OVERVIEW

This was the second of three conferences run in partnership by Cumberland Lodge and the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE). Compelling evidence was given that ethnic diversity is not harmful to neighbourhoods. Speakers highlighted the social capital and cohesion of ethnic minority groups, as shown in their strong commitment to educational success, a higher proportion of civic and political engagement and a prevailing sense of wellbeing within disadvantaged yet diverse neighbourhoods. However there are still stark inequalities, particularly in the higher number of migrants reporting ill health. Several speakers described how some past and current government policies in relation to immigration, housing and citizenship have appeared to hinder the integration of migrants. It was also suggested that top-down government policies intended to promote integration were less successful than had been hoped: a localised, multi-actor, personalised approach is needed. Integration needs to be seen as a two-way process between immigrants and residents.
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION?
- Nissa Finney

The ‘segregation’ of ethnic minority groups is neither a problem nor a reality. Ethnic minority neighbourhoods are characterised by ethnically mixed households and friendship networks. Diversity, or co-ethnic concentration, has positive outcomes in terms of social support, and sense of belonging (cohesion).

Ethnic minority neighbourhoods are also characterised by a constantly changing demographic. Migration patterns within the UK reflect suburbanisation and counter-urbanisation rather than ‘white flight’: all ethnic groups are moving away from concentrations and urban centres. The benign process of family building, not ethnic conflict, is the primary driver of neighbourhood population dynamics in many areas.

However, ‘bad segregation’ is sometimes real: it is a consequence of ethnic minorities being disadvantaged in housing, through choice of tenure, and being constrained to live in particular neighbourhoods due to socio-economic deprivation, discrimination and other factors. These adverse residential patterns increase the risk of social isolation and tension. Policy can respond to this by focusing on ethnic inequalities in housing.

Question: The census reveals that half of those born abroad who are resident in this country are now British citizens, so it can be confusing if we look at ethnicity as a measure of how we judge immigration policy. Similarly, why do we discuss immigration, migration and integration as though they relate to one big group? Ethnic groups are quite different with varying needs. Wouldn’t it be more helpful to focus on more disadvantaged minority groups and the very disadvantaged white communities?

Answer: Policy should be well informed by statistics, and this is provided by the census, which was devised in the 1970s to tackle discrimination inequalities. Ethnic groups still matter: after so many decades of immigration there are still stark inequalities.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION?
- Robert Arnott

The immigration system exists for four things: to control crime by regulating criminals; prevent terrorism; regulate migration; and contribute to growth. It needs to be recognised more widely that although there can be strong sentiments about those who come here and do not leave, in reality the number of those settling here is comparatively small. Similarly, only a relatively small number of people who come here for humanitarian protection (around 20,000 applications a year, which places the UK fourth in Europe), are granted asylum and ultimately achieve citizenship. The vast majority of visitors come from the EU and America on short-term visas.

How should the government regulate net migration; choosing some potential migrants over others? How do we use policy to help regulate the flow of people in and out? Do we want to manage access to education and health care? Do we want people to pay a surety to come here? How should we respond to those who are here illegally?

The future is big data and data analytics: these offer the potential to make more specific choices about which people the UK wants to attract or keep out. No longer is it as simple as ‘what is your nationality?’ Increasingly, a more nuanced picture of each potential immigrant will be built up, detailing age, sex, region of origin, and life-story. That will allow future governments to run more sophisticated or selective visa regimes, and a more secure border control system. Public policy questions will be about what kinds of migrants or visitors the UK wants to attract; responses to (non)-compliant behaviours; and how that fits with any vision of the role temporary or permanent migrants should play in society.

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WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION?
- Ruth Grove-White

The integration initiatives of successive governments have taken a similar top-down approach, focused on messaging rather than long-term work in local communities. The onus has been put on migrants to integrate, rather than recognising the need for mutual accommodation.

Citizenship ceremonies, devised by Labour, are still thought to provide an important symbolic moment, establishing a sense of belonging and stability. The emphasis was on migrant citizenship granted as a reward for integration. Although the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition government dropped the ‘earned citizenship’ proposal, it has made the ‘Life in the UK’ test harder to pass. It is unhelpful and possibly counter-productive for politicians to ratchet up the hurdles to citizenship in a symbolic way.

Integration and immigration policies often go hand in hand, but tension between the two have grown over the last fifteen years. The Coalition government has focussed on net migration targets, and there is no meaningful integration strategy at the national level. If immigration policy increases the insecurity of migrants, this can make integration more difficult. There are new hurdles for naturalisation and little scope for the regularisation of the undocumented people in this country, who may number up to half a million.

