Sure Start has the potential to promote the integration of migrant families by acting as an 'integration hub' – a site where different groups of parents meet and interact. National guidance still stipulates that Sure Start children's centres should aim to promote social cohesion (*ibid*).

While free early education and the services in children's centres have the potential to help the integration of migrant families with young children, there is evidence that these social interventions may not be fulfilling this aim. There is evidence of developmental gaps between some ethnic groups and the England average in relation to young children's development, particularly their linguistic development. Figure 6.1 (over) presents 2011 data from one London local authority on Early Years Foundation Stage Profile<sup>43</sup> scores by ethnic group, highlighting differential levels of development.

In some areas the uptake of free early education is low among some migrant and minority ethnic groups. Similarly, in some areas Sure Start is not reaching some minority ethnic populations which may include many migrants.<sup>44</sup>

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41 ONS live tables; ONS does not break this data down by country of birth.

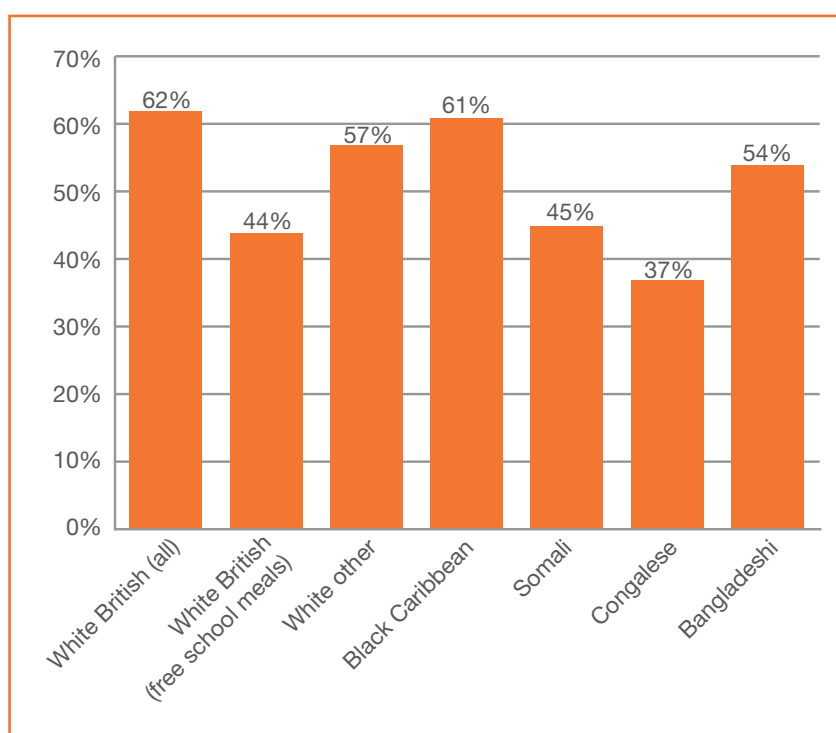
42 Young children in Scotland and Wales also qualify for some free early education, although it amounts to fewer hours than in England.

43 This is an assessment of children's level of development typically carried out around the age of five years.

44 Until 2010 Sure Start was obliged by the Department for Education to collect data on registration for an use of its services among minority ethnic groups.



**Figure 6.1**  
 Percentage of children in the London Borough of Camden achieving a good level of development at end of Early Years Foundation Stage, by ethnic group, 2010–2011 mean



Source: School and Early Years Census data, London Borough of Camden.

Where migrant families do use Sure Start and take up free early education, two further issues remain. First, there are high levels of social segregation in nurseries in relation to income and also by ethnicity (Gambaro et al 2014 forthcoming). In England, where 65 per cent of nursery provision is private sector provision, 23 per cent is run by the third sector and 12 per cent is public sector provision analysis of the School Census and Early Years Census indicates that children from workless households are much more likely to use public sector nurseries, mostly those attached to primary schools (ibid). Where workless households are disproportionately from migrant or minority households this segregation limits everyday social mixing. Second, the range and quality of support services offered by Sure Start children's centres is very varied and in some cases may not provide the relevant assistance needed to help the integration of migrant families. For example, links with JobCentre Plus and further education colleges that run ESOL classes vary considerably across England (Marangozov and Stevens 2011).

### Housing and residential segregation

Patterns of housing tenure among migrants are different to those among the UK-born population in a manner that can affect integration. New migrants to the UK are overwhelmingly housed in the private rental sector: 2011 Labour Force Survey suggested that of those who have arrived in the UK during the last five years, some 67 per cent were housed in the private rental sector. Privately rented accommodation is often insecure, and as a consequence those who are housed in it tend to move more frequently than those who are owner-occupiers or social tenants. Consequently, migrants move home more often than the UK-born population, affect their abilities to put roots, form local connections and feel that they 'belong' (Gidley and Jayaweera 2010, Robinson and Reeve 2007).

Generally over a period of time migrants who remain in the UK leave the private rental sector and move into their own housing or become social tenants (Robinson and Reeve 2007, Rutter and Latorre 2008). Income and local housing markets affect these pathways and contribute to the residential segregation experienced by some migrant and minority ethnic groups. For example, the British Pakistani enclaves in central Bradford have partly been driven by the availability of housing. When these communities arrived in the UK in the 1950s and 1960s the only affordable accommodation was located in the centre of the city. The role of income and housing markets is a factor that has been overlooked in debates about residential segregation among migrants.

