

# WZB



Berlin Social Science Center

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Research Area “Migration and Diversity”

**DOES CULTURE MATTER FOR INTEGRATION?**

**EMPIRICAL PATTERNS AND REGULATION OF DIFFERENCE**

September 14-16, 2022

**PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS**

## **PANEL 1: CULTURAL ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION**

### **Andrey Tibajev**

Social values as a pull factor for migration

The reasons immigrants have for migrating out of their country of origin and into the country of destination are multifaceted, and important for integration processes after arrival. However, surveys of immigrants rarely contain more information than a few categories based on legal ground for settlement. We use a novel way to measure individual reasons for migration on a large sample of newly arrived immigrants in Sweden. Respondents did not only indicate their formal ground for settlement, but they also answered why they specifically choose to immigrate to Sweden compared to another European country. Among the reasons for choosing the country was the option that Swedish social values are aligned with their own. In this study, we show that there is a substantial portion of migrants who are pulled to Sweden based on the perceived similarity of values across all formal grounds for settlement and including among so-called traditional push migrants. Individuals who migrated to Sweden for this reason also displayed more liberal social values, and hence a stronger agreement between their own values and the very liberal Swedish society. This difference in values is substantial and exists regardless of both formal ground for settlement and how liberal the immigrants' countries of origin are. We conclude that social values can act as a pull factor for migration, affecting both migrant selection and socio-cultural integration.

### **Cynthia Feliciano**

Cultural loss among children of U.S. immigrants: From adolescence to middle adulthood  
Together with Rubén G. Rumbaut

In the United States, as elsewhere in the world, contentious debates about the assimilation of immigrants and their children abound. The shift from European to Latin American and Asian origins over the last half-century raised key questions and implicit fears. Many question whether the racialized newcomers who arrived since the 1960s will "assimilate" like earlier European immigrant groups did. Are immigrants' children adopting American ways or holding on to pre-migration cultures? Do they threaten American culture? Existing studies focusing on immigrants' children in their mid-twenties cannot fully address these questions or illuminate the processes that contribute to change or stability in language, religion, or other cultural practices across the life course.

This paper draws from our follow-up to the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS) in Southern California, the metropolitan area that is home to the world's largest settlement of immigrants. CILS's baseline consisted of all middle-schoolers with an immigrant parent in San Diego public schools in 1991-92. We collected interviews with a representative subset of original respondents with origins in Mexico, the Philippines, Vietnam, and other countries. Combined with earlier waves, we capture four points in our respondents' lives: early adolescence, late adolescence, mid-twenties, and late 30s, providing a unique longitudinal view spanning nearly 25 years (1991-2016).

Our analysis shows significant loss of ethnic culture across the life course and provides insight into this process. For instance, most immigrants' children value their parents' native tongues; some even work to improve their abilities in college. As young adults, they *intended* to raise future children as bilinguals, yet over a decade later, the vast majority speak only English to their children because they themselves lost fluency and/or encounter resistance from their children.

Many do not maintain any cultural practices from their parents' homeland; others note only eating ethnic foods or celebrating holidays and traditions on occasion. While valuing their heritage, they cannot pass on cultural traditions or languages to their children. Few identified religion as an aspect of their ethnic culture that they maintained, and at least one out of three respondents who had practiced the religions most closely linked to their home countries (Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism) no longer did so by middle adulthood. Overall, in contrast to concerns that immigration brings cultural differences that threaten American unity, our longitudinal analysis reveals that children of immigrants in middle adulthood recognize they are "culturally" American, often lamenting what has been lost.

## **PANEL 2: ACCULTURATION**

### **Karen Phalet**

Acculturation and national belonging: Perspectives from Muslim minority youth in Europe

Together with Fenella Fleischmann and Nadya Gharaei

The backdrop of our inquiries into the national belonging of Muslim youth in Europe is a well-established ‘recognition gap’ excluding Muslims from national identities in Europe. My research focuses on the consequences of non-recognition of Muslims as nationals by other nationals for the national belonging of the next generation. National belonging not only benefits Muslim minorities – as evident from associations with civic engagement – but society as a whole, since the failed belonging of significant segments of society undermines the legitimacy and political viability of liberal democracies.

To empirically estimate and decompose the phenomenon of national ‘belonging gaps’ which set Muslim citizens apart from other immigrant and non-immigrant reference groups in European societies, I draw on cross-nationally comparative samples of Muslim minority youth in Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden and England. To examine the role of cultural membership in explaining this unexplained belonging gap, we set up a series of vignette experiments among large samples of Muslim youth in Belgium. We manipulated cultural membership of an imaginary Muslim and compared perceptions of national fit and acceptance between vignettes of (imagined) culturally different, hybrid, or similar Muslims. Moving beyond individual differences in acculturation attitudes, our preliminary experimental findings highlight perceptions of national fit and acceptance as underlying social-psychological processes connecting the national belonging of Muslim youth to their cultural membership.