Under this government local enforcement - ‘go home’ vans - have gained a high profile and send a negative message to minority communities throughout the country. Raids on local employers, or local housing properties and enforcing action in registrar offices while people are getting married are also unwelcoming. The 2014 Immigration Act explicitly aims to create a hostile environment for those here illegally: many feel this creates a hostile environment for migrants who are here legally.

Suggestions
1. Review the government approach to integration: the European Commission defines it as a two way process between immigrants and residents. Politicians need to speak more positively and confidently about how well migrants are settling.
2. Integration needs to be facilitated and encouraged rather than prevented and made more difficult through a series of hoops.
3. We need an approach which supports migrants in local communities, with funding to enable statutory and civil society actors to take the initiative.

Question: UKIP supporters, the poorer section of the white working class, share a sense of being unjustly treated. Maybe we also need to address that group’s resentments?

Answer: Yes employment rights and status at work are pitted in a zero sum game where the culprit is the employer, and workers of all backgrounds are the victims. Yet we also need to recognise that immigration policy sets a distinct framework that poses barriers for migrants as a
INTEGRATION AS “CONVERGENCE”
- Trevor Phillips

Most descriptions of integration are partial or inadequate. For example, residential patterns are thought to indicate acceptance, but sometimes proximity provokes friction; there is an over-optimistic belief that interaction between different kinds of people is always going to be positive; and while domestic cultural tourism, such as the sharing of food, is fine, it does not necessarily create greater understanding.

More helpful is the notion of ‘convergence’, which could be explained as follows: society is perfectly integrated when every individual’s behaviours and preferences are random with regard to race or religion; these identity characteristics have no correlation to actions or choices that are made. There are three aspects to convergence: convergence of attainment, for example in educational achievement and employment; convergence of behaviour in work environments, which may be different from behaviour at home; and cultural convergence it is probable, for example, that immigrant groups have different patterns in relation to when holidays are taken and for how long.

In working for greater integration – convergence – it is necessary to ensure adequate infrastructure provision: schools, housing and health care. In addition, convergence requires both the majority and minorities to take steps towards greater understanding and acceptance. Finally, we need to recognise that integration cannot be achieved purely through policy: governments and civil servants can only create the conditions that allow for integration.

Question: Your presentation focused on the behaviour of individuals to achieve a more integrated society, but surely the context within which people live, the structural constraints imposed upon their choices, are important?

Answer: It is worth focusing on individual behaviour because that is what most people care about. Policy cannot and should not govern individual attitudes, but it has a role in advocating positive interaction between different people. There is increasing policy interest in non-coercive ways of influencing behaviour and choices.

Question: Surely the negative stereotypes held by majority groups are powerful influences on outcomes and must be recognised and resisted? For example, the difference in frequency of stop and search experienced by particular ethnic minority groups is unjust and shaped by the context within which the police are operating.

Answer: This is a proposition that has been held for a long time in the academy, yet I don’t agree with it. The idea that ‘teachers decide, or the police decide’ denies ethnic minorities of any agency: they have a role in their fate too.

We need to recognise that integration cannot be achieved purely through policy: governments and civil servants can only create the conditions that allow for integration.
INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION: POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT
- Robert Ford

Political integration means active support for our political institutions. Research indicates that migrants are more trusting of political institutions than those born in the country, but the second generation become less trusting. Minorities are more likely to see voting as a duty, but converge on less participatory norms the longer they are here. There is a strong attachment between ethnic minorities and the Labour party: Labour is thought to address the economic and social deprivation of ethnic minorities.

Class, education, age and ethnicity are clear predictors of attitudes in this area. In general older people think that immigration is bad, while young people are indifferent. This indifference is not helpful in political terms because such people are not motivated to be politically active, resulting in a bias in political debate towards immigration critics, who are more vocal. Only those who are university educated are unambiguously pro-migration. While people in London favour migration, those elsewhere in the country are against it.

To what extent is the rise of UKIP the political mobilisation of a new social division, focussed on identity politics? Those who support UKIP believe that both parties have failed on immigration: they do not want a new immigration policy, they want immigration to cease. They are also often deeply unhappy with the state of modern British society, and reject many of the social values commonly accepted by the young and the university educated. It seems that identity divisions do have the capacity to displace other political conflicts such as those over economics or redistribution. UKIP will remain, so what conversations can we have to defuse its appeal? UKIP voters need to feel respected, if they are held in contempt the problem is exacerbated.

INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION: CIVIC PARTICIPATION
- Therese O’Toole

There is currently a crisis narrative about Muslim young people: their supposed political disaffection or violent political extremism is linked to failed integration and is often tied to concerns about a growing identification with Islam/the umma and the compatibility of this with commitments to British secular, liberal democracy. Yet these crisis narratives are not supported by data.

Emerging literature argues that citizen’s political engagement is changing rather than simply declining, particularly among the young. Activism among young Muslims in Birmingham and Bradford is characterised by:

- hands-on, direct action.
- informal networks rather than institutions with formal regulation/membership.
- Engagement with concrete projects rather than abstract debate.
- Personalised (rather than individualised) modes of interaction.
- Commitment to a politics of difference that is not separatist or inimical with universal rights or broader social justice.
- A politics founded on the scope for activists to make a difference.

There was evidence of ‘subpolitical’ activism:

- Political shopping (e.g. Fair Trade, or boycotting Israeli goods).
- Voluntary activity (e.g. volunteering for Islamic Relief).
- Career choices (e.g. working in an Asian woman’s refuge).
- Online political activism (e.g. to challenge perceptions of Muslim women or youth).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is increasingly allowing young Muslims a personal engagement with notions of a global Muslim community. This is a means by which young Muslims in diaspora can challenge ‘traditional’ ethnic or cultural affiliations. Ethnic and/or religious politics and a commitment to universal principles such as human rights are not necessarily counter posed.

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**Question:** The picture you present is reassuring, but obviously the problem is with those minorities who are problematic. Do surveys tend to attract those who are more positive: how is it possible to tap into the views of those who are not so positive?

**Answer:** Yes, it is important to look at young Muslims who are hard to reach and are in danger of radicalisation, but a more general picture is also important. There is a need for a corrective to stories of radicalisation.

**Question:** Is the ‘London effect’ really due to ethnic diversity?

**Answer:** The gap between GCSE progress in London and the rest of England is extremely large. White British pupils make up 35 percent of pupils in London (in year 11), but over 85 percent of pupils in schools outside London. White British pupils make slow progress through school compared to some ethnic minority groups, so this accounts for the ‘London effect’.

**INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION: EDUCATION**
- Simon Burgess

When measuring integration in education we need to consider this taking place at several different levels: school, class, and friendship networks. A school’s ethnic mix may indeed reflect the mix of a town, yet friends might still only associate with their own type: clearly, friendship groups are important too.

The most popular way of measuring segregation is through indices: the Dissimilarity Index asks if the composition of a school reflects the composition of a city, while the Exposure Index describes the chance of encountering someone of another ethnic group in a school. Interestingly, the proportion of pupils who are of Asian ethnicity is much higher in Birmingham than in London, but the exposure index is about the same for these two cities, so we may conclude that segregation is lower in London. It was hoped that schools would function as a melting pot, but generally there is slightly more segregation in schools than in their neighbourhoods.

Pupils from ethnic minorities make incredibly good educational progress so the proportion of ethnic minority students is an important component of the different achievement levels of schools. The much vaunted ‘London effect’, the higher scores its pupils achieve, seems to be accounted for largely by the ethnic diversity of the pupils. Does the performance of ethnic minorities influence other groups, especially white pupils? It’s hard to get causal evidence on this.

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INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION: HOUSING
- Sue Lukes

Migrants have different experiences of housing but many live in poor and overcrowded conditions. The pattern of housing is changing quite significantly: soon social renting from housing associations and local authorities will be accommodating one in ten, compared to one in seven today. Private renting has overtaken social housing and will account for 20 percent of the market. Politicians say it does not matter who is providing the housing, only that there is adequate supply: they ignore the fact that there are no controls over private sector rents, which are set to rise by 90 percent over the next thirty years. The private rental sector leaves people feeling vulnerable to discrimination in relation to the supply, allocation and terms and conditions of let agreements. While allocation is regulated in the public sector, in areas of high housing demand being able to take legal steps against perceived discrimination by a potential private landlord does not achieve the desired result, that is, a house to rent. In fact no housing discrimination cases have been taken though the courts. Those who don't get into the formal, legal end of the private sector might end up in private housing which is operating outside the law, perhaps providing unsafe and insecure accommodation. The Immigration Act 2014 demands that landlords check the status of all new tenants and this will exacerbate discrimination and force more migrants into the dangerous and illegal end of the sector.

Question: Is there not a conflation between 'migrant', describing someone's origin, 'status', describing someone's lawful position, and 'discrimination' which is to do with behaviour? The government intends that the landlords' checking system stop those without legal status from being here, protecting the wider tax payer from harm, on the basis of what parliament has decided.