There has been a great deal of heated debate about patterns of ethnic segregation over the last 10 years. As previously noted, residential segregation can be difficult to measure. Additionally, patterns of ethnic residential segregation may be mediated by other factors such as household income, employment and savings. For example, what is sometimes described as ‘white flight’ from inner cities may be the out-migration of households with higher incomes into the suburbs – in some urban areas these households may be disproportionately of white British ethnicity (Robinson et al 2007). While all levels of government need to be aware of any emerging patterns of segregation, as previously argued, it is important to understand the reasons why migrant and minority communities end up living in particular areas, or do not interact with other groups. Migrant populations that tend to cluster together are those who depend on each other for work or housing (Phillips 1998). Thus residential clustering might be seen as an outcome of poor economic integration, as well as a cause of it. Public policy interventions to tackle residential segregation should thus focus on improving the skills base and employment experiences of migrant groups that are highly dependent on each other for work and survival.

### Social and cultural aspects of integration

This is a mostly qualitative body of research as both the social and cultural aspects of integration are often hard to measure quantitatively. The literature on the social aspects of integration generally comprises three overlapping types of study:

- research on the role of social networks and social capital in enhancing or hindering integration
- how social identities impact on integration (see chapter 3 of this paper)
- newer work on the local and the everyday aspects of integration.

Analyses of social networks draws on theories of social capital, as elaborated by Putnam (1995) who sees social capital as ‘networks, norms and trust.’ and suggests a typology of social capitals, namely:

- **bonding capital** – strong ties within kinship networks or among friends who see themselves as alike
- **bridging capital** – weaker ties outside kinship networks or among people who do not have close affiliations
- **linking capital** – ties between those in power within organisations and the clients they serve.

Social networks help migrants find work and acquire the knowledge need to adapt to life in a new country. Conversely, the social networks – as bonding capital – can inhibit integration if they are at the expense of links outside specific communities. There is little quantitative UK data that measures the extent to which different groups of people interact with each other in their localities. The Citizenship Survey and the successor

Community Life Survey measure less active and concrete conditions such as how much individuals trust others or feel that they belong in their neighbourhoods. However, most qualitative studies from the UK studies of migrants' lives suggest that the great majority of them make friendships and network outside their own national groups (Rutter et al 2007). It is the most vulnerable migrants – often irregular migrants and women with family responsibilities and little English – who tend to be the most isolated. The social networks of migrants is a core issue to be examined in IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research.

A second body of literature – already discussed in chapter 3 of this paper – has examined how social identities impact on integration. There has been much recent interest in migrants' identification with Britishness and British values as been a component of integration. A number of studies have argued that identification with the UK's political institutions and the development of a 'British' component to a person's identity are outcomes or indicators of successful integration (Saggar et al 2012, Rutter et al 2008a). Recent analysis of the Citizenship Survey suggests that the length of residency in the UK is associated with a stronger sense of 'Britishness' (Saggar et al 2012). These findings are supported in qualitative research (Rutter et al 2007, Rutter et al 2008a). That length of settlement determines levels of attachment to the UK and notions of belonging raises issues in an era when short-term migration is on the increase

A third and newer body of literature draws on ethnographic studies argues that integration is essentially an experience that happens locally, in institutions such as schools, in public space and through neighbourhood social interactions (Amin 2007, Brubaker et al 2008, Cherti and McNeil 2012, Wessendorf 2011). Gidley (2012) argues that there has been a 'convivial' turn in the study of integration. This is an area that IPPR's *Everyday Integration* research will examine in detail.

### Groups who are left behind

As already noted, the integration trajectories of migrants differ considerably and most migrants integrate with little input from the state. However, some groups of migrants emerge as being more vulnerable in relation to their labour market and educational experiences, their ability to speak English as well as their levels of social integration into their new neighbourhoods. These groups include family migrants and refugees, as well as some under-25s. Data is given above about the labour market experiences and educational outcomes of different groups. However, challenges to integration may extend beyond unemployment and poor educational outcomes and include factors such as social isolation in new communities.

The reasons for that predispose some migrant groups to vulnerability or social exclusion vary greatly. However, those who come to the UK to work tend to have skills that match needs within the UK labour market. The skills of family migrants and refugees – whose primary motive for migration is not work – may not match the needs of the UK labour market.

Young migrants who arrive in the UK late in their educational careers emerge as another vulnerable group. Some literature describes them as 'generation 1.5' (Portes and Zhou 1993). This group will not benefit from a complete primary and secondary education through the medium of English. Some among them, particularly from refugee-producing countries, may have had an interrupted prior education. They may also lack cultural knowledge of the labour market and further education sectors in the UK (Rutter 2006). Labour Force Survey data shows disproportionately high levels of unemployment among under-25s from some countries, even when education as a reason for economic inactivity is taken into consideration (for example, just 17 per cent of Somalia-born 20–24-year-olds were in work in Q3 2012).

Migrants who have not secured good integration outcomes may be disproportionately represented in some local authorities. This may be a consequence of the availability of housing, but also because they may depend on their compatriots for support. While just 1.6 per cent of the population of England and Wales does not speak English well or very well, in some local authorities this figure is far higher – 7.5 per cent in Leicester, for example.

In the past the government has recognised the vulnerability of some migrant (and minority ethnic) groups and in 2003 set up an Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force to create strategy and remove barriers to work. There was targeting of refugees and family migrants from south Asia by JobCentre Plus, in particular, although to varying degrees of success (Rutter et al 2008). However, *Creating the Conditions for Integration* does not specify specific groups as targets for interventions. More broadly across central government departments, the localism agenda means there has been a move away from identifying specific groups as targets for intervention, with central government tending to leave these decisions to local public services.

