



AMICALL

Research reports



Country report – United Kingdom

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Executive Summary

Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL) is an eighteen-month transnational project funded by the European Union's Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals. Led by a partnership of six European research institutions, with the Council of Europe as an associate partner, the project seeks to provide a platform for the sharing of good practice and the development of new strategies for the promotion of positive attitudes towards migrants and towards migrant integration at the local and regional level. Thus it addresses two core areas of integration policy and debate: the role of local and regional authorities (LRAs) in integration, and the importance of communication and public attitudes. AMICALL intends to make a contribution to the debate on integration in three ways:

- Map existing LRA practice on changing attitudes towards migrants in six European countries
- Engage LRAs in learning exchange on good practice and challenges
- Share this knowledge across Europe and inform local policy-making

This report relates to the UK research element of the AMICALL project, and sits alongside comparable reports from the other five country partners, and a transnational report of findings. In addition, the promising practice case studies from all six country partners will be published as a separate booklet, to which readers can refer for further details of the practice case studies mentioned in this report.

What we did

The UK research involved reviewing the existing good practice guides on communications and migration, and interviewing individuals involved in promising practices, to identify: how they viewed the role of LRAs in communications work to improve attitudes to migrants; how they measured success; and examples of promising practices. As well as a general oversight of practice across different regions of the UK, five case studies were made of specific initiatives viewed as good practice in LRA circles. A further two in-depth case studies were made in Glasgow and in Hackney, where interviews were held with representatives at different levels and in different roles within the LRA, and with representatives from their partner organisations, including in civil society. The learning from these case studies are referred to throughout this report. A technical workshop was held in October 2011 to test emerging findings with LRA and other relevant representatives from across the UK, a policy round table in February 2012 allowed us to incorporate commentary from national policy makers, and by attending similar events with our partner research teams in other countries we developed cross-national perspectives on the national research findings.

What we found

- **Experiences across the UK vary** significantly, in particular between the individual nations of the UK, because of differences in governance, political priorities, demography and local attitudes.

- There was much **enthusiasm for sharing practical ideas** and knowledge. Several toolkits and guidance modules exist, but LRAs were keen on identifying specific practices they could apply to their situation.
- Though there are a number of guides to 'good practice' and 'what works' in this and related areas, much of the evidence for practices being 'good' is impressionistic. There is **a lack of robust evaluation** of how interventions have made a difference to outcomes.
- Many UK LRAs had **doubts about the language of 'integration'**. Some preferred 'equality', 'community cohesion' or 'social inclusion'.
- Developing **local shared language and understanding** of the issues was an important process in itself.
- Similarly, the focus of the project on attitudes to third-country nationals (non-EU citizens, and not asylum seekers or refugees) did not fit easily with the ways that LRAs understand their role. For example, their focus was often on specific groups of migrants, or **diversity and inclusion as a whole**.
- Many UK LRAs had viewed **face to face communication as much more effective** than traditional media-based initiatives that seemed like a public relations or 'spin'. This links to the emphasis on engagement and involvement in many areas of UK local government policy.
- LRAs viewed **communications work in this area as encompassing** communication with front-line staff, between local organisations, at both strategic and operational levels, and with migrants to enable them to take part in local communities, as well as traditional communications such as leaflets and posters.
- There may be opportunities to **work more practically with local media**, for instance providing potential news content, rather than inviting senior editors to take part in strategic meetings.
- Though interviewees valued strategic oversight, many of the initiatives which LRAs saw as the **most effective had begun as ad hoc initiatives**, in response to – or pre-empting – critical incidents.
- Successful initiatives are often **driven by the vision and motivation of particular individuals** (whether politicians or officers). Though dependence on an individual in this way can be risky if they leave, some attempts to 'mainstream' practice had led to loss of momentum and expertise.
- LRAs viewed many of the major **factors affecting attitudes to migrants as beyond their immediate control**, making a long-term, evidence-based approach much harder. Such factors included negative coverage of migration in much London-based national media; frequently changing policy contexts (national migration policies, funding streams, local and regional government responsibilities, powers, priorities and structures); and global migration flows.
- Because of the nature of the research we focused on LRAs with 'promising practices' and therefore may have missed out the **experiences of LRAs who do not have an interest in this area**, whose inclusion could have produced different findings.

Contents

Executive Summary 2

Contents 4

1) Introduction..... 5

2) LRA activity..... 6

3) Leadership and planning process..... 13

4) Outcomes 16

5) Factors influencing outcomes 17

6) Learning 18

Appendix 1: Abbreviations 20

Appendix 2: Methodological Notes..... 21

 Research question 21

 Scoping the research 21

 Selecting case studies..... 21

 The research process 22

 Producing and reflecting on findings 24

Appendix 3: References 27

1) Introduction

Survey after survey and poll after poll reveal high levels of anti-migrant attitudes across Europe. In many countries, migration has become a 'toxic' topic, and is manipulated by populist and extremist political entrepreneurs, as can be seen in the electoral rise of xenophobic political parties across Europe. More and more Europeans are opposed to the cultural diversity associated with migration – in 2005 the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia found that about one quarter of the EU-15's population does not share the notion that “the diversity of a country in terms of race, religion or culture is a positive element and a strength” and that there had been a significant increase (to two-thirds) who are convinced that “multicultural society has reached its limits”. However, a closer look at the evidence reveals a more complex and nuanced picture.

This is indicated in three ways. First, attitudes to migrants and to integration vary in different regions, and there is some evidence that cities tend to have much weaker anti-migrant sentiment and more embrace of diversity and cosmopolitanism. Second, polls suggest that citizens see migration as a problem for a country, but not their local area. Analysis of electoral support for anti-immigrant parties confirms this, showing that local conditions shape anti-immigrant attitudes but only in the presence of *salient national rhetoric* about immigration. Third, in some European countries, there is evidence that migrants have a much stronger local identification (especially with cities) than national identification (Blinder, 2011; Crawley, 2005).

The literature on how politicians and policy discourse interact with attitudes tends to focus on national rather than local contexts, while the literature on local contexts tends to focus on formal party politics rather than on local and regional authorities holistically. This means that much of the emphasis has been on anti-immigrant parties and on elections, rather than local government actions.

A key premise of the AMICALL project is that integration happens primarily at a smaller geographical scale than the nation-state. The body of work focusing on the local and regional state has not included much emphasis on attitudes and communications. Existing practice varies from isolated initiatives (e.g. after a terrorist incident) to a municipal dissemination of factsheets, transparency on issues such as housing allocation where perceptions of unfairness can fuel resentment, and local mediation projects. The AMICALL project aims to identify what work has been going on at this level, create platforms at national and European level for sharing that work, and identify ways forward. Thus, the AMICALL project is an action research project: reviewing practice in case study countries as rigorously as possible, and then using this research to provide a space for reflection and development for LRAs.

