"Intercultural Dialogue

Enabling free, full and equal participation"

Platform for Intercultural Europe

For an equitable European community that values its diverse people, seeks positive dialogue with others and enables each person to make their distinctive contribution to society.

Our mission is to be a legitimate and effective interlocutor between European institutions and civil society organizations committed to the values of intercultural dialogue.

Platform for Intercultural Europe Discussion Papers

Developing understanding of the concepts behind intercultural dialogue and action

Platform for Intercultural Europe
International not-for-profit association under Belgian law since 2008

www.intercultural-europe.org
dialogue@intercultural-europe.org

Intercultural Dialogue
Enabling free, full and equal participation

FOREWORD Sabine Frank

Towards a new agenda
Joel Anderson

Engaged Europe
Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs

ALLIANCE
PUBLISHING
TRUST

PLATFORM FOR
INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

Foreword

Several years of engagement with the topic 'intercultural dialogue' — stimulated in no small part by the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue — have strengthened the view that ethnic and cultural diversity must be lived through mutual engagement and underpinned by recognition of the fundamental equality of all people. The Platform for Intercultural Europe formulated the vision of an intercultural Europe as one where our focus is on 'what we can become together' and on 'intercultural innovation'. 'We must make the principle of evolving cultures through intercultural engagement our new human norm' is what we demanded in our manifesto (the Rainbow Paper — *Intercultural Dialogue: From practice to policy and back*, 2008). This vision was set out as an alternative to disengaged tolerance and multicultural, parallel lives. It was of course also set against the fear, ignorance and selfishness that often lies behind discrimination and racism.

Yet the step from endorsing an intercultural Europe to actively promoting it is a different challenge. What intercultural dialogue and action will get us there? What are the stakes in intercultural relations? With our Rainbow Paper we had already put down some markers. Our first set of practice exchanges for intercultural capacity-building in different locations of Europe then helped us further chart the way. But there is still a need for expert and critical reflection on these issues, especially in looking at cultural and ethnic difference in the context of socio-economic and political inequalities.

Joel Anderson brings to the topic the analytical precision of a philosopher of the social sciences, and helpfully situates intercultural dialogue within the web of contemporary political theory, from distributive justice to liberalism and the politics of recognition. Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs in turn approaches intercultural dialogue from the perspective of an expert on community development and social inclusion and equality, arguing for its potential contribution to overcoming exclusion, tackling disenfranchisement and achieving social reform. While the authors use different methodologies and terminologies, both arrive at the conclusion that equality and participation are interdependent and crucial to any effective work in intercultural dialogue. By so doing, both authors articulate the need to define clearly and address the barriers, competencies and conditions that can hinder or enable the free, full and equal participation by all citizens and residents.

Earlier versions of the two papers were discussed at a seminar on 'Developing the Concept of Intercultural Dialogue' hosted by the Platform for Intercultural Europe in Brussels on 22 February 2010. The finalized papers have already contributed to the internal reflection process of the platform and have informed the formulation of its work plan for 2011–13. They are now published in order to stimulate other organizations in our membership and wider network to reflect on their strategic orientation. They mark the beginning of a series of occasional discussion papers through which the platform intends to encourage reflection, debate and understanding of intercultural dialogue.

Sabine Frank
Secretary General, Platform for Intercultural Europe
November 2010

Intercultural Dialogue and Free, Full and Equal Participation:
Towards a new agenda for an intercultural Europe

Joel Anderson

Joel Anderson is researcher-lecturer in the department of philosophy at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. His research focus lies at the intersection of social philosophy, moral psychology and political theory, and emphasizes the importance of social structures in enabling individual autonomy and agency. He co-edited (with John Christman) *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New essays* (2005), translated Axel Honneth's *The Struggle for Recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts* (1996), and is currently writing a book on 'autonomy gaps'.

Contents

1 Introduction: The historical context of Europe's cultural diversity

Europe finds itself struggling to come to terms with its growing and changing cultural diversity. This is itself nothing new. This part of the planet, stretching from the Urals to the Atlantic and from the Arctic Circle to the Mediterranean, has always been occupied by a complex mix of linguistic dialects, religious faiths, cultural practices and forms of political organization. Europe has long struggled with this diversity, as demonstrated by the history of religious wars or the treatment of Jews, Roma, colonial subjects and slaves. Seen from this perspective, the establishment of the European Union is an extraordinary accomplishment. But any success is crucially an *ongoing* accomplishment, something that must be continually re-established and re-negotiated as the circumstances change. And the circumstances have changed, compared with the postwar period in which the idea of a European Community first emerged. The urgent, unifying fear of another European-born world war has faded, and new forms of diversity have emerged: regional minorities have gained political standing, the boundaries of the European Union have expanded, and high levels of migration have finally come to be recognized as an enduring feature of European societies. Europe's diversity of Danes and Italians, Germans and Spanish, has become also a diversity of Catalonians and Scots, Bulgarians and Lithuanians, Sikhs and Berbers. Furthermore, processes of emancipation, individualization and intermarriage have added new dimensions to this diversity, as individuals within these cultural groups have come to identify with divergent, overlapping and hybridized subcultures, lifestyles, religious practices, and degrees of identification with majority cultures.

This cultural diversity is not itself a problem, of course. But this expanding diversity heightens opportunities for conflict and misunderstanding, complicates the task of social coordinating, and increases the probability that the subordinated margins of society become further fragmented. In addition, the *perception* that cultural diversity is a threat feeds fears about migrants and minorities that exacerbate discrimination and further cycles of oppression, violent revolt, and security crackdowns.

A peaceful, prosperous and just Europe requires sustained and concerted efforts to effectively address the real challenges of this cultural diversity and to realize its enormous promise. The Platform for Intercultural Europe has an important role to play in this. As a watchdog, an advocate, and a facilitator, the platform can help to ensure

that policymakers, NGOs, community organizations and individual citizens understand what needs to be done to move towards an intercultural Europe that fulfils its promise and potential.

The Platform for Intercultural Europe has already made a good start, with very limited resources, in addressing this massively complex task. It has brought together a core of European players with the requisite experience and expertise and continues to expand its network of partner organizations. Its 2008 Rainbow Paper established an innovative emphasis on dialogue, competence and interculturalism, and has attracted extensive support.