### **Christian Welzel**

Migrant acculturation to tolerance: Insights from the frontier of human emancipation

Together with Bi Puranen

In response to large-scale, non-Western immigration, many migrant-receiving societies in Western Europe have adopted cultural and language requirements to encourage immigrant incorporation and value acculturation. These new “civic integration” policies promote liberal democratic and emancipative values for migrants, including tolerance and related values of individualism, like the acceptance of divorce, homosexuality and abortion. These values are non-random; the social prevalence of “pro-choice” values is strongly correlated with effective democratic institutions in public opinion surveys and, thus, represent a significant avenue to immigrant integration. To assess migrant value acculturation, this paper examines a survey of more than 6,500 migrants in Sweden in the period following the 2015 refugee crisis. We find support for pro-choice values is strongly predicted by linguistic integration, that is, among migrants among those having learned Swedish or English. Further, linguistic integration is more prevalent among women, migrants who are economically integrated, long-term stayers, less religious, and have fewer children. Muslim migrants are consistently less likely to speak either Swedish or English, less likely to be economically integrated, have more children and are more religious. These findings suggest mandatory civic integration programs that promote language proficiency are an

effective vehicle for increasing migrant value acculturation. Substantively, our findings also support the idea of featuring religion as a prominent subject in civic education in teaching religious tolerance and the principles of a secular state.

## **PANEL 3: DISCRIMINATION AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

### **Claudia Diehl**

Perceived discrimination among recent immigrants: The role of physical visibility and education

Together with Sabine Trittler

The question of why and when immigrants feel discriminated against is as socially relevant as academically challenging. The salience of group boundaries plays an important role in this respect. Previous research suggests that assimilation theory applies to migrants that become increasingly invisible when their integration proceeds, but the opposite seems to be the case for visible or racialized minorities: For them, discrimination may not decline the longer they stay, at the same time, those with higher levels of education become more aware of discrimination and exclusion and react more sensitive to it. The few studies that have systematically looked into these group-specific trajectories in perceived discrimination have captured visibility indirectly by using group membership as a proxy.

We analyze how perceived discrimination among recently arrived migrants changes over time by looking into the role of physical visibility more directly. We analyze unique two-wave panel data that were collected among newcomers to Germany and that include a new measurement for physical “visibility”. Results suggest that perceived discrimination increases rather than decreases over time among physically visible migrants with higher levels of education. For this group, exposure to discrimination remains high even if their integration proceeds. At the same time, they have high aspirations for equal treatment and react particularly sensitive if it is denied to them.

### **Korinna Olivia Lindemann**

Minority policies and outgroup hostility: Evidence from face veil bans

Together with Antonio Valentim

Do voters react to policies targeting ethnic minorities? Governments in Western democracies have recently taken restrictive stances on migration and the integration of ethnic minorities. While most research on the reactions to policies is focused on the consequences of intergroup contact, less is known about how voters react to them. In this study, we address this gap by assessing the effect of policies targeting ethnic minorities on outgroup hostility. Face veil policies in particular are becoming increasingly common across Western democracies, with many countries adapting partial or full bans. These policies are a clear example of policies targeting a particular ethnic minority. In what we term policy cues, we argue that these policies are means by which political actors define who is entitled to be a member of a polity, and who is not. We further argue that these policy cues can increase hostility towards minority groups by signalling them as *other*. We test this argument by studying the implementation of a face veil policy in the Canton of Ticino, in Switzerland, a policy that was clearly targeted at Muslim minorities by its initiators. We assess the policy’s impact on outgroup hostility, which we measure through voting behaviour in migration and integration referenda, as well as hate crime. Using a series of difference-in-differences designs, we find that these policies increase outgroup hostility and have important behavioural consequences for the integration of immigrants and those of ethnic and religious minorities. Exploiting panel survey data, we show that these effects are driven by hostility

towards Muslim minorities and find some support for an elite cueing mechanism. Overall, this study has implications for how policies impact attitudes and behaviours of voters and the cohesiveness of multicultural societies.

### **David Bartram**

Do immigrant integration policies influence subjective wellbeing among non-immigrants?