AMICALL (Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership) is an eighteen-month transnational project funded by the European Union's Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals. Led by a partnership of six European research institutions, with the Council of Europe as an associate partner, the project seeks to provide a platform for the sharing of good practice and the development of new strategies for the promotion of positive attitudes towards migrants and towards migrant integration at the local and regional level. Thus it addresses two core areas of integration policy and debate: the role of local and regional authorities (LRAs) in integration, and the importance of communication and public attitudes. AMICALL intends to make a contribution to the debate on integration in three ways:

- Map existing LRA practice on changing attitudes towards migrants in six European countries
- Engage LRAs in learning exchange on good practice and challenges
- Share this knowledge across Europe and inform local policy-making

AMICALL is delivered by a partnership including the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at Oxford University, UK; Central European University, Budapest, Hungary; the International and European Forum of Migration Research (FIERI), Torino, Italy; the European Forum for Migration Studies (efms) at the University of Bamberg, Germany; the Faculty of Social Sciences at Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands; Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain; and the Council of Europe.

The sections of the report follow the key research questions for the research. The report also draws on seven case studies. The first five of these are on initiatives identified from background research and initial stakeholder interviews as potential 'promising practices', and more detail on these can be found in the accompanying transnational booklet of promising practices.¹ The last two case studies are of individual LRAs (Glasgow and Hackney), examining the whole process of developing, implementing and learning from communications activities. Information on all of the case studies is incorporated throughout the report, and more detailed and sustained discussions of those areas can be found in the research report (Jones, 2012). This report is based on face to face and telephone interviews, case studies and a review of existing documentation of this area of work.

The research was conducted in summer 2011. The timing of the research is significant as the Coalition government, elected in 2010, is still developing policy on integration, and because of the uncertainties about several policy initiatives due to the fiscal climate. Consequently, the work reviewed in this paper is in a process of flux. For example, a large number of initiatives referred to in this paper were funded by the Migration Impacts Fund (MIF). This was established as a short-term fund for LRAs, to run initially for two financial years from April 2009, raising approximately £35 million per year from additional visa fees, to relieve short-term pressures on local services affected by (legal) migration. The Coalition government truncated the funding, which ended in September 2010. Along with other funding cuts, this has meant that much existing work on attitudes to migrants is in the process of being 'mainstreamed': brought from the area of special initiatives, often supported by short-term targeted funding, into the day to day business of local and regional authorities. Other initiatives have uncertain futures.

2) LRA activity

This section briefly explains the nature of local and regional government in the UK, before focusing in more detail on the range of communication activities to promote positive attitudes to migrants in which LRAs are involved.

The structures and responsibilities of local and regional authorities in the UK vary enormously, both between and within the four nations of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There are complex differences in powers, overlapping territorial responsibilities between authorities, and different patterns of elections across the UK. However, all local and regional authorities hold responsibility for at least some element of public services (housing, education, environmental health, etc); and all have some responsibility, whether legally mandated or not, for developing harmonious relations in their local area and an interest in working with other public and civil society institutions to maintain this. However, LRAs in the UK have very limited capacity for raising funds through local taxes, with the vast majority of their revenue coming through tax collection and redistribution at a national level. Nor do they have much involvement in managing

¹ The promising practice case studies from the UK are work done by Breckland Council, Norfolk; the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA); Humber Improvement Partnership; Peterborough City Council; and Slough Borough Council.

migration flows, except to support residents once they have arrived. Much more detail on local and regional government structures is given in the AMICALL UK background report (Jayaweera and Gidley, 2011). This section of the current report provides an overview of local and regional authority work to communicate with residents about migration.

Many LRA representatives we contacted, particularly those who have been working on these issues for some time, described work on supporting new migrants (to speak English, to know their rights and responsibilities, to find work and decent housing) as part of the process of improving attitudes to migrants. Even addressing practical matters with migrants (such as advice, information and enforcement related to environmental health issues) can help improve existing residents' attitudes by avoiding minor conflict which could develop into serious tensions.

Opportunities for face-to-face interaction – which may involve addressing areas of tension – were seen by many LRAs as more effective in improving attitudes to migrants than traditional communications work. However, most LRAs produced some form of publicity campaign using posters, leaflets, work with the media, and carnivals or festivals celebrating local diversity.

The broad consensus from practitioners and decision-makers contacted for this research is that ordinary residents are either unaware of the different legal statuses of migrants, or confused about them. This confusion varied across areas of the country, and it was not clear how helpful it was to focus on specific statuses of migrants, or to consider attitudes to 'migrants' as a whole.

Many LRAs addressed attitudes to migrants not as a distinct area of work, but as part of a broader strategy on community cohesion, integration or equality, going beyond migration status and including other dimensions of possible tension such as 'race' and ethnicity, gender, religion, class, disability, sexuality, age and religion. For example, in the London Borough of Hackney, the view was that the borough was so super-diverse that to attempt to separate out attitudes to one group was not necessarily helpful – issues were addressed by need through attempts to make services accessible to all groups, and efforts were made to reflect the diversity of Hackney's residents in publicity and the workforce. A major focus of the Sustainable Community Strategy was on addressing economic inequalities across all population groups.

Where LRAs do give specific attention to migration and attitudes to migrants, this tends to focus on a particular legal category of migrants, rather than migrants as a whole. A great deal of attention has been given to asylum seekers and refugees (often in response to the impact of the national Asylum Seeker Dispersal programme) and migrant workers from within the EU. Best practice guides and knowledge sharing at a national level also tend to be organised in this way, for example the Audit Commission produced a report into local authority responses to new migration from A8 countries (Audit Commission, 2007). There is less work which specifically addresses third-country nationals as a group, although a number of smaller projects do exist which look at issues for particular groups with this status – for example, in Glasgow the West of Scotland Regional Equality Council (WSREC) was running a project developing English language skills and support groups for women arriving on spousal visas.

Local and regional authorities have different legal and service responsibilities and powers related to migration, which relate to how they interpret their role in this area. This is different again for the devolved national governments. Interviewees in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland had the impression that attitudes to migrants were more positive than in England, perhaps because of the ability of devolved governments to distance themselves from border controls, but also because of a positive consensus across Scottish political parties, in particular, about the benefits of migration (and more positive perspectives in the Scottish media than the London-based press). The structures of Strategic Migration Partnerships are currently in flux, but where there is a partnership manager they are key in sharing information and learning

between local authorities (and acting as an interface with national government). For example, West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (WMSMP) produced a resource for raising awareness of issues relating to asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants and supported training using this tool for voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) and local authority staff in the region (WMSMP, 2009).

Some areas of the UK actively encourage international in-migration (in particular Scotland, and some rural areas in England and Wales). This can be linked to a need for labour in certain industries, but in areas experiencing de-population or population stagnation, LRAs also make the case that they need to stabilise or expand populations through migration in order to maintain local services. In these cases, the local media and communications work tends to be less about attitudes to *migrants* than attitudes to *migration*, and in some cases about making the place attractive to potential migrants, rather than vice versa. For example in Shetland, taxi drivers and other local businesses are encouraged to be welcoming to tourists and other visitors, to encourage them to think about settling locally. A number of LRAs (including Bradford, Sheffield and Swansea) have signed up with other local partners in civil society to mark their areas as official 'cities of sanctuary', 'proud to be places of safety which include people seeking sanctuary fully in the life of their communities'.²

Many LRAs found that their responsibilities for day-to-day issues, such as enforcing rules on parking, litter and waste collection, noise and fire safety, were central to preventing banal friction which could result in stereotyping of migrants. This might involve working with long-term residents and mediating disputes, and explaining requirements and practices to new arrivals to help them avoid inadvertently causing distress to others. Peterborough Council's New Link project was a pioneer and advocate of this work, identifying potential tensions between new and existing communities and working to address them (for example bilingual staff from the Mediation Service helped to resolve neighbourhood disputes over difficulties with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)), as well as providing direct services and advice to migrants to support them to integrate into local communities. In Leeds, MIF work on English language skills which focused on 'friendship English', or everyday conversation skills, was shown to support migrants to find employment more quickly, but may also support links between migrants and non-migrants.