The Rainbow Paper is the manifesto of the Platform for Intercultural Europe. It is available online for endorsement on http//rainbowpaper.labforculture.org Much intense online and live debate went into the making of the paper in 2007–8. Signatories can become members of the platform. The paper has been the platform's guide in its grassroots and advocacy work.

If the platform is to live up to its potential and meet the urgent need for leadership regarding the challenges of an intercultural Europe, it needs to build further on the Rainbow Paper in articulating a clear understanding of its distinctive mission and a compelling elaboration of its core principles. In this discussion paper, I offer my own recommendations regarding both the purpose behind such an elaboration and the possible content of it, drawing on recent work in social theory and political philosophy, my research on how to conceptualize autonomy, and (tacitly) my own experience as a recently naturalized Dutch citizen.

2 What is needed to move forward: an agenda for intercultural Europe

As with any guiding document, the Rainbow Paper calls for further elaboration of its core ideas, in response to changing circumstances and new insights. It has become clear that what is needed, in the first instance, is a statement of the platform's distinctive role and contribution in realizing the goals and principles articulated laid out in the Rainbow Paper. Such a statement would serve several purposes, since what is needed is both an articulation of the vision the platform has of an intercultural Europe and also a clear statement of its role in contributing to its realization. I will refer to this document as the Agenda, and I would encourage the platform to consider initiating a process of formulating this for ratification at the June 2011 annual meeting. The Agenda would have three elements: an elaboration of the core principles found in the Rainbow Paper, a specification of the platform's overall role and objectives, and specific priorities for how to achieve those objectives with the available resources.

My proposal is to weave together 'participation' and 'dialogue' as elements in both the goal and the means to achieving it, elements that have distinctively cultural aspects to them with which the platform is primarily engaged. According to this proposal, the ***vision*** of an intercultural Europe that the platform advocates is one in which individuals are able to participate freely, fully and equally in the society and in which genuine intercultural dialogue is something in which individuals and groups can and do routinely engage. The ***practical approach*** to realizing this envisioned society that the platform emphasizes is one in which intercultural dialogue serves as a means to achieve the end, and in which free, full and equal participation in the cultural life serves to strengthen the capacities that individuals need for life in an intercultural society.

> "The vision of an intercultural Europe is one in which individuals are able to participate freely, fully and equally in the society and in which genuine intercultural dialogue is something in which individuals and groups can and do routinely engage."

Articulating the vision and realizing an intercultural Europe

To begin with, the Agenda would clarify the identity of the platform, which is vital for positioning itself amidst a variety of organizations that are concerned with related issues. The platform has the potential to be a clear and distinctive voice in EU policy debates, but that voice must be clear and distinctive enough not to get lost amidst the large number of NGOs, academic fora and government agencies addressing related issues.

The Agenda would also provide a basis for setting priorities in its activities. Given its limited resources, the platform must consistently and deliberately choose a small number of focal areas. A clear statement of a core focus would provide a basis for doing so and of explaining the choices that are made. This needn't be overly rigid or narrow. Even a focused statement of principles will allow for a wide range of potential activities. Strategic choices will still need to be made about specific areas of focus during particular periods. But the statement of core principles will help ensure continuity and cohesiveness over time.

Finally, the Agenda would itself also advance the work already done by the Rainbow Paper in providing a compelling articulation of principles that can shape the moral landscape within which European organizations operate. It would serve to remind legislators, policymakers and citizens why an intercultural Europe is an important aspiration. At the same time, it would engage their conscience, providing a critical standard that highlights current shortcomings within Europe and potentially negative implications of policies under debate.

> The Agenda would provide a compelling articulation of principles that can shape the moral landscape within which European organizations operate.

Supplementing, extending and elaborating the Rainbow Paper

By itself, the Rainbow Paper cannot meet all these desiderata. Hence the need for further elaboration in the Agenda. In what follows, I briefly highlight the key concepts from the Rainbow Paper that, in my view, ought to be further elaborated in the Agenda. I also draw on recent work in philosophy and social science to suggest some important considerations to keep in mind in making such further elaborations. On the basis of this ground-level discussion of key ideas from the Rainbow Paper, I go on to propose, in the next section, one way of integrating these key ideas into a normatively and politically compelling focus on 'intercultural dialogue and free, full and equal participation'. The present section serves, then, to highlight the insights that such an integrative theme should incorporate, beginning with the 'three principles of intercultural experience'.

Competence One of the real strengths of the Rainbow Paper is its emphasis on the interdependence of individual capacities and social/cultural contexts, which I build on below. Clearly we all need to improve our capacities for intercultural interaction if our neighbourhoods, schools, cultural organizations, political institutions and public spaces are to flourish; and we need to transform these same social and cultural contexts if we are to be able to develop these capacities. More has to be said, however, in distinguishing the relevant sorts of competence needed, what they are needed for, and how they can be developed – again, as part of the work of the platform.

Dialogue This is an important concept, and there are plenty of reasons to keep it front-and-centre in the platform's approach. In elaborating this concept beyond what is already contained in the Rainbow Paper, there is a particularly clear need for a more explicit statement of the relationship between power and dialogue, in order to highlight

> There is a particularly clear need for a more explicit statement of the relationship between power and dialogue, in order to highlight the ways in which genuine intercultural dialogue can be challenging and transformative for all involved.

the ways in which genuine intercultural dialogue can be challenging and transformative for all involved.

Action The Rainbow Paper makes clear that the goal of the platform is change. The platform is not itself, however, an activist organization. Instead, by supporting, inspiring, guiding, coordinating and also critiquing the activities of a variety of players in the cultural-political arena, the platform can make a practical difference in ensuring that its core principles are at the centre of attention.