### Experiences in other EU states

Looking at individual countries, integration tends to be a higher profile issue outside the UK where it is more central to debates about immigration, which in the UK have tended to focus more on numbers. Polling suggests that higher proportion of the public in countries such as France, Germany, Netherlands and the Nordic countries have concerns about migrant integration than do in the UK.<sup>45</sup> In the UK, concerns focus on the Muslim migrants and the children of migrants. Conversely, public opinion in Spain, USA and Canada is more positive about integration than it is in the UK.

Partly as a consequence of public opinion, but also high levels of unemployment among migrants, the governments in some EU member states – Netherlands, France, Germany and some of the Nordic countries – have introduced much more compulsion into the integration process (Joppke 2009). In the Netherlands most migrants from outside the EU are obliged to pay for and participate in a 12-month integration course that consists of language teaching, citizenship education and preparation for the labour market. Permanent residency requires a migrant to pass an integration test. This test has now been extended to potential family migrants who want to move to the Netherlands.

In France, many migrants<sup>46</sup> are required to sign an integration contract with their local prefecture. The *contrat d'accueil et d'integration* lasts for 12 months and requires that migrants pass an oral and written test in French, although free lessons are provided. The integration contract also requires attendance at a one-day civic education class, as well as a skills assessment. Migrants are required to show 'professional' integration. The grant of a 10-year residency card is contingent on fulfilling the obligations of the integration contract.

There has been some debate in the UK about integration contracts and introducing a greater amount of compulsion into the integration process.

45 See for example Transatlantic Trends 2011

46 EEA migrants and overseas students are excluded from this process.

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However, there is limited evidence to show that formal integration contracts promote the early integration of migrants in those countries that have adopted them. Employment rates, language fluency and local and national attachments are not higher in countries that have adopted integration contracts than are in the UK. Moreover, in the countries that have adopted such contracts, many migrants are not covered by them. Such policies seem to be symbolic and designed to temper public opinion, rather than benefit migrants and wider society.

There are, however, policies and practices from outside the UK that do appear to promote integration. In Sweden, successive governments have published integration strategies with clear objectives and programmes of work, in particular attention to labour market participation. Having clear pathways to long-term residence and citizenship has been found to encourage language learning. Having fair school admissions systems that prevent ethnic and income segregation is also important (Nusche 2009). The UK government needs to evaluate and learn from these practices.

## 7. TOWARDS A SUCCESSFUL AND COST-EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION POLICY

### Why is integration policy so hard?

Reviewing recent integration policy, it is clear that successive governments have found it difficult to 'do' integration. Recent Labour governments generated a large number of strategy documents, but did not follow through their recommendations with effective or coordinated action. The Coalition government has been characterised by the absence of explicit integration policy, apart from a rhetorical rejection of multiculturalism, and some specific policies relating to counter-terrorism. If intervention policy is to achieve its aims and objectives it is important to understand why it has been and remains difficult a difficult area for recent governments of all political stripes.

One of the most significant issues that has hindered effective integration policy has been a lack of conceptual clarity about integration and a common understanding about the role of government in promoting it. Alongside conceptual vagueness, there has also been a chronic problem of poor evidence, with little longitudinal data collected and limited use made of existing administrative datasets. Moreover, those tasked to work on integration policy within government have tended to place greater emphasis on the social and cultural aspects of integration – whether we get on – rather than the more 'structural' aspects of integration such as labour market participation. Perhaps ironically, this is one aspect of integration that is particularly difficult to evidence, or to translate into effective public policy interventions, simply because government does not (and should not) intervene directly in the relationships and interactions that determine integration of this kind, so must seek less direct means of influencing outcomes.

Governments have also had a tendency to respond in a short-term manner to some of the issues which are associated with, but distinct from, integration – in particular, religious extremism. Integration policy and its delivery require long-term commitment by central and local government. Yet there is a tendency for all governments to want quick solutions.

A further factor hindering effective integration policy is that the characteristics of migration flows to the UK have changed over the last 20 years. We have seen large-scale population movements to parts of the UK that have had relatively little recent experience of supporting migrant integration. Migrants are an increasingly super-diverse and super-mobile sector of the population; as previously discussed, this can make policy responses to integration more difficult. As migrants have become much more widely dispersed across the UK, they are present in small numbers in an increasing number of local authorities. Where particular groups are present in small numbers in specific areas, it can be difficult to argue for resources to target them. This is a particular problem for refugee populations.

There is also an unresolved tension between the objectives of immigration control and those of integration policy. Faced with growing asylum and immigration numbers, European governments have, since the late 1980s, sought to restrict the social citizenship rights of migrants, as a deterrent measure to dissuade the would-be migrant from making the journey to Europe (Somerville 2008). In the mind of some ministers and civil servants, measures to improve integration could act as a 'pull' factor, increasing migrant numbers. While there is evidence to suggest that open labour markets do attract migrants, there is little to substantiate the view that access to information, English classes and decent housing cause people to move to the UK (Hatton 2011). Restrictions on social citizenship rights have the potential to impact negatively on the integration of those migrants who end up staying; restrictions on fee concessions for adults wishing to learn English is one example.

Related to this tension between integration and immigration policy is the nature of public and political debates about migration, which circumscribe the scope for policymakers to enact and deliver integration policy. While public opinion is more complex than superficial summaries suggest (and there is actually a high degree of consensus about some integration issues), there is clear public hostility to measures perceived as helping or encouraging the ‘wrong kind’ of migrants – with elements of the media offering their own judgments on who are the right and wrong kind. Media coverage of integration is usually linked to other, higher-profile issues such as religious extremism. By contrast, stories about successful integration are often inherently mundane – involving the realities and rhythms of everyday life – and therefore much less ‘interesting’ as a media story.