LRAs across the UK have produced 'welcome packs' for migrants, as a guide to local services, regulations and information points. These are often produced in a number of languages as well as English – for example, in Lincolnshire the welcome pack is available in English, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese, and is available to download through the council website.

Several good practice guides (e.g. Audit Commission, 2007; Ipsos-MORI, 2007; Kitchin et al, 2009) advocate training of 'front-line workers' who have direct contact with residents to enable them to counter myths and misinformation through providing accurate information and skills, and as a means of gathering information on developing tensions. Peterborough's New Link project is often cited as a good example of such training work; however, there seem to be few other concrete examples of such practice. The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham worked with consultants to develop a social marketing approach to communications with residents, training nearly 1000 front-line staff and a network of volunteer 'community ambassadors' to understand emotional reactions as well as passing on information to avoid community tensions (TCC, 2010). In some cases (e.g. in Breckland and in Peterborough), key staff have been given training in the languages of new migrants, which enabled them to build trust with new arrivals as well as providing information on practical matters which might otherwise develop into tensions.

A great deal of work had been put into inter-agency communications. Many areas found that different local services (such as health, the police, education, housing, employment services) had different information

² See www.cityofsanctuary.org for more information on this movement.

and ways of dealing with new arrivals. Though the means for inter-agency working exists in most areas of the UK through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in England, Local Service Boards (LSBs) in Wales and Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) in Scotland, the extent to which information and practice is being shared on issues specific to migrants varies. Several LRAs have set up working groups of their LRAs in response to (or anticipation of) tensions related to new migration, in order to develop an integrated approach. Humber Improvement Partnership, for example, responded to a series of violent or near-violent incidents in public places in the evenings which seemed to involve migrants and long-term residents, by developing community safety and policing practices involving four neighbouring local authorities, the police and fire services. Such an approach has also been used in other areas. Though this may not be recognised as a traditional communication approach involving residents, improved communication between agencies ought to enable more sensitive responses to local tensions, thereby improving community relations.

Work to influence attitudes through communications can include face-to-face interaction, community development and consultation events, as well as work directly undertaken by LRA communications teams.

For many LRAs, a first measure in addressing negative attitudes to migrants is the production of 'myth-busting' leaflets, which identify a common rumour about migrants, and provide more accurate information to dispel misconceptions. However, there is a growing body of opinion, based on available research and evaluation, that such tools may be counter-productive – several LRA representatives whom we interviewed referred both to direct experience and to research (e.g. Crawley, 2009; Ipsos-Mori, 2007; Kitchin et al, 2009; Lewis and Newman, 2007) to argue that dissemination of myth-busting leaflets alone was not the most effective way to influence attitudes. Such a format is seen as risking re-enforcing myths by repeating them; may not reach the people who have the most entrenched negative views; and may be ineffective when resentment is built on deep emotional attachments rather than simply lack of information. The general feeling and available evidence is that leaflets may be useful in response to specific crises, but need to be used alongside interactive and responsive methods of communication.

Several examples of traditional public relations campaigns exist; for example 'One Scotland, many cultures' used a mix of TV, radio and outdoor advertising and a dedicated website to raise awareness of the negative impacts of racism and to promote the benefits of multicultural society (Sutton et al, 2007). This ran from 2002 with successive evaluations, and again was part of a wider strategy of activities by Scottish Government including the Fresh Talent campaign, launched in 2004, to attract highly skilled migrants to Scotland (Sim and Gow, 2008). Several authorities embed images of diversity (of all forms) within their publicity material, for example by having a representative range of faces in leaflets advertising mainstream services, producing local free newspapers which include positive stories about all groups of residents, and promoting cultural and inter-cultural events.

Many local authorities attempt to build links with local newspapers to promote positive stories about migration, other forms of diversity (and more generally, about work by the LRA), but with mixed success. Many LRAs cite press engagement as a priority in work on cohesion and attitudes to migrants, and some LRAs have attempted to involve local newspaper editors and others in their local partnerships, but their attendance was often not high. In Cardiff, a Refugee Media Forum has brought together local media with the local authority, police, academics and asylum seekers and refugees to encourage balanced reporting of asylum issues (Finney and Robinson, 2008). Oxfam and the Welsh Refugee Council have worked with the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University to employ a part-time media officer countering negative attitudes to asylum seekers and refugees, in part by helping journalists to find sources that might otherwise be difficult to access (Speers, 2001). Discussions with journalists suggest that this type of story-focused intervention may be more effective than involvement in strategic partnership meetings.

Many LRAs include in their communication, consultation and engagement strategies some form of events

celebrating local diversity, which can involve both publicity and inter-group contact. Many such events are focused around sharing food, music or performance. In the London Borough of Southwark, attention has been given to English traditions within the celebration of diversity, and to raising awareness that traditions are constantly re-invented. Booklets on 'Celebrating Southwark' considered how traditions evolve (Southwark Alliance, n.d.), and from 2007 Southwark has held a St George Festival, which aims to bring together groups who already celebrate the patron saint of England and Shakespeare's birthday, and to identify St George's links to other places, cultures, occupations and illnesses as a patron saint (from Aragon to Beirut and from butchers to syphilis).³ In Leicester, LMAG (Leicester Multicultural Advisory Group) brings together representatives of local media, public agencies and different faith and ethnic groups, to help to develop relationships between Leicester's diverse population and the local media, and to develop mutual understanding between Leicester's communities (Open Society Foundations, 2011). In many places, cultural activities are centred on particular times of year, such as Refugee Week and Holocaust Memorial Day.

Other communications work is embedded within the provision of local services; for example, Glasgow City Council has produced detailed curriculum development materials to support school lessons on diversity and anti-racism. Many schools have activities aimed at developing international links and empathy – for example, in Oldham several groups of teenagers have been taken to visit Auschwitz and have spent time working with pupils from different schools and different ethnic backgrounds thinking about the links between racism, division and the Holocaust. These students have then acted as peer educators sharing learning within their own schools.

As noted above, some authorities have also worked on providing clear information on access to services, migration issues and languages to front-line staff, and to share information and practice between organisations. Many LRAs have an emphasis on developing capacity within specific migrant groups to help them advocate for themselves and become involved in the wider community – examples include work with new Roma communities in Margate, and with Gurkhas in Rushmoor in Hampshire.