Diversity In embracing diversity, the Rainbow Paper makes clear that this is a deep feature of Europe today. As I emphasized above, it has a long history and one that is not always easy. In further elaborating the Rainbow Paper's positive stance towards diversity, two errors need to be avoided. On the one hand, it is important to emphasize the positive aspects of multiplicities of cultures, languages, identities and lifestyles, against the fear-mongering of nationalistic, racist, anti-immigrant and xenophobic elements now widespread in Europe. On the other hand, it is equally important not to trivialize the challenges that diversity brings, to all involved. Too often positive presentations of diversity reduces to cheerleading for what Marilyn Friedman calls 'shallow global diversity',[1] in which elites find diversity interesting and enriching, as long as they can return to their comfortable homes after sampling new cuisine, music, dance, etc. Real intercultural diversity, however enriching, is a source of frustrations, irritations and conflict. That doesn't mean diversity should be reduced; but effective strategies are needed for ensuring that diversity is more often an asset rather than a threat, *and that the European public is convinced of this.*

Intercultural There are several advantages to this term. To begin with, it emphasizes ongoing interactions and suggests the sort of two-way flow that is essential to genuine dialogue and to free, full and equal participation in society. It is also a usefully inclusive term, in that it can refer to any group that provides a shared perspective or experience, and is not tied to increasingly complex notions of race and ethnicity. Differences in class, country of origin, citizen status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, degree of disability and so on can all fall within this rubric, as can hybridized, biracial and subcultural identities. Indeed, already using this term in a clear and consistent way – and emphasizing parallels with the Canadian metaphor of a 'mosaic' (rather than a 'melting pot') – contributes to welcome destabilization of the widespread (and politically popular) notion that a nation-state has its 'national culture', and that other 'minority cultures' need to relate to this.

In addition, this language provides a way of putting religiously based disagreements on a par with other sorts of disagreements of perspective, rather than giving it a special status. This has some risks, but on the whole it fits best with a European political liberalism in which religion plays a legitimate but not dominant role as a basis for identity.

> It is important to emphasize the positive aspects of multiplicities of cultures, languages, identities and lifestyles, against the fear-mongering of nationalistic, racist, anti-immigrant and xenophobic elements now widespread in Europe; it is equally important not to trivialize the challenges that diversity brings, to all involved.

---

[1] Marilyn Friedman, 'Codes, Canons, Correctness, and Feminism', in *Political Correctness: For and Against*, by Marilyn Friedman and Jan Narveson (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995), 14–5.

Finally, the talk of intercultural dialogue in particular, provides a way of balancing an appreciation of diversity with the importance of finding shared, collaboratively adopted principles for governing our cooperation.

Why use the word 'intercultural'?
– Emphasizes ongoing interactions and suggests two-way flow
– Contributes to the destabilization of the notion that a nation-state has its 'national culture'
– Provides a way of balancing an appreciation of diversity with the importance of finding shared, collaboratively adopted principles for governing our cooperation
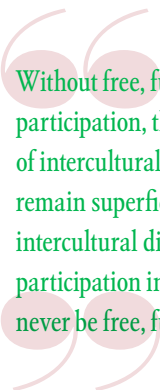
3 Articulating a compelling vision of an intercultural Europe

If what I said at the outset is right, about the need for a cohesive and compelling statement of principles, then the natural thing to do will be to find an overarching theme that accomplishes that goal in a way that incorporates the key Rainbow Paper insights just discussed. A compelling articulation of a vision for an intercultural Europe is of enormous practical significance.

This might not be obvious. It might be asked why there is a need for more talk of 'vision', 'principles' and 'ideals' at a time when there are so many obviously pressing cases in which cultural groups are subjected to discrimination and exclusion, not to mention outright violence. And, indeed, it is important not to underestimate the effects of naked power and blind hatred. But force and power do not operate in a cultural vacuum. If governments and individuals approach cultural diversity in a way that is widely considered unfair, hardhearted or mean, they can act with less impunity and must be more circumspect. In a political-cultural climate in which large numbers of people think, 'You just can't get away with saying/doing that!', then those engaged in discrimination and denigration must have more brute power at their disposal than in a culture of indifference. The key issue is: what determines whether certain practices trigger the critical reactions? Some of this obviously has to do with what people's actual convictions are, and these can vary. But people – all of us – have limited attention. And when the issues get complicated, our eyes tend to glaze over. Vivid cases of abuse and humiliation may still trigger outrage, but when the question is as complex as the issue of how best to approach cultural diversity, it's hard to bring things into focus.

The platform can make a difference here. By drawing connections between its specific goals and broadly supported ethical commitments and political commitments, the platform's ongoing articulation of its guiding principles shifts the tables. Issues that once seemed marginal, 'soft' or optional can become experienced as issues that must *obviously* be addressed or that it would be embarrassing to have neglected. In the process, much-needed initiatives can move higher up the agenda and the critical awareness of policymakers, journalists, politicians, and others concerned with issues of cultural diversity and social justice.

> Vivid cases of abuse and humiliation may still trigger outrage, but when the question is as complex as the issue of how best to approach cultural diversity, it's hard to bring things into focus.

In what follows, I develop a proposal for one way of doing this, by anchoring the platform's key commitments to the idea of 'free, full and equal participation' and the idea of 'intercultural dialogue'. Part of what is particularly compelling about these ideas, for present purposes, is that they dovetail with each other, with progress on each front supporting the realization of the other. In addition, they are simultaneously goals and means to achieving those goals: without free, full and equal participation, the conditions of intercultural dialogue will remain superficial; without intercultural dialogue, participation in society will never be free, full and equal.

Free, full and equal participation

Many of the most central documents outlining the ideals and human rights commitments of European nations focus on enabling participation. This is also closely linked with values of autonomy, democratic self-rule, freedom and many others.

– Seen from the perspective of **distributive justice**, the denial of real opportunities for participation involves depriving and marginalizing individuals in ways that thwart their pursuit of a life that meets their needs and realizes their aspirations.[2]

– Seen from the perspective of **liberal ideals of autonomy, freedom, and democratic self-rule**, denials of participation represent arbitrary limits to choice and blockages with respect to the possibility of co-determining the conditions under which one lives.[3]

– Seen from the perspective of the guiding concerns of **identity politics and the politics of recognition**, barriers to participation tear the socio-cultural fabric of mutual respect that is essential if individuals are to see one another's (and their own) contributions to society as worthwhile and their life-choices as meaningful.[4]

This broad support for the principle of free, full and equal participation makes it a good basis for articulating central goals of the platform. Moreover, it is also at the

---

[2] Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); W Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989); Nancy Fraser, 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, Participation' in *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, by Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth (London: Verso, 2003), 7–109; John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, ed Erin Kelly (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[3] Philippe van Parijs, *Real Freedom for All: What (If Anything) Can Justify Capitalism?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Gerald Gaus, *Justificatory Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); J Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

[4] C Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); Charles Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition' in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 25–74; J Anderson and A Honneth, 'Autonomy, Vulnerability, Recognition, and Justice' in *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays*, ed J Christman and J Anderson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 127–49; Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans Joel Anderson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

heart, implicitly or explicitly, of many international documents. For example, Article 27 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights states that 'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community'. The Millennium Declaration in Article 25 reaffirms the commitment to work collectively for more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child lays down the principle and purpose of meaningful participation of children and young people, and Article 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women states that 'the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields'. Article 3 of the recent UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stresses the goal of 'full and effective participation and inclusion in society'. And this is only a sampling. Participation is clearly a fundament human right.