A recent article (Tatarko et al. 2021) demonstrated that there is an association between a country's immigrant integration policies and the level of subjective well-being among non-immigrants. The analysis in that research is cross-sectional and (as the authors acknowledge) is therefore limited in its ability to tell us whether there is a causal relationship that corresponds to that association. For this purpose, a longitudinal analysis is more effective. For a longitudinal analysis, we need cross-national panel data, something that does not exist at the level of individual respondents. This article argues that we do not need individual-level control variables to address the research question in play; instead, we can construct country-level averages of subjective well-being data from repeated cross-sections (here from the European Social Survey), match those averages to corresponding measures of policy (the MIPEX score), and construct a longitudinal ("within") analysis that tells us whether changes in policies lead to changes in subjective well-being. The core finding is that more accommodating integration policies do lead to increases in subjective well-being, but the effect is very small.

## **PANEL 4: GENDER, ASSIMILATION, VALUE CONFLICT**

### **Marc Helbling**

Gender and gestures of respect: Open versus closed conflicts of values between Muslims and non-Muslims

Together with Elisabeth Ivarsflaten, Paul Sniderman, Richard Traunmüller

The inclusion of Muslim minorities in Western Europe faces challenges on multiple fronts, but none is more problematic than conflicts between the values of contemporary liberal democracies and traditional Muslim communities. A case in point is handshaking, when Muslims refuse to shake hands with people from the opposite gender. This leads to a conflict between liberty and equality: either natives accept a religious practice that they consider illiberal or Muslims have to abandon their practice and assimilate. The purpose of this paper is to call attention to a different type of value conflict. Rather than a forced choice between mutually exhaustive alternatives, the conflict is open to a resolution that is mutually acceptable to majority and minority communities. Conflicts often emerge because values of two groups indeed stand in contradiction to each other. Conflicts might however also be the result of ignorance as people do not know the meaning of cultural practices and do not know that gestures of respect are substitutable for one another. Our analyses on the basis of a representative survey and several survey experiments in Germany reveal high support for the compulsory handshaking and especially if this involves the equal treatment of men and women. However, we also find that this demand for cultural conformity can be softened when Muslims propose alternative gestures of respect and place the hand on their heart. Finally, we show that this substitute is more likely to be accepted by people who control their prejudices and thus by people who try to be tolerant and who are willing to learn about the meaning of Muslims' cultural practices.

### **Eman Abdelhadi**

Marked: Why women leave Muslim communities while men stay

While ethno-religious minority communities have garnered considerable attention from religious scholars, variation on engagement with those communities and how it may intersect with gender remains under-theorized. Using the case of second-generation immigrant American Muslims, this ongoing book project examines 1) how community ties are created, maintained, or eroded over the life course; and 2) why and how gender structures these trajectories. I use name-based sampling to draw participants from a range of different communities and levels of engagement with Islam and conduct life history interviews to capture data on change across stages of the life course (N=100).

I find that American Muslim communities are losing women and retaining men. I argue that these communities place their anxieties about cultural assimilation onto women's shoulders, creating unintended pressure that drives women out. Looking at what I call *trajectories of embeddedness* across the life course, I find that both women and men tend to move away from Muslim communities in adolescence and early adulthood, but this experimentation leads to *departures* for women and *detours* for men. I argue that this gender inequality begins at home where adolescent women are parented quite differently than adolescent men. Young girls are intensively monitored and surveilled, leading to intergenerational conflict that women only resolve by creating distance from their parents. Meanwhile, young boys are treated in a "don't ask, don't tell" manner, which allows them to continue to compartmentalize their Muslim and non-Muslim lives. Muslim

organizations reproduce these dynamics by policing women's dress and behavior while leaving men unmarked. Since their clothing signifies little to nothing about their religiosity, men can simply enter and exit Muslim organizations assuming they will receive the benefit of the doubt. They then retain a psychological and social space for "returning" that is unmarred by conflict. Indeed, men see returning as part of a package of "adulthood" that includes shedding religiously banned actions and starting their own Muslim families. Marriage market discrepancies between women and men are the final step in solidifying these divergent paths. Women are more likely to marry out of the community or bring non-Muslim partners, at least symbolically, into the fold as converts—relationships that then carry them further away from Muslim communities. I discuss the implications of these findings for both Muslim Americans and for other ethno-religious, migrant communities.