³ <http://www.stgeorgefestival.org.uk/st-george-is-patron-of/>

The range of work can be broken into different target groups, both in terms of those who directly come into contact with a programme or intervention, and those whom it benefits or influences. For example:

Type of Intervention	Target group (involvement)	Intended Output	Target group (influence)	Objectives
Local identity and branding campaigns celebrating diversity (e.g. 'I Love Hackney', 'One Oldham', 'We Are Walsall')	Migrants and non-migrants (all local residents)	Attachment to place	All residents, and visitors	A sense of local belonging for all
Provision of information and signposting to local services (e.g. welcome packs for new migrants, New Link service in Peterborough)	Migrants/new arrivals as a whole	Migrant knowledge of local custom, practice, and legal requirements, and improved well-being	Migrants and their neighbours	Migrants understand local norms, so reduced tensions from mundane misunderstandings
Mythbusting leaflets	Non-migrants as a whole	Information on change to local population and reasons for it	Non-migrant residents with hostile views to migrants	Dispel negative stereotypes and improve attitudes to migrants
English language training	Specific group of migrants based on legal status (e.g. refugees, third country nationals)	New arrivals better able to access work and rights, to integrate and contribute to local area	All residents	Improved life chances for migrants, improved communication between migrants and non-migrants, sense of shared belonging
Information on migrant rights and local statistics	LRA (and partner) staff	Staff better able to answer queries from migrants and non-migrants	All residents	Improved information to all residents to dispel harmful myths

As noted above, the objectives of activities vary in terms of specific outcomes and target groups, but the majority are linked to a broader aim of promoting community cohesion or avoiding local tensions. LRA representatives explain such interventions as part of broader work to promote their area as a safe and enjoyable place to live and work – for all groups, including migrant and non-migrant residents. LRAs also have legal duties to provide equal treatment and basic health and safety requirements to all residents, and many Local Area Agreements (LAAs) (abolished in 2010) included performance targets measuring residents' sense of belonging, feelings that they got along with people from different backgrounds, and sense of safety in the local area. In some areas which face de-population, there is a pro-active objective of encouraging new migrants to settle locally.

A great deal of work is dedicated to developing communications between organisations, and to understanding what the needs are or what works in relation to communication with migrants. This may not necessarily have a direct impact on attitudes towards migrants, though it can be an important first step.

Evaluations are limited (see below). Many interviewees commented that it is extremely difficult to know whether a particular intervention had an effect, particularly in a context of constant change in national law and policy, local structures, international and internal migration flows, and changing measures of integration and cohesion. However, there is growing evidence from overviews of practice and what research and evaluation exists, that communications work on attitudes to migrants *can* be counter-productive if not planned well. This case has especially been made in relation to myth-busting leaflets, as discussed above. Face-to-face interventions can also be problematic if they are not handled sensitively, and examples were given of migrants feeling more threatened by discussion of tensions where an atmosphere of trust had not been established.

In general, it appears that having an enthusiastic officer, member, or team can be the driving force in developing effective working. There were several examples of an officer taking an interest in and responsibility for working on attitudes to migrants, leading to innovative work from a perhaps unexpected part of the LRA – for example, in Breckland innovative practice was initially developed by the Environmental Health Officers in housing. Though all LRAs have in-house communications teams, very few pointed to those teams as the main driver on work to improve attitudes to migrants – though usually publicity materials will be signed off by that team to develop corporate branding and consistency of message. The importance of individual advocates may mean that while impacts are being made on the ground, work is understood, owned, or known about to different extents across the authority (see (3a) below for more on this).

It is also notable that a great deal of work is devoted to making links between organisations and parts of the local authority, to share and join up existing work, through partnership structures and sub-groups (for example, in Humber). There can be a tension between balancing direct and visible responses to specific problems while also using and coordinating the full resources of the LRA. However, research participants described instances where (lack of) communication between service professionals could have direct effects on the circumstances of migrants and attitudes towards them. For example, migrants (either from within the EU or third country nationals) on spousal visas who experience family break down (sometimes involving domestic violence) or lose their jobs and are not entitled to public funds, and can be left completely destitute. Often LRA social services departments and Job Centre or Department of Work and Pensions staff are ill-equipped to know what support is available in such cases (particularly as legislation and eligibility is complex and keeps changing), and as a result can give varying responses, sometimes leading to very poor outcomes for the migrants concerned (such as destitution or homelessness – which can in turn lead to negative attitudes towards them). The difficulties of ensuring a consistent message within the LRA and with local partners was heightened by the fact that national policy on migrants appeared to many practitioners to be contradictory (citing examples of conflicting messages on migration, cohesion, equality and preventing violent extremism, for example) and to change frequently. Policy language was often contentious because it could suggest assimilation or negativity, and many local and regional areas worked hard to find a language that was locally suitable – for example, Welsh local and national government tends to favour the term 'inclusion' over 'cohesion'.

In the majority of LRAs contacted, the main impetus for this work appeared to come from officers, rather than politicians (although this was not universal and in some places political support was very important – for example, it was key in developing the asylum seeker support programme in Glasgow). Research participants described how some colleagues – often politicians but also officers – could favour counter-productive approaches when basing their views and work on a lack of understanding of new communities and the diversity between new migrants, sometimes because they relied on a model of migration related to dynamics in previous decades, reliance on impressions from businesses opening up, or on press coverage. In several LRAs, elected member training in equality and diversity issues was seen as a priority for ensuring a consistent message, but as with communications with residents, take-up tended to be partial and attendance and interest would mainly come from members who were already sympathetic.

3) Leadership and planning process

As noted above, LRAs active in this area of work tended to be inspired by a particular individual or team who had identified specific issues and innovative ways of dealing with them. In many cases, individuals or teams were well known across the LRA as the most knowledgeable lead in such work. For example, in Slough, the Economic Development Team had a history of innovative uses of data, such as using sewage management information to develop more accurate estimates of population size. This emphasis on research-led policy led to a successful bid to develop action research on integration in a neighbourhood of Slough which has similar demography to areas of the country which have experienced community tensions. This is typical of some of the more 'bottom-up' work on improving attitudes. Such initiatives often involve work across services within the LRA and other partner agencies, on a service-delivery level rather than through the most senior representatives who attend strategic partnership board meetings.

Another notable lesson from Slough was that, when asked, many residents expressed that they would like opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds, but they felt that leadership and organisation of this should come from an outside authority, such as the LRA. This suggests that local opinions may not always chime directly with expectations of national policy agendas (whether for the Big Society or for community development approaches). A similar example of residents' views on leadership differing from policy expectations was in Walsall, where the LRA and other partners' attempts to encourage communities to organise on a broader interest base (e.g. as an African women's group) partly to enable more effective infrastructure and voice for the sector, but residents preferred to keep to the support and preservation of individual national identity – despite the limitations this might place on them when trying to find enough support for several different voluntary sector groups.

Messaging and PR campaigns from LRAs have tended to be more 'top-down', co-ordinated by communications teams within LRAs and incorporated in the LRA's wider place-shaping and community strategy objectives. National government strategy and targets are influential in bringing attention to migration and cohesion issues at a strategic partnership level (although national strategy and targets are continuously shifting, and may continue to do so significantly given changed national priorities).

Much of the work we have detailed in this report has been led and developed by officers in local and regional authorities. However, we have a number of instances where the leadership of elected politicians has made a significant difference. This difference registers in one of two ways. Negatively, some politicians have opposed the development of initiatives. In rare instances, initiatives have been developed in spite of local politicians, but in other cases politicians have effectively vetoed action. In one case study, interviewees from the LRA described being heavily criticised by local politicians from a mainstream party; however, when the project was cited by national politicians from the same party as an example of good practice, the critical local politicians were quick to take the credit and began to champion the work. In extreme cases, we found some examples of local politicians playing a counterproductive role. For example, in one area which had seen a rapid influx of a particular group of migrants, both the local Member of Parliament, from a mainstream party, and a local councillor from a small anti-immigration party, had been highly visible inflaming public opinion against them, and local officials and police officers reported that this had made a significant negative impact on local relations and been followed by racist graffiti and verbal harassment of the newcomers.