Awareness and apprehension of this hostility on the part of policymakers make them reluctant to stand up for publicly-funded interventions such as ESOL provision. The present fiscal climate has made it even harder for both national and local government to justify spending public funds on social interventions that are seen to target migrants, even where these have wider social or economic benefits.

Local authorities are responsible for delivering many aspects of integration policy, but have never formed an effective lobby themselves when considering integration. In earlier years this was due in large part to the contaminated nature of the term integration, with its associations with assimilation. There is also a long history of adversarial relationships between local government and some groups of migrants, most notably asylum-seekers,<sup>47</sup> which has made some local authorities unwilling to commit to integration policy. More recently, it is due to the challenges they face with budget cuts.

Non-governmental organisations working with migrants, most of them working with an asylum-seeking client base, tend to spend more time lobbying on immigration control, for example, on asylum procedures and the use of detention. Integration is seen as a lower priority because a failure of integration does not have the same clear *individual* impact that the refusal of an asylum claim, detention or removal obviously has.

A final factor is that coherent integration policy requires effective inter-departmental coordination within central government and this has always been weak. Inter-departmental working groups have often been sidelined as low priority – for example, the National Refugee Integration Forum, which was wound down in 2006 (Rutter 2006). Moreover, a large number of government departments (and non-departmental government bodies) need to be involved in integration policy. In England, these now include the Home Office and the UK Border Agency, but also the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Education, the Department of Health, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the Ministry of Justice. The Cabinet Office and Treasury and may also have some involvement with migrant integration from time to time. Of the non-departmental government bodies, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission’s duties should oblige them to consider migrant integration. For migrants settled in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the devolved governments of these nations also need to be involved. The priorities and policies of all these central government departments then need to be translated down to local level, in a way that encourages both locally-appropriate policy responses and local leadership.

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47 In the period 1996–2000 local authorities were responsible for supporting destitute asylum-seekers under the provisions of the National Assistance Act 1948, the Children Act 1989 and later asylum legislation. Local authorities are still responsible for supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.



These factors together explain why successive governments have found it difficult to deliver effective policy interventions to support migrant integration. These factors remain in place and if future governments are to address integration effectively through policy, they need also to address some of these underlying tensions and challenges.

### Towards areas for policy intervention

This paper set out to review integration policy in Britain and examine areas for government intervention. What has emerged is a lack of clarity about the concept itself, a lack of political will, strategy, coordination and long-term planning on the part of central and local government in their approach to integration. This is not entirely surprising. Migrant integration is an inherently complex process and there are no quick and easy solutions. Nevertheless, integration remains an important objective, and this review points towards areas for consideration by the government and others, set out below.

While much successful integration happens without any intervention from the state, there is a role for policy, particularly with respect to the groups and communities most at risk of being left behind. Current UK integration policy is neglecting both migrant groups with less successful integration trajectories, and communities where integration is not working; and failing to learn lessons from groups and communities where integration has been successful.

The overwhelming priorities of successive recent government have been border control and managing public perceptions about immigration. Integration policy has often been an add-on, pursued by governments at times of crisis, then neglected when media scrutiny relents. Integration policy needs to be seen as an integral component to managed migration policy at all times, as well as being integral to other policy areas, particularly neighbourhood renewal, welfare-to-work and employment policy.

Crucially, integration policy has not been based on clear principles and aims.<sup>48</sup> Overall, we need a much stronger consensus about the principles and aims of integration policy and a clear vision of what ‘integration’ looks like, from the perspective of both migrants themselves and wider society. Policymakers need a clearer agreement about the integration processes and outcomes that they are striving to achieve. This consensus needs to be led from the very top of politics, but also encourage local leadership. This consensus can only be achieved by talking about integration.

Yet integration remains an elusive concept and dominant understandings of integration have tended to focus on the social and cultural aspects of integration and away from the economic aspects. In order to develop policy at a national and local level we need a common understanding of integration that emphasises positive participation in society, but takes a broad view of what this means in practice. As argued above, integration can most simply be seen as a person or group of people **possessing the opportunities and skills needed to ensure social inclusion and long-term wellbeing**. It is both a process and an outcome.

Much past and current policy has confused integration and social cohesion, but there is a difference, although the two are clearly related. Integration is about individuals/households from and their relation to wider society (although it is important to emphasise that integration is a two-way process – wider society must play a role as well as migrants themselves). Social cohesion is about the relations between all groups of people, not

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48 IPPR has recently set out a series of principles or ‘tests’ on which immigration policy, including integration policy might be based (see Cavanagh and Mulley 2013).

just migrants but also others, and usually refers to specific places: nations, cities, towns or neighbourhoods. Integration may be a pre-condition for social cohesion, but it is not sufficient to guarantee it – problems of social cohesion may signify problems of integration, but may be caused by other issues. Similarly, social cohesion may help to promote integration by making communities more welcoming and providing opportunities for social inclusion, although some highly cohesive communities may also struggle to accommodate newcomers).

The state has a limited capacity *directly* to influence everyday social interactions and determine with whom we meet and mix in everyday life. Debates about cultural values also tend to be inconclusive and rarely translate into effective public policy interventions (although they may be both substantive and politically important). Given these observations, the aim of integration policy should be **to remove barriers to integration and to build the economic and social structures that underpin all components of integration**. Ensuring that migrants can work and providing, through imaginative neighbourhood planning and the provision of public services, spaces and contexts where all sectors of society can meet and mix are two ways that the state can do this. If these basic structures are in place, less tangible conditions such as ‘belonging’ and ‘Britishness’ may emerge.