The importance of participation is also anticipated in the Rainbow Paper, and is underscored by the emphasis placed there on inclusion and non-discrimination, in its Mission, the Constructive Path it outlines, and its Value Premises. The importance of participation is clearest from looking at its opposite, at the situation in which individuals within a society do not see themselves as participants. These are objectively factual and subjectively experienced conditions of marginalization, ostracism, anomie and exclusion. Indeed, the language of participation provides a way of taking up a strong anti-exclusion, anti-marginalization position that broadens the scope beyond anti-racism approaches. I have proposed the phrase 'free, full and equal participation' as a key means for articulating a focal point of the platform's goals and ideals. Each component word, however, requires some elaboration, beginning with 'participation'.

Participation The contexts of participation in the (cultural) life of a society can be quite varied, including everything from engaging in meaningful work and standing for political office to taking part in local festivals or volunteering at one's child's school. But, whatever the context, one of the striking aspects of participation is that, to be a participant in a social or cultural activity, it is not enough to have the interest and competence to take part in that activity. The other participants must, at some level, also acknowledge one to be a co-participant. As an illustration: I can kick around a football on a pitch where a game is being played, but unless I'm considered to be a co-participant, I'm not one. Participation requires securing uptake. By extension, in the sense at issue here, promoting participation is not so much a matter of sending many players onto the pitch as a matter of ensuring that they get uptake, that they are seen as genuine co-participants. It's not just about showing up; you have to be able to play.[5] This may sound rather assimilationist, but that would be to assume what is explicitly being rejected here: that everyone has to play by the rules of the majority culture. Rather, as I will emphasize below, the rules themselves are understood to be open to ongoing transformation. Moreover, it is crucially important to distinguish *inclusion* from

> The language of participation provides a way of taking up a strong anti-exclusion, anti-marginalization position that broadens the scope beyond anti-racism approaches.

> One of the striking aspects of participation is that, to be a participant in a social or cultural activity, it is not enough to have the interest and competence to take part in that activity. The other participants must, at some level, also acknowledge one to be a co-participant.

---

[5] The link between being recognized and being included as a genuine participant is a central theme in the work of Axel Honneth and Jürgen Habermas cited below.

assimilation, and it is only the first of these that is connected with the requirements of participation.[6]

Free participation According to this understanding, promoting participation is to be understood in terms of possibilities for participation becoming available to individuals. Whether they choose to make use of it is to be left up to them. Indeed, turning now to the concept of 'free participation', participation is free only if it is voluntary and uncoerced, and this excludes pushing people hard into making use of the opportunities that are made available to them. There may be reasons to be concerned about failures to participate actively, and I will return to this below, but it is clear from the human rights perspective and a commitment to respect for persons that the burden of proof is on those who would insist on measures to require anyone to make active use of their opportunities for freedom.

In addition to being voluntary, free participation is accessible without arbitrary barriers or restrictions. A commitment to free participation thus entails also a commitment to removing barriers to access. The clearest cases of barriers are formal prohibitions on who can become a member of particular organizations or participate in certain activities, but the informal barriers are perhaps more pernicious because they operate implicitly and without clear perpetrators. Often, a newcomer's sense that 'I wouldn't fit in there' bars participation as effectively as any formal prohibition. Other cases include what is often referred to as a lack of 'positive freedom',[7] including the material conditions necessary for participation. High fees for cultural events, lack of public transportation or wheelchair accessibility also represent barriers. Obviously, in a world of limited resources, hard choices need to be made, but they need to be made in light of the principle of participatory parity to which I return below.

Full participation Making participation not merely free but also full introduces an emphasis on inclusiveness and richness of participation. Fullness of participation varies both in scope and depth. In terms of depth, a given individual's involvement in their community could be relatively limited and piecemeal or it could be intense and extensive. In terms of scope, the number of active participants in central cultural activities might be low or high. A commitment to promoting 'full participation' might seem to contradict the value of freedom just mentioned, but matters are more complicated. To begin with, a commitment to full participation is primarily about making *possible* an extensive depth and scope of participation. In this sense, it is about ensuring that the forms of participation freely accessible to all are not watered-down, marginal forms of participation but rather the robust, genuine article.

Commitment to full participation might, however, take the form of heightened attention to low levels of actual participation. Suppose that participation in shared cultural activities was particularly low in some subcultures, both in scope and depth.

---

[6] Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, trans Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1998), chapters 4, 5, 6 and 8.

[7] The phrase comes from I Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty' in *Four Essays on Liberty* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 118–72. See also Charles Taylor, 'What's Wrong with Negative Liberty?' in *Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 211–29.

Taking full participation as a critical standard could raise important questions about *why* this participation is low. Are there unnoticed barriers to participation? Are there forms of socialization that discourage participation, for example, among women within the subculture? In this way, the notion of full participation might serve an important signal function.

Alternatively and more controversially, one might endorse a substantive commitment to more extensive participation, on the grounds that this is necessary for a vibrant cultural life. This perspective has been developed by a number of broadly 'communitarian' or 'republican' or 'perfectionist' thinkers, who emphasize that robust, active participation is either intrinsically valuable or, more interestingly, that a certain level of participation by large numbers of people is necessary if the forms of participation are to be available to any. Unless there are enough people who speak the language and know the cultural practices, the possibility of participation in such subcultures will whither and die for all. Here, then, there is a clear possibility of a tension between commitment to voluntariness of participation ('parents should be allowed to decide whether children must learn Welsh') and commitment to a substantive ideal of cultural preservation ('children must be required to learn Welsh, or the language will die out').[8] Although a commitment to a principle of full participation does not require endorsing a communitarian understanding of it, it is important that those employing the concept be clear where they stand on the issue.