## **PANEL 5: CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND GROUPNESS**

### **Jonas Wiedner**

Ethno-religious minority infrastructures in Germany

Together with Merlin Schaeffer, Sarah Carol, and Susanne Böller

Ethno-religious enclaves and their infrastructures in terms of associations or local businesses have long been a central concern in the study of immigrant adaptation. Surprisingly, however, quantitative research has hitherto failed to explicitly measure the local density of infrastructures, and instead relies on crude demographic group shares to proxy rich community life. Against this background, we address the following two questions. First, how well do demographic group shares proxy the density of ethno-religious infrastructures and under which conditions are they a poor indicator? Second, which dynamics lead some groups to establish dense organizational infrastructures while others do not? We hypothesize that origin countries' cultural distance from Germany and rejection by the mainstream affect demand for, while the groups' resources shape the supply of infrastructures. Our theoretical model implies that demographic group shares are poor proxies of the density of ethno-religious infrastructures for culturally and phenotypically similar immigrants, for example from neighboring countries. Empirically, we draw on a comprehensive geo-coded dataset of ethnic businesses and ethno-religious organizations catering towards the 60 most numerous immigrant groups in Germany. We estimate random effects negative binomial models of infrastructure density across immigrant groups and across German counties. This research-design allows us to assess under which conditions nominal categories of ethnic difference (the country of origin classification of official statistics) correspond to an actually group-oriented sociability in real life, and thus contribute to de-reifying ethnic difference in quantitative research. Our results consistently support the cultural distance hypothesis. Contrary to prominent arguments made in ethnographic work, groups' exposure to racism is associated with a lower density of organizations. We conclude by reviewing potential explanations that may account for the unexpected findings and discuss the implications of our results for the integration of immigrants and their descendants.

### **Lucas Drouhot**

Integration or fragmentation? Cultural diversity and friendship networks among European adolescents

Together with Mario Molina and Filiz Garip

Does diversity lead to social fragmentation? Recent research on ethnic homophily – the tendency to form social relationships with others of similar national origins – in friendship networks has helped advance scholarly understandings of how diversity affects relational structures. While national origins are a reasonable proxy for the subjectively felt commonality assumed to be motivating ethnic homophily, we argue it is unlikely friendship ties are in practice shaped by such “passport homophily”. Rather, historical-comparative and theoretical work on nationhood and ethnicity suggest national origins proxy two major domains of culture likely to shape social relations in context of diversity: language and religion. Using data on hundreds of classroom friendship networks in four European countries, we first show that diversity in national origins is indeed entangled with linguistic and religious diversity at the classroom level, so that different underlying mechanisms may remain obscured in approach relying on national origins. A

random-effects meta-regression analysis of coefficients from exponential random graph models for friendship ties shows that ethnic homophily and linguistic homophily similarly peak around moderate levels of ethnic and linguistic diversity at the classroom level, and they then decay. Conversely, religious homophily has a positive linear relationship with religious diversity. Using best unbiased linear predictions (BLUP) from our meta-regression models as predicted ERGM coefficients, we then show that linguistic homophily peaks around a 60% share of outgroup size and amounts to a 6% increase in the probability of making a new friend on the basis of linguistic similarity alone (holding other network mechanisms constant), while religious homophily amounts to an 8% increase in the probability of friendship formation when peaking at 90% outgroup share. Overall, these results suggest moderate but meaningful patterns of relational fragmentation in contexts of cultural diversity, and point to a divergence in tie formation mechanisms embedded in elementary differences between major domains of culture – language and religion – that has hitherto been ignored in past scholarship on ethnic homophily.

## **PANEL 6: INTEGRATION POLICIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

### **Maria Schiller**

Urban immigrant regimes: conceptualizing local actor coalitions in the governance of migration-based diversity

As migration keeps shaping urban societies, the ways in which cities deal with increasing heterogeneity has become a salient issue. Focusing on the realm of urban immigrant policy-making, this article starts from the need to capture new ideas in conjunction with new coalitions that emerged between local authorities and civil society organizations in the governance of migration-related diversity. It conceives of coalitions between governmental and non-governmental actors working on and involved in diversity policies as “urban diversity regimes”. Drawing on governance literature, urban regime theory and various research on local immigrant policy-making, it emphasizes that urban diversity regimes involve repeated and institutionalized interaction (collaborative or conflictual) over time as well as the negotiation of different conceptions of diversity and actors’ respective power positions. Analysing urban immigrant regimes can help to further specify how a governance turn, a diversity turn and a local turn combine and manifest in practice. I will use the city Mannheim as an example, a city that heavily invested in the build-up of an urban diversity alliance in the governance of migration-related diversity, to illustrate potential insights from state and non-state actors’ collaborations around the notion of diversity.

### **Meta van der Linden**

Is policy effective for refugee integration? A quasi-experiment in Rotterdam  
Together with Jaco Dagevos

Refugees now form a large but distinct immigrant group who may face more or different problems during their integration than traditional migrant groups. Subsequently, there is a growing need for knowledge of appropriate and effective approaches to refugee integration. Yet, the fundamental question of how specific policy types influence the policy target group has rarely been addressed in integration studies.