Poverty and inequality compromise integration, for migrants themselves and the communities in which they live. Unequal societies are far more likely to be segregated. Conversely, failures of integration can increase inequality and poverty among vulnerable migrant groups. A further aim of integration policy should be **a reduction of levels of inequality and social segregation**, for example, by reducing educational underachievement among some migrant groups.

Over the last 15 years, the majority of government integration policy has largely focused on refugees, with little consideration given to the experiences of other groups. Integration policy needs to give attention to all groups of migrants, in particular to short-term migrants, family migrants, and irregular migrants. Moreover, governments’ interest on integration has waxed and waned. If integration policy is to meet its objectives, long-term commitment, by all political parties and all relevant government departments is needed.

The challenge for government is how to translate all this into policy and practice. This needs to be led from the very top of politics, but must also be based on local leadership – much integration policy is necessarily rooted in local communities and neighbourhoods. This report points towards some possible areas for government action. These will be explored in more detail through IPPR’s *Everyday Integration* research, which will also further consider the role of the voluntary sector and communities themselves.

### Coherent settlement and naturalisation policies

In the past, settlement and naturalisation policy were seen as a means to aid integration, but today, the achievement of integration through these routes is no longer always possible. There is much more short-term migration and many people who now come to the UK have no intention of settling here. Governments also have acted to curtail the rights to permanent settlement of some groups of migrants, most recently, skilled workers who will, in future, be expected to leave the UK after five years, so settlement obligations cannot be used to incentivise integration. Moreover, migrants from EU countries are far less likely to take up British citizenship – because they do not need it to remain in the UK. The challenge now is to devise coherent settlement and naturalisation policies that respond to these changes and aid integration.

Government needs to be clear about the aims of settlement and naturalisation policy. Does it want to make attaining British citizenship more meaningful: affording greater significance to this event? Does it want the process of settlement and naturalisation to assist in the integration of migrants? Does government want progress the notion of contractual citizenship, and perhaps contractual integration, obliging those granted permanent settlement or citizenship to sign a contract? Or does the government simply want to raise the bar to naturalisation, making the achievement of British citizenship a more selective process and thus curtailing net migration?

Overall, a move towards ‘contractual’ citizenship has the potential to incentivise integration and there has been some debate in the UK about formal integration contracts, following a French model. It is certainly worth evaluating the experiences of the French integration contract and other EU countries to see if formal contracts do improve integration – both economic labour market integration and a sense of social and local belonging. But any move towards integration contracts in the UK should be based on evidence of success. There is little point in introducing such contracts if they are purely symbolic and do not result improved fluency in English, better labour market outcomes and a greater sense of local and national attachments.

### Integrating short-term migrants

Over the last 30 years, levels of short-term migration to the UK have increased, in part as a consequence of greater student and EU migration. Only a quarter of those who moved to the UK in 1998 remained in the country in 2008 (Finch et al 2009). Short-term migration presents particular challenges to integration, as migrants may well feel they have less of stake in the communities in which they live. Students and EU migrants often end up living in private rented accommodation in neighbourhoods experiencing high population churn. Additionally, short-term migrants rarely take up British citizenship, so the process of naturalisation cannot be used to promote integration.

But there may be other ways to promote the integration of short-term migrants. Overseas students comprise a significant proportion of short term migrants to the UK. Many overseas students have little contact with those outside the student population. Nevertheless, some universities have excellent programmes to help overseas students integrate into their local communities, for through local volunteering or befriending schemes that put overseas students in contact with ‘local families. Universities have also acted to overcome cultural divides on campus. However, many universities and colleges do not see it as their role to promote integration and cohesion. This view needs to change and we believe that the higher education sector needs to take a more active role in promoting the integration of overseas students.

There are specific integration challenges in relation to the integration of short-term EU migrants. However, the workplace can be an important space in which integration takes place. Reducing labour market segregation is one way of promoting integration among short-term migrants (see below). But this group often possesses the least amount of fluency in English and often has little incentive in learning the language. We need a debate at a European level about our responsibilities to learn the language of the countries of the countries in which we reside. Just as British nationals living in Spain have some responsibility to learn Spanish, so should Polish nationals living in the UK. A stronger consensus in the EU about our obligations to learn the language of our host countries is needed, even among short-term migrants.

## A language in common

English language fluency is central to integration. It empowers migrants and enables them to deal with day-to-day life. It also facilitates communication with those who live around them and helps them find work. Despite recent increases in funding for adult ESOL, our record in helping migrants learn English is distinctly chequered.

The recent removal of Skills Funding Agency subsidies to workplace-based ESOL courses in England was meant to shift the responsibility for funding ESOL from the state to the individual and the employer. However, there is little evidence to show that significant numbers of employers are paying for ESOL.<sup>49</sup> Removing the subsidy may only result in the closure of those courses that were targeting migrant workers in the workplace. There needs to be more debate about the role of employers in supporting English language fluency among their workforce. Additionally, the government could look at increasing the English language learning content of some vocational courses, for example, NVQs in social care and childcare. This would better support the labour market integration of migrants.

We need to invest in ESOL, but spending money on this ensures savings in the long term. Some of the money saved from written translation budgets could be used to fund ESOL. Another way that ESOL could be financed would be a loan system with classes funded up-front and money recouped once a person has secured work over a certain income threshold. These are options that the government needs to consider. But we also need to improve the quality of teaching and ensure it gets to those who most need help. It does cost more money to teach English to migrants who have had a limited prior education, but colleges receive the same amount of money irrespective of the background of the learner. Reviewing the funding formula to direct greater funding towards groups more costly to educate would be welcome. We also need more government leadership in promoting courses targeted at groups who are under-represented in college settings, for example, shift workers or those with little prior education.