In addition, whatever the justification is for trying to enlarge the extent to which people take full advantage of their opportunities for participation, there are also various ways to go about encouraging that. Since mandatory policies (such as fines for not voting) are unpopular and coercive, and incentive-based approaches (such as offering rewards) are often expensive or ineffectual or both, it is worth considering recent work on 'nudging' people to engage in certain forms of socially desirable behaviour. This approach, developed by economist Richard Thaler and jurist Cass Sunstein, involves adjusting the default options, situational cues, and other indirect means to steer or 'nudge' people in certain directions, without forcing them to do so, by making certain courses of action just seem like the natural thing to do.[9] There is, I think, room here for creative proposals for encouraging participation, especially where it is clear that this is what is needed to allow individuals to develop, through participation, the skills and attitudes needed to participate actively on their own. But any use of nudges needs to

[8] For a discussion, see Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition'; Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*; J Habermas, 'Kampf um Anerkennung im demokratischen Rechtsstaat' in *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen: Studien zur politischen Philosophie* (Frankfurt a M: Suhrkamp, 1996), 237–276. For influential communitarian positions, see Robert Bellah et al, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Amitai Etzioni, *Spirit Of Community* (Beaverton OR: Touchstone, 1994).

[9] Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

keep clearly in mind the dangers that this can become a form of paternalism in which people are shaped by elites to fit into a preset mould.[10]

Equal participation The third aspect of the proposed ideal of participation is equality. It is important at the outset to set aside the idea that equality is about everyone having the same of everything. That would make equal participation incompatible with diversity, whereas it is actually a crucial condition for the *flourishing* of a rich and stable form of diversity. Equality is in fact better seen as applying to equal status with regard to the activities and processes that determine people's life chances. In countless contexts, the real possibility for rewarding participation in society is threatened by inequality. Often, this is because those who have fewer resources fall below a minimum of adequate resources; especially where inequality is significant, the bottom end of the spectrum involves massive deprivation. But even in situations in which the least well off have most of what they really need (in absolute terms), subordination and discrimination is problematic. It creates situations in which some participants have disproportionate power to set the terms of participation, and it does so in an insulting way that expresses denigration (whether or not individuals within the dominant group(s) themselves explicitly hold or express denigrating attitudes).[11] As a result, the social and cultural world one faces as a subordinated participant is one in which one cannot be fully at home, cannot see fully as one own.

Equality actually operates at two different levels. First, in deciding (cultural) policy, a democratic commitment to equality requires promoting more than just 'one person, one vote' and majority rule, since this standard leads to situations in which a majority dominates.[12] Second, equality operates at the level of the participation itself, of ensuring that people are treated as having standing as equals. The core insight here is ultimately the idea that no individual has more intrinsic worth than another, and that individuals can and should look each other in the eye as peers. A society in which equality of participation was realized would be a society in which no one would be accorded a subordinate position by virtue of, for example, his or her cultural affiliation.

One of the most compelling formulations of the interdependence of equality and participation is Nancy Fraser's principle of 'participatory parity'. As she explains:

'According to this norm, justice requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers. For participatory parity to be possible, I claim, at least two conditions must be satisfied. First the distribution of

> Equality is equal status with regard to the activities and processes that determine people's life chances. Subordination and discrimination create situations in which some participants have disproportionate power to set the terms of participation.

> No individual has more intrinsic worth than another; individuals can and should look each other in the eye as peers.

[10] This is a point I return to below in the discussion of intercultural dialogue. See also my critique of *Nudge* in Joel Anderson, 'Review of Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein "Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness"' *Economics and Philosophy* (2010). Some particularly nuanced and compelling critiques of these subtle forms of shaping a population are inspired by Foucault's groundbreaking work on governmentality, eg Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1991).

[11] Elizabeth Anderson, 'What Is the Point of Equality?' *Ethics* 109, no. 2 (1999): 287–337.

[12] This is an old theme in the history of political liberalism, but it is given a particularly sharp formulation in Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989); Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition'.

material resources must be such as to ensure participants' independence and 'voice.' This . . . *objective condition* of participatory parity . . . precludes forms and levels of economic dependence and inequality that impede parity of participation . . . In contrast, the second condition requires that institutionalized patterns of cultural value express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for achieving social esteem. This . . . *intersubjective condition* . . . precludes . . . institutionalized value patterns that deny some people the status of full partners in interaction – whether by burdening them with excessive ascribed 'difference' or by failing to acknowledge their distinctiveness.'[13]

By emphasizing the importance of ensuring that individuals are not assigned to a subordinate status, Fraser is able to accommodate concerns about both economic inequalities and cultural denigration. Fraser's work – and the ongoing exchanges with Axel Honneth (and others) regarding the relations between the violations of participatory parity and various disempowering forms of misrecognition – provide useful theoretical resources for further refinements of the ideal of free, full, and equal participation.[14]

Before continuing, it is worth again emphasizing that there are some trade-offs and hard cases that are not easy to resolve. For example, as already mentioned, it might be the case that, although it should ultimately be up to individuals whether or not to participate actively in various practices, there could be situations in which this would amount to unfairly 'free-riding' on the efforts of others. In such cases, it might be reasonable to mandate or strongly encourage certain forms of participation. Similarly, there will be difficult issues to resolve regarding the question of what counts as a reasonable accommodation to enable participation, especially when this doesn't merely inconvenience other groups but actually undermines their chances for participation. The principle of participatory parity, along with the other principles mentioned, can provide some guidance, but ultimately they will need to be decided through democratic processes and intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural dialogue

There are a variety of ways of working to bring about a society of free, full and equal participation. One part of this, as I have already mentioned, involves continual articulation and re-articulation of the principles themselves and their implications for policy, so as to keep these concerns high on the public agenda and clear in the

---

[13] Fraser, 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, Participation', 36.

[14] Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange* (London: Verso, 2003); Nancy Fraser, *Adding Insult to Injury: Nancy Fraser Debates Her Critics*, ed Kevin Olson (London: Verso, 2008); Patchen Markell, *Bound by Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Bert van den Brink and David Owen, eds, *Recognition and Power: Axel Honneth and the Tradition of Critical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

minds of policymakers. Another piece will involve lending support, wherever possible, to organizations working to improve the legal protections, social standing, and material wellbeing of subordinated and marginalized groups. Given the platform's priorities and identity, it makes sense to focus on improving the cultural means for sustained progress regarding free, full, and equal participation by promoting contexts, institutions, policies, and capacities in which genuine dialogue can occur between individuals and groups from different subcultures. As a further advantage, 'intercultural dialogue' is not only a means of contributing to the realization of free, full, and equal participation but is also a constitutive feature of a society in which that ideal is realized. For, as the discussion of competences below makes clear, participation in a culturally diverse society requires many of the same skills and practices that are central to intercultural dialogue. And this is very much in keeping with the three foci mentioned in the 'Constructive Path' in the Rainbow Paper: 'Attitude', 'What We Have in Common' and 'What We Can Become – Together'.