The current study breaks new ground by examining the extent to which refugees’ structural and socio-cultural integration is shaped by integration policy. The study is situated in Rotterdam; the second largest city in the Netherlands, which features two parallel integration programs varying in scale, resources, and intensity. We employ a quasi-experimental design using the representative two-wave Bridge panel survey (Nwave I&II=1004, response rate 85%), which includes detailed information on predominantly Syrian refugees from the moment they were granted asylum status up to two years later.

After accounting for treatment assignment bias using coarsened exact matching, random effects analyses show a significant increase over time in refugees’ language proficiency, identification, self-reliance, and participation in volunteer or paid work. However, we did not find a significant interaction effect showing that integration developed differently depending on the integration program.

We discuss possible explanations for our findings based on our additional qualitative research (e.g. focus groups and interviews with refugees as well as policy makers and practitioners) and advance policy interventions that aim to foster refugees' integration in the receiving society.

## **PANEL 7: MUSLIM DIVERSITIES IN EUROPE**

### **Lena Dreier**

Integrating Islam through education? Students' perspective on Islamic theology in Germany

The paper contributes to the debate about new Islamic educational projects in European countries as techniques to “domesticate” a religious minority (Sunier 2018). Different academic projects of Muslim education were founded with the goal to integrate Muslims and to train “democratic” Imams in Western countries. While discussions on new Islamic Education were very similar in these countries, the new emerging studies, academies, and schools took different forms. Although the political agenda of integrating Islam by academic projects has been very strong, we do not know if integration and cultural alignment (“domestication”) describe what is happening practically within these new disciplines. I will explore this question by looking closer to the example of German Islamic Theology.

I will present three main theses relating to this question, by analyzing qualitative interviews with students from Islamic Theology in Germany from three universities: First, Islamic Theology differs from other disciplines by the amount of first-generation students more than by the religious factor. For them, it is less a question of confessional Islamic studies but a question of representation from inside (from a “Muslim perspective”) that makes Islamic Theology a potential field of studying. Second, they distance themselves from the demand for integration and formulate the claim to help shape society. Third, in summarizing the student’s perspective, the question of confession is more a question of symbolic representation and representation of specific social experiences (as for example discrimination). For the students more important seems to be the representation of Islam in university as something they are connected to by former experiences of non-representation.

The example Islamic Theology teaches us that the discipline is stronger connected to cultural and symbolic representation of experiences as religious minority, than with integration and “domestication” of Islam from above. It is to be discussed if these processes are both part of cultural integration by religion.

### **Paul Statham**

Sociological imagination deficits in survey research on people who are Muslims: why lumping “Muslims” into a single group and overfocusing on “religiosity” falls short

This paper critically unpacks the problematic usage of “Muslim” as a social and analytic category in survey research. The conflation of the two often leads survey-based research to reproduce and legitimate stereotypical “tropes” of people who are Muslims of migrant origin and their presumed cultural differences from non-Muslims in their settlement societies. Theorists, including Brubaker, make this point. However, such claims largely bypass scholars applying survey methods, partly because few exchanges cut across the territorially defined academic silos of qualitative vs. quantitative research on Muslims. The approach of this paper is to use survey data analysis to critique and debunk some of the common assumptions of survey research on Muslims. This is made possible by using a data-set that includes a number of cultural variables (e.g., language use, intermarriage, self-identification with settlement society etc..) for measuring acculturation, alongside the more commonly used religiosity. The paper revisits the EurIslam survey

data-set and undertakes an original empirical analysis to account for variations between Muslims and non-Muslims in their settlement societies (UK, F, NL, D) on topics that are commonly used to construct differences between them, including gender, public religion, and “democratic values” in liberal societies. The empirical findings contradict and relativise some of the common findings in survey research on Muslims. First, the findings expose the explanatory limitations of “lumping” people into a single group as “Muslims”, by demonstrating clear differences between people who are Muslims, whose families are from different origin countries. Second, the research shows that “religiosity” is not the only, nor the strongest cultural variable, for predicting differences between Muslims and non-Muslims over “liberal democratic values”. We conclude that many studies find “religiosity” as the explanatory variable, because of their methodological limitations, i.e., they do not collect information on, or test, any other cultural variables. This is problematic because social science can end up validating politicised negative tropes that depict “Muslims” as a single group (denying self-evident heterogeneity) whose values and behaviour are shaped only by a higher degree of “religiosity” (denying other cultural variables) relative to other people in the settlement society.