English language learning needs to begin immediately on arrival in the UK. Regulations issued by the Skills Funding Agency in England bar some groups of migrants from claiming fee concessions for ESOL courses. At present non-EEA family migrants cannot claim a fee concession until they have one year's legal residence and while colleges do have some discretion to grant concessionary fees, these waivers are not applied consistently. (This period for spouses may lengthen further with imminent changes to family migration policy.) Although immigration rules now require spouses from outside the EEA to pass an approved English language tests, English language skills can decline if they are not practised, particularly if an overseas spouse, usually female, is not working outside the home. Excluding spouses from fee concessions runs contrary to promoting integration and this policy needs review and clarity in regulations.

## Combating poverty and unemployment

One constant theme across the complex landscape of migrant integration is that social deprivation is a major barrier to integration (just as it is for the 'social inclusion' of UK-born groups, although the way the problem manifests itself is often different). Deprived areas experience the lowest levels of social cohesion. Migrant integration cannot be advanced without wider interventions to combat poverty and the decline of neighbourhoods.

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49 See O'Leary 2006, Rosenberg 2007

Many migrants are affected by the low pay and in-work poverty that affects so many people in the UK – integration of these groups would be helped by wider interventions to tackle low pay. But some migrant groups face specific challenges and have particularly poor labour market outcomes as a result. Migrant groups should not be favoured over other disadvantaged communities. Many of the interventions that help non-migrants find and remain in work also help migrants. But there is a need to address specific issues faced by migrant populations, as well as employer perceptions about groups such as refugees. Previous research suggests that incorporating organisations with expertise and success in welfare-to-work support for migrant communities as equal partners in the Work Programme can help ensure that particularly vulnerable groups receive the best help in finding work. The government may also wish to review the areas of dispersal for asylum-seekers and consider prioritising areas where there is housing *and* employment vacancies over areas that solely have available housing.

Limited fluency in English is a major factor that limits some migrants' job prospects. JobCentre Plus and some Work Programme providers often require that migrants attend ESOL courses, although this requirement is not applied consistently. Yet local coordination between JobCentre Plus, Work Programme providers and ESOL providers is often poor (Foster and Lane 2012). JobCentre Plus and Work Programme assessment of English language skills and needs is also poor and as a consequence some people end up on inappropriate courses. There is a need for much more coordinated approach to ESOL provision for those supported by JobCentre Plus and the Work Programme.

While being in work supports integration, the type of work that migrants do, as well as their levels of pay, can also affect the process of integration. Labour market segregation – where migrants largely work with other migrants is not conducive to integration. The causes of labour market segregation are complex, but reducing this condition and ensuring that work supports integration should be a key policy objective.

### Addressing achievement gaps in education

While there are many integration success stories in schools, some children from migrant families underachieve right across the age range. Although there have been some successes in addressing the achievement gap, it still persists for some groups. It is essential that that ethnic monitoring picks up on these patterns of underachievement, so that they can be addressed.

In England, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, as a ring-fenced fund, has been abolished. While some schools have maintained previous levels of funding for English language support, others have not. In the absence of a ring-fence much more national leadership is needed to make the case for English language support.

Children's educational needs vary, but one vulnerable group are those young people who have had an interrupted prior education before coming to the UK who need support to be tailored to their needs. This needs to be set alongside better careers advice for 13–19-year-olds who may lack the cultural knowledge about the UK education system and job market. The extended school programme also offers potential for providing support to migrant children (see below).

Institutional segregation is an issue in some areas and it is important that the academy and free school programme does not cause greater segregation by social class and ethnicity.

### Mainstream first then partnership and targeted interventions

Some of the recent debate about integration has focused on the extent to which integration should be delivered by mainstream social interventions – for example, the Work Programme and mainstream education – and how much publicly-funded targeted integration support through community organisations working with specific groups of migrants. The consensus now is that it is better to deliver support through mainstream provision as far as possible. But for this to happen, services like welfare-to-work support and education need to be flexible enough to meet the needs of individuals and groups with specific needs.

This is not to say there is no place for targeted interventions and migrant community organisations. These organisations are an essential component of the ‘Big Society’ and can sometimes reach groups who are reluctant to use mainstream services. Integration policy needs to incorporate the strengths of these groups, and build better partnerships between them and the mainstream organisations of the state. Arguably, integration policy could use a three-stage approach, starting with a mainstream approach. If mainstream services do not secure good outcomes, a second stage is for the mainstream public service provider to work in partnership with a community organisation to deliver. If this approach fails, then it is reasonable to fund single group community organisations where they deliver results.

Many refugee and migrant community organisations also provide the type of support that cannot easily be offered by mainstream public sector services, informal peer-to-peer support. For groups experiencing poor levels of integration we think there is scope for exploring the role of community ‘integration champions’. These individuals could act as positive role models in relation to integration and provide informal peer-to-peer advice to their compatriots that would aim to increase levels of integration and contact with mainstream services.

### Housing and the built environment

The majority of newly-arrived migrants end up living in privately rented accommodation, often in deprived neighbourhoods experiencing high levels of population churn (Rutter and Latorre 2009). While residential mobility linked to employment is desirable – we need people to be able to move for work – residential mobility caused by insecure housing tenure is usually undesirable. Moving accommodation on a frequent basis impacts on the ability of people to form local attachments and to integrate effectively. Residential mobility also impacts on levels of social cohesion in neighbourhoods.