Intercultural encounters

Before continuing, it is important to clear up a widespread ambiguity between two rather different understandings of 'intercultural dialogue'. In the strict sense I will be emphasizing, 'intercultural dialogue' involves concrete exchange between two or more parties aimed at resolving conflicts or at addressing tensions, frequently over felt misrecognition and disrespect. These are contexts in which the explicit purpose of the exchange is to come to a new and better understanding, across the gulf of differing (sub)cultural perspectives, about how to proceed.[15] These are risky joint undertakings and they often fail, but they can succeed only if there is a clear focus on what is at issue, often with a practical focus.[16] In a very different, metaphorical sense, 'intercultural dialogue' is sometimes used (also in the Rainbow Paper) for the looser contexts in which different (sub)cultures merely come into contact with one another. Public festivals or other cultural events are examples of such contexts. For such 'intercultural encounters', the level of individual competence and supporting structures required is much lower, and the expectations are quite different. Both encounters and genuine dialogue can play important roles in the process of realizing free, full and equal participation, but failing to distinguish them can lead to confusion and poorly designed initiatives.

Intercultural *encounters* – such as the 'pancakes-and-popodams' encounters described by Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs[17] – often involve low-threshold contact that

---

[15] The most sophisticated theoretical analysis of the general structures of practices of 'coming to an understanding about something' can be found in the work of Jürgen Habermas, 'Handlungen, Sprechakte, sprachlich vermittelte Interaktionen' in *Nachmetaphysisches Denken: Philosophische Aufsätze* (Frankfurt a M: Suhrkamp, 1988), 63 ff.; Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol 1 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

[16] Here I heartily agree with Sukvinder Kaur-Stubbs's emphasis (in her paper for the platform, 'Engaged Europe') on concrete, local contexts of intercultural interaction, around economic or other concerns.

[17] Kaur-Stubbs, 'Engaged Europe', section 3.

requires relatively little preparation or willingness to be challenged. They serve to familiarize people from different subcultures with one another and have the potential to dispel extreme stereotypes. By exposing people in informal ways to different practices, ideas and customs, these can provide relatively easy ways to generate 'positive social ties' and a greater appreciation of those who are different from oneself. Indeed, the low-key and fun nature of these encounters is a real advantage, especially in cases in which mutual suspicion is high.

There are, however, two caveats that should be noted regarding this way of approaching intercultural interactions. First, it is vitally important that the design of these encounters be adequately informed by what we know about human psychology and interpersonal dynamics. Many community organizers often have good intuitions, based on extensive practical experience. But what recent work in social psychology, behavioural economics, planning theory and other domains has made clear is that what works best may often be counter-intuitive. More attention is thus needed to ensuring that cultural encounters that we *think* will produce good outcomes in fact do so. There is some evidence in favour of the 'contact hypothesis',[18] according to which contact itself is sufficient for reducing prejudice, but there are clearly also contexts in which rubbing shoulders informally with those from other subcultures sometimes exacerbates feelings of misunderstanding and suspicion. As Yehuda Amir notes in a widely cited article, 'changes in ethnic relations do occur following intergroup contact, but the nature of this change is not necessarily in the anticipated direction; "favourable" conditions do tend to reduce prejudice, but "unfavourable" conditions may increase intergroup tension and prejudice'.[19] My point is not to belittle the significance of intercultural encounters, but to emphasize that, since the question of what is effective is an empirical question, intuitions and optimism are no replacement for scientific study. For example, most work drawing on Allport's 'contact hypothesis' emphasizes the importance of securing 'optimal conditions' for successful contact (whether in encounters or dialogue): equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation and support of authorities, law or customs. The platform could plan an important role in supporting, gathering and disseminating some of this empirical research.

Second, these encounters are often experienced to be insultingly superficial, especially by members of subordinate groups who are keenly aware of deeper disagreements and have been repeatedly frustrated by a lack of progress. For those subordinated groups demanding *real* change and *real* inclusion, the sports exchanges and cultural festivals will be inadequate and will often only strengthen a sense of alienation. There are doubtless ways of reducing this, for example, by involving

---

[18] The 'contact hypothesis' is largely attributed to Gordon Willard Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), and is supported by a significant number of studies; see especially Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp, 'A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (2006): 751–783.

[19] Yehuda Amir 'Contact hypothesis in ethnic relations' *Psychological Bulletin* 71, no. 5 (1969): 319–342.

disaffected groups and individuals into the planning process, a process that has additional benefits when approached as a genuine intercultural dialogue.

Intercultural dialogue

Compared to 'encounters', genuine dialogue (in the sense I have in mind) involves much more, placing internal demands on participants to rethink their presuppositions in an open and self-critical manner. There are several features of intercultural dialogue that I would like to emphasize here, partly with an eye to the ways in which they contribute to promoting free, full and equal participation. Let me emphasize the following six: focus, bindingness, openness, reciprocity, reflexivity and recognition.
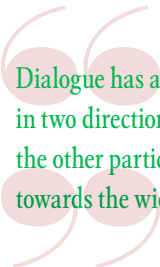
Focus Unlike informal encounters or free-form conversation, dialogue is necessarily *about* something. Dialogue is thus always a three-part relation between speaker, listener, and what it is that they are trying to figure out together. Dialogue may be aimed at resolving disputes over facts (such as how a riot started) or over policy decisions (such as what policies to have regarding a country's official language) or over accusations of wrongdoing (such as whether a refusal to allow a particular religious observance counts as offensive or denigrating). Whatever the particulars of the case, however, dialogue is not just a matter of two parties exchanging perspectives for the sake of exchange alone, but for the purpose of figuring out how to move forward. Dialogue, in this sense, is thus decidedly practical.