Answer: Discrimination and the dreadful conditions in parts of the private rented sector are also 'harms' and it is a political choice as to which ones are prioritised for action. And checks do not make people disappear: they still need somewhere to live.

INDICATORS OF INTEGRATION: BELONGING AND WELLBEING
- James Nazroo

Ethnic minorities are more likely to live in deprived areas, but they claim to be happier with where they live than similarly placed white communities: wherever migrants live they can still feel valued and well connected. Thus the problem is not integration, it is health inequality. Ethnic minority groups, especially those living in deprived areas, are more likely to report bad health.

On a census form those who are white British will choose mainly 'English' as their national identity, although some will choose 'British'. Those from ethnic minority groups choose 'British', rarely any other national grouping. The census also reveals a sense of compatibility of feeling 'British' with minority religious identities, or maintaining a different culture.

Stark inequalities in terms of health are driven by social and economic inequality. Experiences of racism or living in deprived areas mar people's health. However ethnic diversity appears to be good for health. As diversity increases there is less chance of experiencing racism.

Ethnic inequalities cannot be addressed by policies targeted on average reductions in socio-economic inequalities, because the policies do not address processes impacting on ethnic minority people. Policies need to address racism and the marginalisation of people with different ethnic backgrounds so as to promote equitable life chances.
There is a crucial distinction to be made, in policy terms, between simple and complex social problems. Simple social problems lend themselves to the great Westminster lever, which can set targets, develop top-down plans, commission providers and pay by results. In recent years it has been recognised that such an approach cannot be applied to more complex social problems, which require: more localised approaches; personalised and wrap around services; and multiple actors, not just the private sector but also the voluntary sector. Public services are often poor at relational issues, in fact they sometimes militate against the building of relationships.

What is good integration policy? Sometimes a top-down target-driven approach works: such as the decision to put money into poor performing schools in London, or to expand access to higher education to more than 50 percent of the population. Both these met the aspiration of migrant groups and in recent years we have seen significant progress. However this top-down approach does not work in relation to community policies aiming to promote integration. With its 2006 Local Government White Paper, the Labour government tried to make people feel they had a stake in their local community, but the centrally imposed performance framework (based on directives, targets and duties) was anathema to this objective.

For effective integration we need a relational state: strategies that are personalised, localised and multi-actor. The process of naturalisation could be improved, being made less expensive and more effective in promoting citizenship. The enforcement of basic laws in relation to private landlords is important, as is the enforcement of the minimum wage. We need more accessible public services, which often feel inaccessible to migrants. Getting people to live together in diversity is a difficult task and the work to achieve it needs to be done at local authority level.

Question: Was the speaker too hard on the Labour government, which did realise the importance of neighbourhood renewal, targeted at hard to reach communities? Social investment in local communities has now gone: how will people be acculturated into positive social values?

Comment: Top down strategies to promote integration are intended to solve a problem that is not actually experienced at the local level. The lack of resources is the key problem. There needs to be top down investment and bottom up decisions as to how those resources are used.

Answer: The community cohesion project had valuable objectives, and did create a greater sense of security, but imposing a duty to promote cohesion distorted the project.
CONFERENCE SUMMARY
- Laurence Brown

During the early 1960s immigration control and integration policies were seen as interlinked by British policy makers. Now the current policy emphasis on creating a hostile environment for immigrants has shifted from border control to internal exclusion from state services. This has dangerous implications, allowing injustices in areas such as housing, health and the labour market, and it limits the scope for integration policies. Governments are afraid that policies promoted to support the social integration of minorities will be seen as ethnic favouritism. Such an approach ignores the successful micro-management of migration in ways that were not previously possible.

There are integration success stories which need to be recognised more widely. For example, there has been a transformation for ethnic minorities in terms of their educational attainments, with a significant increase in the number of qualifications they have gained.

Integration is taking place more successfully in London than elsewhere. What can be done to improve integration in other areas, through policies on health, housing, education and employment? We need to find policies that work at the local level.

ABOUT CUMBERLAND LODGE

Cumberland Lodge is an educational charity which was established in 1947 as an institute dedicated to the betterment of society through the promotion of ethical discussion.

Inspired by the beauty and history of its surroundings, Cumberland Lodge is dedicated to the discussion of ethical, spiritual and topical issues in contemporary society. Preparing young people for their future responsibilities is at the heart of its work, but the Lodge seeks through the enquiring nature of its programmes and the quality of its hospitality to enhance the well-being of people whatever their age or wherever they live.

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Migration, Integration and Neighbourhoods: Where’s The Harm?
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