Most tenancy agreements in the private rental sector are six-month shorthold tenancies and the de jure minimum has become the de facto maximum for many households. Many of those who work with low income groups in private rental accommodation are calling for an additional ‘family’ tenancy, giving a longer period of tenure and longer notice period – this could also help to promote integration and community cohesion (Hull and Cooke 2012). A better legal framework to regulate the private rental sector and homes of multiple occupancy and tied accommodation, alongside the commitment by local authorities to implement regulations, would also help to remove barriers to integration.

### Integration hubs and public space

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion gave some emphasis on the role of ‘integration hubs’ within neighbourhoods – places and spaces where different groups of people both meet and where support services can be provided for them. Such



integration hubs can include schools, colleges, children's centres, community centres, libraries, allotments, parks and playgrounds.<sup>50</sup> Such spaces might be considered to be the 'soft' infrastructure of settlements. But national and local government usually gives little thought about how the built environment and public space can support the mixing of people. Local authority planning departments have usually been absent from debates about social cohesion. Planning regulations and land use strategies need to be used to ensure that there is a soft infrastructure where different groups of people can meet and interact. For example, schools and children's centres are institutions are used by both migrants and those from the broader community. The government may wish to consider the role that 'extended' schools might play in helping integration. This is clearly an area for further investigation.

### Reducing irregular migration

As previously noted, probably the least integrated group of migrants are irregular migrants. Immigration policy needs to aim to reduce overall levels of irregular migration in the UK, as well as look at ways of stemming this migration flow at source. Additionally, the government needs to adopt a more realistic policy towards irregular migrants who are here and consider all practical options in dealing with this difficult problem. Some irregular migrants do return home, but many remain as a shadow presence in our communities. Most irregular migrants enter the UK legally, so enhanced border control will not always curtail their numbers. Forcibly removing more than a small proportion of irregular migrants is not an attainable goal, as apprehending and removal irregular migrants is difficult and costly. Curtailing 'pull' factors – opportunities for 'off-the books' employment - alongside offering some irregular migrants routes to regularization is one option that Government might consider. However, there is little political appetite or public support for this and there remain no easy answers to this problem.<sup>51</sup>

### Better evidence

Integration policy needs to draw from a better evidence base, and there could be progress on this at little extra cost. Local and national administrative datasets – such as the School Census – could be better used to show the integration experiences of migrants. In light of changing migration patterns, there is also a need to review the use of broad ethnicity codes as they often aggregate diverse groups. Longitudinal data is also needed and in future the UK Household Longitudinal Study could be analysed from the perspective of integration.

There needs to be a greater recognition of the importance of qualitative and ethnographic studies in informing integration strategies. We need to ensure that research accounts for differences between and within migrant groups. We hope that IPPR's *Everyday Integration* work will make an important contribution to this debate.

There is also a need for proper evaluation of social interventions to support integration, as well as robust cost-benefit analysis to understand better the social returns on investment in integration. We need to learn from integration success stories, including those from outside the UK, and understand how and why some migrant groups have achieved successful integration outcomes.

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50 IPPR is undertaking a year-long research programme on everyday integration that will look at the local spaces in which integration takes place.

51 For a discussion of options in relation to reducing irregular migration see Finch and Cherti 2011.



### Effective interdepartmental working and government leadership

Finally, the implementation of successful integration policy requires effective inter-departmental working, a condition that has so far eluded successive governments, on this and many other issues (see Cavanagh 2011a). Drawing on the experiences of other OECD countries, there are a number of ways the UK government might consider improving interdepartmental working. The Swedish government has a minister for integration who sits within the Department of Employment, for example. But reviewing the UK's record on equalities suggests caution. We have had ministers for equality for a number of years, yet these ministers have been sidelined and not been enabled to lead effective interventions to narrow inequalities. An integration minister risks being sidelined unless the whole narrative about integration changes – from the very top of politics to a local level. It should be noted that successive Scottish governments have promoted a more positive message on migration. As a consequence, local government in Scotland has been much more proactive in promoting migrant integration.

Leadership is needed at a local government level, too. Migration has affected all local authorities in the UK, to a greater or lesser degree, and answers to many integration issues will only be found at the local level. But local leadership seems to be becoming much more reticent in discussing migrant integration, the needs of migrant groups – or even their existence – and integration features less and less in local authority strategy. It is a matter of concern that *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, the most recent integration strategy for England, passes responsibility for integration entirely to local areas – without a clear lead from central government, and without local political leaders who will talk about migration, coherent local integration strategies are unlikely to emerge.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

This report has shown that many migrants integrate successfully, into the workplace and into their new neighbourhoods. Their children make good progress at school. Other migrant groups are less successful, particularly in relation to their labour market experiences, and often there is considerable variation in the economic and social aspects of integration within migrant groups. As with migrant groups, experience across the UK is varied – some communities thrive with diversity and change and welcome newcomers, while others struggle to cope.

Much successful integration happens without any intervention from the state, but there is a role for policy, particularly with respect to the groups and communities most at risk of being left behind. Current UK integration policy is neglecting migrant groups with less successful integration trajectories, and communities where integration is not working; and failing to learn lessons from groups and communities where integration has been successful

This paper argues for migrant integration to become a greater policy priority, at a national and local level. It calls for political leadership from the very top of government, alongside greater clarity in the aims and objectives of integration policies. The paper calls for a refocusing of integration policy towards achieving better labour market and educational outcomes. These conditions will impact positively on the social mixing of migrant and non-migrants in the workplace and enable conditions such as belonging and ‘Britishness’ to emerge.

Successful migrant integration does not require large amounts of public funding. English language teaching does need to be supported, but investment in this saves money in the long term. And much of what helps migrant integration also helps the wider community – for example, the better regulation of privately rented accommodation and or enforcement of the national minimum wage.