In other areas, local politicians' leadership had made a significant positive impact. One striking example is London, illustrating how good practice can cut across party lines. Both the last (Labour) Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, and the current (Conservative) Mayor, Boris Johnson, have been highly prominent in advocating for the economic, cultural and social benefits of migration and championing a proactive, evidence-based integration policy, first for refugees and then for all migrants. The previous mayor created MRAP, the Mayor's Refugee Advisory Panel, to give voice to refugees at a high policy level; under the

current mayor this has widened its remit to all migrants. Strong messages at mayoral level have significantly altered the terms of debate in London; for example, regularisation of undocumented working migrants has been discussed at a high level, despite being seen as politically impossible in the national debate.

In some cases, a local incident, or one in a place with similar demography, has led to senior officers or politicians asking for pre-emptive action, which may involve communication work. The funding to establish New Link in Peterborough was obtained through such an approach, following individual local incidents of violence and tension, and with the aim of avoiding more widespread disturbances seen elsewhere in England. In Glasgow, many LRA and partner representatives suggested that greater priority had been given to communication and community development work following the murder of an asylum seeker, Firsat Dag, in the city. Though the eventual conclusion was that this murder was not racially motivated, the attention it brought to safety issues for refugees and asylum seekers mobilised many local interventions (see case study 6). In a number of LRAs, increases in electoral success of racist far right parties locally and in similar areas led to a greater attention to tackling racism and prejudice with residents.

In many places, low scores on national indicators of community cohesion have mobilised activity, though there may not have been a specific crisis. Some rural areas have noted changes in local population and acted to pre-empt tensions. In Arun in West Sussex, for example, the population was more than 98% White British at the last Census, but has visibly changed in the last decade, particularly with migration from Eastern Europe. Though there was no specific crisis, services such as doctor's surgeries were seeing an increase in the number of patients without fluent English, and raised this with the local authority. Officers recognised that there was a lack of information about diversity and migration in the area, and produced a series of communications tools to counter negative perceptions which appeared to emanate from the national press.

Most LRAs have a dedicated communications team, usually made up of staff with journalism experience. These teams tend to handle corporate relationships with the local press, and manage or commission public relations and branding, and they usually try to filter all the LRA's external communications. However, the extent to which the work of the communications team is joined up with other parts of the LRA varies. Many local services have developed myth-busting and other leaflets independently of the official communications teams. In some LRAs the communications team incorporates or is linked to consultation and engagement staff with an interest in market research or community development; however, this can often remain separated from the public relations focus of the main communications team, or community development work elsewhere in the LRA.

Engagement of outside communications expertise appears to be less frequent. It seems more common to look to other LRAs for shared knowledge and experience, or to guides and toolkits produced by national bodies, such as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)⁴ and the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG). It may be more common to engage external expertise when working on specific community involvement programmes – for example, Capital Ambition (a performance improvement agency for London) commissioned a community engagement consultancy to develop work with community ambassadors in the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Havering and Sutton. The project attributed its success in part to being able to present some of the work as independent from the LRAs.

All local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales are required to have a strategic partnership⁵ which includes the various local public sector and civil society partners (including the police, health and the

⁴ Now Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID).

⁵ In England this is called an LSP, in Scotland the equivalent body is the CPP, and in Wales the LSB. In Northern Ireland governance structures are arranged differently.

voluntary sector and sometimes, but not always, involving business representatives and local media). The sharing of communications initiatives varies from place to place, though usually each organisation will retain its own identity and communications team. The extent to which joined-up messages on migration are developed depends on the relations in each locality. Civil society organisations are often used as a resource in developing communication initiatives, seen as the direct line to minority communities. However, as civil society groups tend to be organised around specific needs or locations, there tend to be fewer organisations acting as a gateway specifically to non-migrant communities, than to migrants (or other minority groups). The City of Sanctuary described above is led by civil society organisations, with a strong religious involvement, and draws in public sector support.

There was a notable enthusiasm for learning from elsewhere, and this is probably linked to a fairly well-embedded culture of 'best practice', at least in terms of rhetoric and structures. It may also be linked to several authorities noting that their initial responses to migration had been 'fire-fighting' or learning as they went along, without the time to reflect strategically.

There are many institutional resources for knowledge exchange on this and related subjects within the UK. This includes reports produced by IDeA summarising good practice (e.g. IDeA, 2007); the IDeA (now LGID) Communities of Practice online social network for practitioners; Beacon Awards and now Local Innovation Awards through the IDeA/LGID; awards from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR); the COSLA Migration Policy Toolkit (see case study 2); case studies of best practice collated by the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo); research and summary reports submitted to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (e.g. Ipsos-MORI, 2007); toolkits and research reports produced by central government departments (e.g. Sutton et al, 2007); research and overviews produced by academic institutions and think tanks (e.g. Kitchin et al, 2009; Lewis and Newman, 2007); peer support through IDeA/LGID programmes, Government Office advisers and CLG Specialist Cohesion Teams; and conferences and training events organised by many of these institutions at which individual LRA representatives share their local experience and learning.

Many LRAs also referred to less formal sharing of information. Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) were one point of contact through which officers might ask for advice with a specific issue. Some SMPs (notably Yorkshire and Humber and the East of England) produced project reports to draw together learning from MIF projects. Regional partnerships also supported one another through learning exchange, for example COSLA had supported the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership with its initial set-up and strategic planning. Glasgow University hosts Glasgow Refugee, Migrant and Asylum Seekers Network (GRAMNET) which brings together researchers, practitioners, NGOs and policy makers working with migrant groups to share knowledge, and this year piloted a collaborative Masters programme where students spend four weeks as interns with knowledge exchange partners. Many LRA practitioners also used informal contacts with colleagues through their personal and professional networks, in an ad hoc way.

Where external research had been commissioned (e.g. in Slough, and in Barking and Dagenham), colleagues had promoted their findings internationally, although this was often to academic rather than practice audiences. Some LRAs were involved in specific international partnering projects, for example, Migration Yorkshire is coordinating an international project, Roma SOURCE, focused on 'developing mutual understanding between Roma and mainstream communities, promoting equal rights and highlighting best practice'.⁶ There was some evidence of individual LRAs looking at work in other countries – for example, Shetland had looked to remote parts of Sweden to understand how to develop transport systems that produce meeting points to bring communities together. However, such international relationships did not appear to be common.

⁶ <http://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/?page=romasource>

Evaluation work is patchy, and that which does exist does not often able to demonstrate robustly a cause and effect relationship between interventions and changes in attitudes. Many LRA practitioners themselves pointed to these inadequacies, which were attributed in part to lack of time and resources for more detailed evaluations, and to the constantly changing context of population and migration patterns, national migration law and policy, and national and local political priorities. Several LRAs mentioned that while the English Place Survey performance indicators for community cohesion had been difficult to interpret, the ending of the national survey by central government would remove even this limited indicator of attitudes. Though many LRAs were keen to evaluate their own work and to use evidence from elsewhere, in most cases, time and resources for measurement could only be found when there was a requirement from funding bodies, or for national performance measurement. Where local initiatives are seen as successful, whether based on service measures or anecdotal evidence, they often become held up as good practice examples and disseminated to other LRAs through the knowledge transfer mechanisms listed above.