Bindingness Dialogue is sometimes considered 'soft' because it can't be enforced, as is the case with legal measures. Dialogue is dependent on the willing participation of the parties involved to achieve its results. Nonetheless, once people do commit to engaging in genuine dialogue, they are bound in certain ways insofar as they continue the dialogue. This is what Jürgen Habermas refers to as the 'performative presuppositions' unavoidably taken on board by participants in dialogue:[20] just as you can't seriously take yourself to be playing football if you pick up the ball and run with it, you can't seriously take yourself to be engaged in genuine dialogue if you persist in manipulating the exchange, excluding participants arbitrarily, misrepresenting one's own views (or those of others), and so on. Genuine dialogue makes its own demands on participants because is essentially involves interdependence; like the two halves of an arching bridge, dialogue exists only by virtue of mutual, supporting commitment to it. Of course, there is always the possibility of breakdown, but that apparent weakness is also the strength of dialogue: any common ground that is found binds participants to each other *from the inside*, rather than being externally imposed. This generates a sense of *legitimacy* that cannot be generated in any other way.
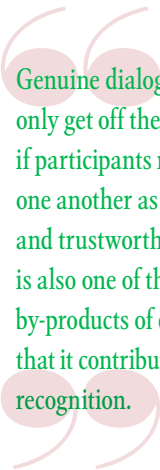
Reciprocity Perhaps the most striking demand that dialogue makes on participants is reciprocity, the idea that the roles of speaker and listener are not fixed but interchangeable; indeed, it is true for each and every participant that she can be a speaker only if the others are listeners, and vice versa. The key idea of dialogue is thus that no perspective is assumed to be automatically authoritative, something that

> Dialogue is not just a matter of two parties exchanging perspectives for the sake of exchange alone, but for the purpose of figuring out how to move forward. Dialogue, in this sense, is thus decidedly practical.

> Genuine dialogue exists only by virtue of mutual, supporting commitment to it.

> The roles of speaker and listener are not fixed but interchangeable; no perspective is assumed to be automatically authoritative.

[20] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action,* 2 vols (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984, 1987).

fits well with a commitment to democratic principles. In genuine dialogue, no one can arrogantly presume that he or she is the sole source of insight and that it is the *others* who must listen. Again, people often do behave arrogantly or fail to listen, but then they are no longer engaged in dialogue, even if they are still talking.

Openness Part of what makes dialogue so challenging, uncomfortable and critical is that it changes people, and it does so in ways that cannot always be predicted. Dialogue has an open end in two directions: towards the other participant(s) and towards the wider world. The openness towards the other is a corollary of the principle of reciprocity just discussed, an openness to the idea that, in trying to figure out together how to proceed, insights may come from the other. The outward-directed openness refers to the ever-present possibility that new experiences, information, circumstances or participants will break open fixed assumptions, leading to new insights. This dual openness forms the counterpoint to the element of 'focus' mentioned at the outset, but there is no contradiction here. Dialogue is always directed toward coming to an understanding about something, even when the subject matter shifts in the course of the dialogue, as it usually should and does.

Reflexivity Genuine dialogue is only possible when participants have a certain attitude towards themselves, when they see themselves as jointly attempting to figure something out. Disagreements can always arise, however, about whether all the participants really have this attitude and are approaching the dialogue in an open and cooperative manner. This is where dialogue turns 'reflexive'. And when participants do dispute whether what they are doing should really count as genuine dialogue, there is no way to resolve that except through further dialogue. This can generate what seems like interminable bickering about procedure, but it is crucial not to dismiss these discussions as irrelevant. They lie at the heart of the self-critical power of dialogue: anyone can, in principle, always challenge *from the inside* the assumption that an exchange is a genuine dialogue, one characterized by openness, reciprocity, etc.

Recognition The relationship between dialogue and mutual recognition is one of mutual support. Genuine dialogue can only get off the ground if participants recognize one another as competent and trustworthy. But it is also one of the main by-products of dialogue that it contributes to mutual recognition. For there are few forms of recognition more powerful than seeing that others have really listened to what one has to say. This is why, especially for members of subordinate and marginalized subcultures, dialogue is not just a means to enhancing participation but is itself the (partial) realization of that participation.[21]

Although I've been discussing dialogue in general terms, the implications for specifically *intercultural* dialogue follow naturally, for the principles are the same. In

---

[21] For more on the 'recognition theory' approach to justice, see especially Axel Honneth, 'Redistribution as Recognition: A Reply to Fraser' in *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, by Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, trans Joel Golb, James Ingram and Christiane Wilke (London: Verso, 2003), 110–197; Axel Honneth, *Reification* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*; Honneth, *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

light of the previous discussion (in section 2) of the concept of the 'intercultural', we can think of intercultural dialogue as occurring between individuals (sometimes as representatives of groups) from different subcultures, typically where disputes arise from differences in perspective or experience.

4 Competencies and conditions for realizing participation and dialogue

As we have seen, a commitment to the two core principles of intercultural dialogue and of free, full and equal participation entails and reinforces a whole range of other ethical commitments, political values and even human rights. But these commitments also have practical implications, particularly regarding the conditions and individual competencies that are vitally important for realizing these principles. ***In short: fundamental principles of human rights and democracy underwrite a commitment to the promotion of free, full and equal participation as well as intercultural dialogue; a commitment to their promotion, in turn, entails a commitment to realizing the conditions and competencies they presuppose.*** It is here, in specifying these conditions and competencies, that the platform can bring them sharply into focus, thereby helping to shift priorities toward measures that provide for them.

In what follows, I provide an initial sketch of the conditions (both structural barriers and contextual supports) and individual competencies that profoundly affect the possibilities for both participation and dialogue. Developing a full analysis of them would be an important task for the platform to pursue.

Competencies and conditions for participation

Barriers Clearly the most visible ways in which societal conditions affect free, full and equal participation are negative ones – that is, when there are barriers that undermine possibilities for participation. These include legal, economic, social and material barriers to participation in cultural practices, such as when fees limit the participation of lower-income groups, or when a lack of accessibility to public buildings limits participation of persons with disability, or when legally sanctioned restrictions keep non-citizen residents from travelling to cultural events. In addition, there are specifically cultural barriers to participation, such as when restrictive language policies impede the development of minority language radio broadcasts, or (more controversially) when the dominance of majority-culture religious holidays crowds out cultural space for other traditions. In addition to calling attention to distinctively cultural barriers, the platform has an important role to play as an ally of organizations devoted to fighting poverty,

discrimination or social marginalization, as conditions that undermine possibilities for realizing the guiding principles.

