

## Cohesion, integration, migration: urbanism, city change, and the future of multiculturalism

### Aims and Objectives

This project addresses the impact of migration on cohesion and integration in geographical areas of restructuring and city transformation. The links between labour demand and migration flows form a well developed strand of work in migration studies. Equally, the attempt to restructure city form, *modernise* the social and economic life of the metropolis through major programmes of regeneration constitutes a well developed strand of contemporary urban studies. However, the links between the two concerns are less frequently studied.

In the United Kingdom the project develops the work of the government's Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC). The Commission was set up in response to the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005 bombing in London and reported to the Secretary of State at the Department of Communities and Local Government in 2007. The construction, consequences and contradictions of alternative models of cohesion and integration across the UK tests the CIC's model that appealed to four ethical principles

- A notion of 'shared futures'
- A sense of rights and responsibilities appropriate at a national, regional and local scale of analysis
- An 'ethics of hospitality' that recognised the dynamics of social change and the role of anonymity, the stranger and the newcomer in determining the register of ethical action.
- A sustained commitment equalities and deliberative transparency in processes of deliberative democracy.

The project aims to develop a wide range of examples at national and continental scales to consider how different models of integration and cohesion support or contradict both academic agendas and policy thinking in this area of work.

### Background

We know that regeneration programmes were central to perceptions of 'fairness' that provided a background to the mill town disorders in northern England in 2001, that the former head of the Commission for Racial Equality (Trevor Phillips) suggested that city change was at the heart of processes that led 'sleepwalking into segregation' and that migrant led growth of Britain's population in the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup>

The ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford conducts high quality research in order to develop theory and knowledge, inform public opinion and contribute to policy debates on migration.

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century has focused attention on housing supply and the exercises in 'place shaping' that might emerge to accommodate this new demography.

Across Europe different national traditions advocate alternative models of cohesion, integration and multiculturalism that have been adopted in response to the evolving migration flows once christened by Stuart Hall as 'globalisations' accompanying shadow'. The ability of societies to respond to transnational networks of sentiment and kinship and highly localised patterns of settlement and identification represent major challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The various national models of adaptation are less adept at understanding some of the accommodations and innovations on the ground in the sites of most intense change. Consequently the project interrogates intellectually the interface of contemporary forms of urbanism (in architectural, political and cultural theory) and contemporary dynamics of migrant settlement (in terms of flows of population, patterns of social change, the emergence of convivial cosmopolitanisms and communal conflict). It addresses directly the concerns, interests and needs of policy makers, stakeholders and communities in the impacts of migrant led social change. It considers both the ethical basis of alternative models of cohesion and integration and the practical outcomes of the dilemmas confronting sites of migrant settlement in the last decade.

## Methods

The project aims to develop collaborative working with organisations in central, regional and local government addressing issues of cohesion and integration. It develops from COMPAS expertise and experience in working with local authorities and agencies of city regeneration and transformation. We are developing a network of agencies and organisations that share an interest in the development of cohesion and integration policy at a national and comparative European scale of analysis.

## Outputs

COMPAS has a long track record working with community organisations, local authorities and policy stakeholders that are concerned with the impacts of migration. This would develop work carried out for English Partnerships and advice for central government on the inter relationship of migration, major regeneration programmes and their impact on cohesion and integration and extend it on the basis of European comparison. If you have an interest in knowing more about the development of this element of COMPAS work please

2008, 'Public Sociology? Between heroic immersion and critical distance: personal reflections on academic engagement with political life', *Critical Social Policy*, (Vol 28 (3) pp 320-34).

2008, 'Between being and becoming? Rights, responsibilities and the politics of multiculturalism in the new east end.', *Sociology Research Online Volume*, 13 (5).

2007, 'Nostalgia isn't what it used to be' *Open Democracy*, July 2007.

2007, 'Don't sleepwalk into simplification: what the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) really said', *Open Democracy*, August 2007.

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