Some LRAs had commissioned independent researchers to evaluate local programmes (for example, University of the West of Scotland in Motherwell; University of Reading in Slough; University of Brighton in Barking and Dagenham). Where independent evaluation of specific initiatives has been carried out, it still tends to be at the output level – for example the evaluation of work on staff training in Barking and Dagenham involved satisfaction questionnaires for staff who completed the programme, rather than a measure of impact on local attitudes. The balance between having an outside body to testify to success or independently identify failure may be weighed against the financial, time, and potential reputation costs of commissioning external research. External researchers may be subject to similar resource constraints as internal evaluators, and many still rely on user feedback (typically questionnaires from the attendees at a training course) or perceptions of staff, rather than outcome based measures looking at tensions, incidents, or direct feedback from residents.

As noted above, most communications work is carried out either as part of a more general approach to community cohesion, or as a very specific project focused on a particular group of migrants. Sutton et al (2007) produced a report for CLG which included evaluations of some national communications initiatives to tackle racism, including the *One Scotland* campaign. They found that the annual surveys intended to evaluate the impact of the *One Scotland* campaign could only provide limited evidence of impact because of the way the sample was selected and the ambiguous wording of some questions. As noted above, some SMPs produced summaries of lessons learnt from MIF projects, but many of these evaluations were output-rather than outcome-focused. COSLA's Migration Policy Toolkit (and most good practice guides) advise LRAs to build evaluation and learning into their interventions.

4) Outcomes

As noted above, much evaluation work is output- rather than outcome-focused. LRA representatives were keen to use evidence, but expressed that it was difficult to find robust sources. Some noted that a balance needed to be found between using approaches found to be successful elsewhere, and responding to the particularities of individual local situations, where previous experience may not be directly applicable. Sometimes routine service data is used as a measure of success – for example, the number of recorded racist incidents in schools – although this also poses questions of interpretation. Even where data is collected, it is not necessarily possible to make a direct link between an intervention and changes in outputs or outcomes, and most interviewees noted this difficulty. Some also noted that attitudinal change may take

several years to be visible (particularly, for example, when approaches were focused on young people who may not be included in surveys of the general population until they reach adulthood). They also noted that long-term work could easily be undermined very quickly by a serious local, national or international event (such as a terrorist attack) or changes to local services.

A notable example of a more long-term evaluation approach was a report commissioned by Oldham Borough Council five years after the town experienced civil disturbances and came to national attention. Those events inspired central government's 'community cohesion' policy agenda based on the hypothesis that local white and Asian settled communities were living 'parallel lives', not meeting or mixing. The report revisited issues in the town to determine what progress had been made and what more was necessary. Though the issues in Oldham were not related to newly arrived migrants, its findings about relationships between longer-standing groups or residents are relevant, in that it found that despite concerted efforts by local bodies, traditional communications work had had little impact on residents' attitudes to one another. The report recommended a more grass-roots engagement approach, examples of which appeared to be having success, and specific attention to white communities' feelings of neglect. This evaluation used desk research, interviews and focus groups with practitioners and residents, and looked at change over a period of years in an area which had seen comprehensive initiatives to improve community cohesion. However, even this type of evaluation cannot provide evidence of a direct mechanical relationship between specific interventions and outcomes (ICoCo, 2006).

LRA representatives expressed that they were keen to gather evaluation and evidence from elsewhere as well as locally. Local interventions are often developed in relation to existing or previous work in the locality, though the extent to which learning is systematised may be limited – learning is often embodied in the institutional or personal memory of local histories.

Aside from its obvious use in shaping the content of interventions, the incorporation of learning from elsewhere can be a powerful tool in gathering institutional and financial support for an initiative or need, as many practitioners noted. Certain research and evaluation reports were mentioned repeatedly (e.g. research demonstrating the limitations of standard myth-busting approaches (Lewis and Newman, 2007)) as were particular interventions (such as the *One Scotland* campaign).

5) Factors influencing outcomes

The national press was seen as a major problem by many interviewees. LRA representatives in Scotland felt that the Scottish and local press was generally quite positive towards migration, but that the output of London-based newspapers still resulted in negative attitudes to migrants. The London press was also seen as a powerful force elsewhere in the UK. Such local-national differences are also visible in relation to the responsibilities of different parts of government: when UKBA talked about promoting 'positive stories' about migration in the press, they were referring to stories about successful enforcement and deportation exercises, while LRAs would tend to mean stories about migrants' achievements or involvement in local communities.

Available resources (financial, staff and time) were widely identified as limiting effective intervention. LRAs emphasised that this was particularly true in a context where political, economic, and demographic contexts were constantly changing. It may also be the case that services are shaped in order to be eligible for available funding streams, as much as in response to locally identified needs. Resources (and the

requirements of funders) also impact on the scope of evaluation work.

Many initiatives identified as promising practices were associated with the energy, expertise, innovation and perseverance of a specific individual or team. There was also some evidence that when the work initiated by such an individual or team was recognised as important and 'mainstreamed' into more general work, momentum and knowledge could be lost and outcomes may suffer.

A lack of available information was seen as problematic in developing interventions. Aside from information on effective models of intervention, many LRAs did not have access to accurate data on their local populations, particularly when accounting for new migration. A number of LRAs had sought to address their information needs by using alternative sources of statistics, and linking service records across partner agencies, or commissioning independent researchers. Doing so uses resources which can not then be spent on direct front-line impact. However, it was felt to be important not only to inform knowledge of local needs, but to make the case for appropriate population-based funding to central government.

6) Learning

Lessons on comparative learning are not possible at this stage, as the work is being done in parallel with our European partners, but learning that may be relevant at a wider scale is emerging. LRAs in the UK are generally very keen to share experience and have a culture of sharing 'best practice', though the criteria for determining best practice may not always be considered scientifically robust. Based on learning from their own experience and available research, many LRAs have moved beyond myth-busting and simple public relations approaches, and have begun exploring direct communications and engagement work.

Most LRAs address attitudes to migrants within a broader agenda of addressing inequality and discrimination or improving community cohesion. Where specific interventions exist, they tend to be focused on a particular group of migrants or a specific need or issue. Thus the amount of information on projects which purely and comprehensively address the specifications of the AMICALL research is limited, but there is a great deal of evidence on work with objectives which are either more broad or more narrow than influencing attitudes to third country nationals.

There is a great deal of regional variation across the UK in terms of the experience of migration, attitudes to migration, and LRA experience and approaches to addressing these issues. Notably, LRAs in areas with devolved government tended to feel that local attitudes to migrants were less negative than in England. Much hostility was attributed to press coverage from national newspapers based in London, though in many places LRAs saw potential for work with the local press on promoting positive stories about migration. Experience of trying to engage media at a local level suggests that story-focused contact may be more effective than attempting to engage editors at a strategic planning level.