While there is room for significant improvements to integration policy, hostile national debates about migration are undoubtedly limiting the space for central and local government to act to promote coherent integration policies, and address difficult issues. If progressive integration policies are to be advanced we need to change the nature of the immigration debate and reconcile policy objectives with public concerns. This is a long-term project – sentiments about immigration will take many years to shift. But the challenging nature of changing public attitudes to immigration should not be used an excuse for giving up on this task.

We need proactive political leadership, at a national and local level. And we need to be courageous enough to talk about integration, in all its complexities.

This report sets out some areas where government can act to promote integration. Ultimately though, integration happens in communities, in everyday life. The kind of policies discussed here may be necessary for successful integration, particularly of vulnerable groups and in disadvantaged communities, but they are certainly not sufficient. IPPR’s *Everyday Integration* research is exploring new ‘bottom-up’ approaches to integration that we hope will take the debate in a new direction.

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# ANNEX

**Table A1**  
Population size and economic activity among main country-of-birth groups resident in UK, 2011

Country of birth	Estimate of population size, July 2010–June 2011	Notes of migration routes into the UK	Employment rate Oct–Dec 2011, as % of 16–64 population	Unemployment rate Oct–Dec 2011	Economic inactivity rate (includes students) Oct–Dec 2011
India	694,000	Long-settled post-1950 migration and recent work visa and student migrants	58	4.8	37.3
Poland	587,000	Largely recent EEA migrants, with smaller numbers of Second World War arrivals and post-war refugees	82	4	14
Pakistan	442,000	Long-settled post-1950 migration, family migrants but also some recent student migrants	47.7	6.4	45.9
Republic of Ireland	407,000	Long-settled labour migrants as well as more recent arrivals, particularly during 1980s. Irish nationals have never been subject to immigration controls in the UK	42.6	3.7	53.7
Germany	295,000	Labour migrants, students and armed forces personnel	58.3	6.5	35.1
South Africa	234,000	UK nationals and work visa migrants	73.1	5.8	21.1
Bangladesh	232,000	Long-settled post-1950 migration, family migrants and recent student and work visa migrants	47.6	10.5	41.9
USA	188,000	Work visa migrants, students and armed forces personnel	61.5	1.9	36.7
Nigeria	174,000	Long-settled migrants and more recent work and student migration	62.2	9.3	28.5
Jamaica	150,000	Long-settled post-1950 migration	38.6	10.2	51.3
France	130,000	EEA migrants including some recent onward migratory flows	69	3.5	27.5
Kenya	130,000	UK nationals, those of South Asian ethnicity with British travel documents and some recent work visa migration	64.6	4.3	31
Italy	130,000	Long-settled post-Second World War labour migrants, plus recently arrived students and EEA labour migrants	65.8	2.6	31.7
China (excluding Hong Kong)	130,000	Mostly recent student and work visa migration	36.3	5.7	58
Sri Lanka	129,000	Largely asylum migrants, including onward migrants from other EEA countries	54.6	8.4	37
Philippines	124,000	Recent work visa migrants	86.8	2.7	10.5
Zimbabwe	121,000	Largely asylum migrants, but also some work visa migrants plus those admitted to the UK through British ancestry routes	67.2	9	23.8
Australia	115,000	UK nationals, ancestry and work visa migration	81	3.2	15.7
Somalia	112,000	Asylum and EEA onward migration	20.4	12.9	66.8
Lithuania	107,000	Largely recent EEA migrants, with smaller numbers of refugees	81.7	4.1	14.2
Romania	87,000	Recent EEA migrants	68.7	5.7	25.6
Ghana	86,000	Long-settled migrants and more recent work visa and student migration flows	56.8	11.2	32

Country of birth	Estimate of population size, July 2010–June 2011	Notes of migration routes into the UK	Employment rate Oct–Dec 2011, as % of 16–64 population	Unemployment rate Oct–Dec 2011	Economic inactivity rate (includes students) Oct–Dec 2011
Portugal	84,000	EEA migrants, including some longer settled groups	65.3	6.2	28.5
Canada	81,000	UK nationals, ancestry and work visa migration	71.6	3	25.4
Turkey	76,000	Largely asylum migrants and recent student and work visa migration	49.6	6.5	43.9
Iran	74,000	Asylum migrants and students	36.6	15.7	47.7
Hong Kong	73,000	Long-settled labour migrants and more recent work visa and student migration	64.8	6	29.2
Iraq	68,000	Largely asylum migrants	34.9	12.6	52.6
Spain	67,000	EEA migrants, including some longer settled groups	73.6	8.5	17.8
Malaysia	62,000	Recent work visa and student migration, plus smaller numbers of longer settled populations	53.7	3.4	42.9
New Zealand	62,000	UK nationals, ancestry and work visa migration	86	2.1	11.9
Netherlands	60,000	EEA labour migrants, including onward migratory flows	58.2	4.4	37.4
Slovakia	54,000	Largely EEA labour migrants	77	8.2	14.8
Latvia	53,000	Largely EEA labour migrants	75.2	4.8	20
Bulgaria	52,000	Largely EEA labour migrants	83.5	4.7	11.9
Afghanistan	50,000	Largely asylum migrants	39.8	6.3	53.9
Uganda	50,000	Largely Uganda Asian refugees and asylum-seekers	69.6	7.7	22.7
Brazil	50,000	Labour migrants some with EEA passports	70.3	3	26.7
UK-born	54,372,000		57.9	5	37.1

Sources: Office For National Statistics Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, Control of Immigration Statistics 200 onwards, Asylum Statistics 1981 onwards