Imaginative, enthusiastic leadership appeared to be an important factor in areas where promising practice is developing. This leadership may not always come from the most senior levels of an organisation, or from the service areas which might be expected to lead on attitudes to migrants (such as communications or community development teams). Often, promising practices begin with a response to a local issue, and work across service areas to develop innovative approaches and networks which develop organically. However, this can be problematic for LRAs attempting to develop co-ordinated and efficient approaches across a whole area or organisation, and many LRAs also devote a great deal of time to attempting to link

existing resources and approaches.

The AMICALL project was developed as an action research project. The lessons we hope to draw from the research are not simply intended for an academic audience, but to be shared and useable for practitioners at a local and regional level in the UK and across Europe, and for policy-makers in this field. Many LRA representatives have already commented that the opportunity to reflect on practice has been useful, helping them to focus in on one area of their work. Many more were very keen to remain updated on the AMICALL findings, and wanted to explore the potential for an ongoing network for knowledge sharing.

Appendix 1: Abbreviations

BNP	British National Party
CEN	Community Empowerment Network
CLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
EDL	English Defence League
EH	Environmental Health
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
EU	European Union
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GP	General Practitioner
GRAMNET	Glasgow Refugee And Migrant Network
HCVS	Hackney Council for Voluntary Service
HIP	Humber Improvement Partnership
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
INDIE	Inclusion and Diversity in Education (project of the British Council)
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LBH	London Borough of Hackney
LGID	Local Government Improvement and Development
LMAG	Leicester Multicultural Advisory Group
LRA	Local or Regional Authority
LSB	Local Service Board
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MEP	Member of European Parliament
MIF	Migration Impacts Fund
MRAP	Mayor's refugee Advisory Panel
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
SCT	Specialist Cohesion Team
SOA	Single Outcome Agreement
TLT	The Learning Trust
UKBA	UK Borders Agency
VCO	voluntary and community organisation
WMSMP	West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership
WSREC	West of Scotland Regional Equality Council

Appendix 2: Methodological Notes

Research question

This report was intended to identify existing sources of research on promising LRA communication practices to promote positive attitudes to migrants, and to collect new data on specific case studies through interviews and documentary searches. The research for this report built on the AMICALL UK background paper which provides context on the governance arrangements, migration histories and attitudinal data on migration for the UK.

Scoping the research

An initial informal briefing paper was produced to scope the existing policy and practice literature on LRA communication work related to attitudes to migrants. This found a large number of relevant reports summarizing LRA activity, but mostly with a slightly different scope to that of AMICALL (e.g. not only focused on communications work, or not focused on attitudes to third country nationals, or with varying definitions of 'migrant' and of 'communication activity'). These sources were drawn on this final report, and include:

- Findings from the national Migration Excellence Programme, case studies detailed at idea.gov.uk/migration
- Publications from regional migration partnerships, particularly evaluation reports of the Migration Impacts Fund (e.g. Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (2010))
- Local Government Improvement and Development Migration Communities of Practice online network
- Individual local authority publications
- COSLA migration team
- Reports and evaluations from the Specialist Cohesion Teams (Breckland and Barnsley)
- COIC evidence and publications
- Audit Commission reports (notably Audit Commission, 2007)
- Think tank research (IPPR has produced several reports including case studies, and is currently conducting new qualitative research on public attitudes towards migration in the UK with the International Organisation for Migration)
- Institute for Community Cohesion resources
- Contacts with a range of umbrella, service delivery and lobbying organisations will also be pursued, e.g. London Councils, NILGA, WLGA, Greater London Authority migration team, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, UKBA, LGID, LGIU.

From these reports, and from initial telephone and email contact with relevant experts (e.g. regional migration partnership coordinators) were identified several promising practice examples demonstrating a range of approaches to communication and context. Care was also taken to ensure these examples included a mixture of urban and rural case studies, and areas which had experienced different types of migration at different periods.

Selecting case studies

It was noted that beginning from 'promising practices' which are already described as such within policy and practice literature, there is a danger of ignoring alternative approaches, practices which have not received previous publicity, or which have 'failed' but may nevertheless have 'promising' lessons to offer. To some extent these risks are inherent in the case study approach on which the AMICALL project relied. However, they were mitigated in the following ways:

- Each of the four case study initiatives identified from existing literature were investigated further through telephone and email contact with LRA contacts involved in the initiative and its subsequent development. These contacts provided further documentation on the approaches taken, as well as frank discussion about the successes and limitations of individual projects, and their development over time.
- An additional promising practice initiative (Slough) was added following contacts with regional migration representatives who shared information on their work. Though the LRA had already begun to share their learning from the local initiative, particularly through the academic researchers with whom they were working, this was an additional practice which was not previously widely available as a source of practice to other LRAs.

In addition, the two in-depth case studies were not identified as ‘promising practice’ initiatives as such, but on the basis of their differing and complex experiences of migration to their respective areas, and evidence that they had engaged in a range of communications work in relation to this (see box below for an extract from the briefing paper giving this rationale).

Box A: Rationale for choosing in-depth case study areas

1. Glasgow

Glasgow is the only asylum reception centre area in Scotland. It is the largest city in Scotland and the third largest in the UK. There has been extensive work on different strands of migration policy in the city – including work by housing providers, work on communicating with Roma communities, dealing with hate crime against asylum seekers and refugees, investigation into the impacts of human trafficking in some areas of the city. The city's work on migration is within the context of Scottish communications encouraging and promoting migration as a positive benefit (see above). A detailed case study would allow consideration of a very large city authority which has seen previous migration. It would look at whether and how communications activities around improving attitudes to migrants are considered to be important in themselves, how they are developed, promoted and evaluated if so, and whether the variety of interventions which exist are being linked through a coherent communications strategy.

2. Hackney

The London Borough of Hackney scores very highly on the national indicator for cohesion, that is, over 80% of people tend to agree that 'people from different backgrounds get along well together in this area'. It has a long history of diverse migration patterns. Many of the issues that other areas of the country are experiencing for the first time as a result of new migration – for example, large numbers of children in schools speaking different languages, and high turnover of pupil populations from year to year – have been long-standing experiences in Hackney. The Local Strategic Partnership, Team Hackney, has recently produced a Draft Migrant Strategy. This case study would provide an opportunity to examine how well this attempt at a strategic approach has connected across different parts of local government, in the context of a super-diverse area, one of the poorest parts of the UK which also includes many wealthy residents, and where housing costs and pressures on housing are high. There is also scope to examine how far the local borough's work on communication activities to improve attitudes to migrants tie in with regional strategies for London developed by the Greater London Authority through their migration work.

The research process

Email contact was initiated with a set of contacts from LRAs and other organisations identified from the literature and from previous networks. Initial emails explained the purpose of the work and asked for a short telephone meeting, interview or email discussion of key research questions (see box below – though

these were tailored for each contact as appropriate). Initial emails were followed up by telephone and email as appropriate. In addition, each respondent was asked if they could think of additional relevant contacts for the research.

Box B: Discussion questions presented to research participants

If possible, I would like to speak with you to discuss in more detail the work you have been involved in to improve attitudes to migrants through communications initiatives, and in particular any work that has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of this work. I am also interested in the following broad questions:

- what communications work local and regional government is doing to influence attitudes to migrants
- what measures of effectiveness there are for this work
- which approaches have been most successful, and why
- what the main challenges might be, and ways of tackling them
- where the impetus for work on communications about migration tends to come from (e.g. do ideas begin from residents, local politicians, national policy, a mixture of these, or somewhere else)
- how communications on migration are coordinated between local authorities, between directorates within local authorities, and with other local partners
- what the future prospects for work in this area might be.

Answers to the questions above were gathered through semi-structured interviews by telephone or face to face, or through extended email contact. Many respondents also provided additional documentation about local initiatives or research reports they had used.

For the in-depth case studies, an initial contact was made in the relevant LRA, who was asked for general consent to being included in the study. The potential benefits to the LRA (learning from elsewhere as part of a transnational network, sharing local good practice, and internal learning) were discussed. For Hackney, it was relatively unproblematic to identify a local gatekeeper (partly because of an existing relationship of trust between the researcher and the organisation). This officer helped to organise interviews with the following range of participants:

- Assistant Chief Executive
- Communications and consultation officer
- Head of Policy and Equalities
- A front-line working from the Housing Department
- A group of officers working in the education provider for Hackney, The Learning Trust
- The head of the Hackney Refugee and Migrant Forum

In Glasgow, there was more difficulty in establishing communications with the corporate leadership of the LRA. However, alternative contacts were identified independently through the researcher's existing contacts, and through developing new networks. The following interviews were carried out in Glasgow, over a period of a week:

- An education officer
- An asylum welfare officer
- An elected politician
- Workers at a migrants rights organisation
- A regeneration officer

- A local researcher and activist
- A research officer at the Scottish Refugee Council

As with the rest of the research process, interviews were supplemented by documents and materials provided by research participants and identified through web research.

Table A: Organisations and individuals involved in the research

Type of organisation	Number of organisations contacted	Number of people contacted	Number of people making substantial contributions to the research (providing information or participation)	Number of people involved in technical workshop	Number of people involved in policy round table
LRA	27	51	33	12	5
Government Department	3	8	6	0	2
LRA umbrella organisations	4	9	6	3	2
Academics, think tanks and research organisations	10	11	8	2	5
Migrant organisations	10	14	11	2	3
Other civil society organisations	11	12	10	1	4

Producing and reflecting on findings

Following the research fieldwork, a technical workshop was organised bringing together a range of LRAs and other organisations to test the initial research findings. Participants were selected from among those who had been interviewed for the case studies and the broader research, and supplemented by representatives from other LRAs nominated by members of the research team or other interested participants. An effort was made to ensure a mixture of regional coverage, particularly across the four constituent nations of the UK (which also have differing LRA structures and migration contexts).

The findings of this research was written up as a draft report, which was circulated to individuals invited to the technical workshop. The individual case studies were not included in that report, but circulated as drafts to the LRAs and other contacts involved in producing each one. All of those to whom the whole report and the case studies were circulated were encouraged to send comments and suggested changes to the research team, and many of these comments have been included in the current draft.

At the technical workshop, the overall findings of the report were briefly presented, and presentations were given by representatives from five of the case studies (Breckland, COSLA, Hackney, Peterborough, Slough). After specific questions about each of the presentations, participants were involved in an open and lively discussion about the issues raised by the report and the presentations, and in particular about regional variations in attitudes and activities. Detailed notes of these discussions were taken. Following the workshop, the researcher condensed these notes into the following table, which has been used to inform this version of the report:

Table B: Questions and actions from the UK Technical Workshop	
Questions raised/ points to ensure included in the final report	Implications for research report
1. What other similar research is taking place in the UK/elsewhere?	Some summary of this in the draft report – we can highlight this as a useful aspect
2. Need to ensure there is a recognition of regional differences (in governance and experience) around the UK, particularly in context of devolution (could strengthen attention to Wales)	Good representation from Scotland, need to check Wales and Northern Ireland specifics also acknowledged
3. Difficulties of dealing with 'mixed messages' in policy – e.g. national statements about migration, cohesion, equalities and preventing extremism being separate issues	Some of these ambiguities might be addressed in the UK context report section? And fieldwork report can refer to how they are managed by LRAs.
4. To what extent is the 'good relations' duty being used by LRAs? General consensus was this could be a good lever to secure political support, however if it is not being monitored at national level the leverage may be limited.	Making these linkages might be best referred to in recommendations section.
5. How to avoid tick box approach? And lack of desire for 'just another toolkit'. Outputs need to be flexible, useful, and recognise what is possible for LRAs in current context.	Note in recommendations, and apply this to both recommendations and production of 'toolkit' (maybe call this something else). This should be something which can be flexible, useful, and not resource-intensive to use.
6. Implications of particular policy terms differ across LRAs (e.g. choices about which among integration/ cohesion/ inclusion is most progressive/ regressive).	Try not to get hung up on arguments about language – recognise process of negotiating what language/concepts to use locally may be part of the process of developing positive communications (and needs to be flexible). Include something to this effect in both findings and recommendations.
7. The importance of leadership – in particular the question of negotiating relationships between officer and political leadership, and engaging politicians	Some elements of this are flagged in the draft report but could be drawn out specifically as it seemed to be a major concern for participants.
8. Practicalities of showing <i>how</i> to get along	Draft report promising practice examples intended to address this
9. Changing national policy context – forthcoming UK Government Integration Strategy, differences between devolved governments	Devolution emerged as a major issue – flagged to some extent in draft report, perhaps flag in recommendations re attention to complexities of 'UK' recommendations. Note forthcoming Integration Strategy in redrafted report.
10. What evidence is there that contact between	This may be a more epistemological question for

migrants and non-migrants changes attitudes to <i>the idea of</i> migration, rather than simply to individual migrants?	overall AMICALL discussion??
11. ESOL (especially access to ESOL given funding situation) a major issue for integration	This is noted in the draft report
12. Promising practices and best practice approach tends to be upbeat – is there an opportunity to discuss what <i>doesn't</i> work – and does the nature of this project mean we will leave out LRAs who are <i>not</i> engaged in effective practice?	This relates to the design of the project but also development of practice research more generally. Ways of involving less positive LRAs (e.g. through MRCOs) could be discussed at policy roundtable and in country report recommendations.
13. As well as addressing myths, need to recognise some negative attitudes stem from harsh realities	This is discussed in the draft report with reference to specific examples.
14. Availability of data on both local and national scales – the responsibility of LRAs to know about their residents (and finding adequate systems to do so)	Include in recommendations.
15. How are we defining 'migrant'?	This is discussed in the draft report (and links to point (16) below).
16. The relationship of funding streams (and their limitations) to practical local issues in shaping activity	This is noted in the draft report
17. Is general 'social inequality' a more acceptable term in local areas (than migration specifically) and does this have implications for communications strategies aimed at combating negative attitudes?	Links to discussion of policy language in (6) above – potentially could be included in recommendations/ for further exploration.

At the workshop and immediately following it, many attendees commented that they had found it a useful and productive experience. Many were extremely keen to develop ongoing learning networks, driven by local government in particular. COMPAS agreed to circulate the contact details of all those who did not have an objection, to enable ongoing networking.

Several participants and other interviewees who received the draft report have sent further comments on the draft report, some of which have been incorporated. Most of these comments have been largely minor, or about particular emphases in certain sections. The research report (Jones, 2012) was circulated to participants in the research, and to invited attendees of the national UK Policy Roundtable in February 2012, and is available online.

Appendix 3: References

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