Competencies The removal of barriers is clearly no guarantee for free, full and equal participation. As mentioned above, participation involves securing 'uptake' in the context of a practice, and that requires certain more or less sophisticated skills. Language skills and knowledge of local customs can make the difference between marginal participation and full participation, but these are just two examples. As has been made clear in the 'capabilities approach' developed by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen, there are numerous capabilities whose development is essential for even an absolute minimum level of participation and inclusion in society.[22] Of course, as societies become more and more complex, new levels and kinds of competence become necessary. Participation in the social, cultural and political practices of a rural village is complicated enough; when one adds to the range of individual choices, differentiated role-expectations and hybridized identities – not to mention technological complexity – that characterize hypercomplex, individualized and globalizing societies today, it is clear that these ongoing processes of development continually threaten to leave some people behind.[23]

Conditions for acquiring competencies This all adds urgency to facilitating the development of these competencies. It is ultimately individuals who must develop the requisite competencies, but some societal climates are better than others at supporting the ongoing development and fair distribution of these competencies in a way that supports participatory parity (in Fraser's sense). Educational programmes are clearly essential here, and it is particularly important that education be thought of as an ongoing process, for which it is vitally important that the threshold to accessing these educational resources remain low. This is where public arts programmes, museums, street theatre and other cultural activities can play an important role, potentially in an accessible and even *fun* way.

Scaffolding and supporting conditions Although individuals can and do develop these competencies, the role of supporting conditions cannot be underestimated. Even elites, who have typically benefitted from optimal conditions for the development of their competencies, regularly rely on all manner of support systems, from an iPhone-Google link that renders them virtually omniscient to a network of people who can give advice on how to handle delicate situations.[24] We are all propped up, in various ways, by supporting environments and institutions. We are

> It is ultimately individuals who must develop the requisite competencies, but some societal climates are better than others at supporting the ongoing development and fair distribution of these competencies in a way that supports participatory parity.

---

[22] Martha Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[23] See especially the groundbreaking analysis of Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage Publications, 1992).

[24] And we should also not forget the still too-frequent cases of elite men enabled by their subordinate wives.

all, in a word, 'scaffolded'.[25] But the potential implications of this for individuals on the margins of society are particularly significant. And here we can draw on the parallels in the influential 'social model of disability', according to which what 'handicaps' individuals is not, for example, simply the fact that one has lost the use of one's legs, but rather also the fact that there are not sufficient ramps for one's wheelchair.[26] Similarly, there are many opportunities for increasing social inclusion by providing support systems: legal aid, coaching, accessible transportation and so on. Thinking creatively about the ways in which these forms of scaffolding can be expanded and made available would be a significant contribution to promoting social inclusion and participatory parity in fast-changing societies in which levels of competence will never be equal.

This leads to an important complicating factor here – namely the fact that the level and substance that is expected regarding competence is also something that is always open to dispute, and ought properly to be a matter for intercultural dialogue. What level of linguistic competence, for example, ought to be required as an 'entry ticket' for participation? Here it is crucial to appreciate that competence is not an absolute standard; rather, it is relative to the expectations built into the informal and institutionalized practices in which individuals participate. Some practices require more competence than others. Sometimes, this is simply in the nature of the practice, and there is no possibility for demanding a lower level of competence to include more people. But very often the level of expectations could be varied. Multilingual ballots and voter guides are a clear example of this, for they lower the level of competence required for participation in the electoral process. The 'entry ticket', in other words, can be more or less 'expensive', and it is an important political issue how expensive it should be. This is not to say that one should always structure institutions and practices in a way that presupposes the lowest possible level of competence. Rather, my point is that this issue should be thematized, and made a topic for political and intercultural dialogue.[27] Moreover, this is an area in which much more could be done to reframe debates about the cultural conditions of free, full and equal participation – and where the platform could take a leading role.[28]

[25] Joseph Heath and Joel Anderson, 'Procrastination and the Extended Will' in *The Thief of Time: Philosophical Essays on Procrastination*, ed Chrisoula Andreou and Mark White (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 233–52; Andy Clark, *Supersizing the mind: embodiment, action, and cognitive extension* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2008).

[26] Tom Shakespeare and Nicholas Watson, 'The Social Model of Disability: An Outdated Ideology?' *Research in Social Science and Disability* 2 (2002): 9–28.

[27] Kevin Olson's work on the way in which free, full and equal participation requires capacities for contesting the current terms of the participation is particularly relevant here: Kevin Olson, 'Legitimate Speech and Hegemonic Idiom: The Limits of Deliberative Democracy in the Diversity of its Voices' *Political Studies* forthcoming (2010); Kevin Olson, *Reflexive Democracy: Political Equality and the Welfare State*, Studies in contemporary German social thought (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2006); Olson, 'Constructing citizens' *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (2008), 40–53.

[28] For a further discussion of this point, see Joel Anderson, 'Autonomielücken als soziale Pathologie. Ideologiekritik jenseits des Paternalismus' in *Sozialphilosophie und Kritik*, ed R. Forst et al (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2009), 433–453.

Competencies and conditions for intercultural dialogue

Barriers The most significant barriers to intercultural dialogue, in Europe at least, are often the least visible. Along with deep-seated prejudices about other (sub) cultures, it is the subtle effects of disparaging looks, a feeling of discomfort or a lack of background knowledge that often keeps intercultural dialogue from getting started. These barriers, then, are in the culture itself and the enculturated attitudes of individuals. Changing those attitudes, on the model of anti-racism education, is an absolutely essential part of promoting intercultural dialogue (and, at the same time, an outcome of that dialogue). But we are here actually already in the domain of competencies.

Competencies Genuine intercultural dialogue, at least as discussed above, is demanding. However much diversity is to be celebrated, it is also hard work. For *everyone*: members of minority cultures and newcomers as well as dominant groups and established cultures. To engage in fruitful intercultural dialogue, participants need to develop dispositional, linguistic, attitudinal, organizational and practical skills. These skills are, incidentally, not isolated skills. They are part of a larger skill-set mentioned above, which is needed for coping with conditions of individualization within the modern societies that make up Europe. As Europeans, we face (and embrace) a liberalized situation in which we must make many more choices than in traditionalist contexts, and this requires capacities for decision-making that not all have developed. In short, the 'post-conventional ego-identity'[29] required for flourishing under modern conditions of diversity is also what is required for processes of ongoing individualization, globalization and subcultural hyrbidization.

There is an enormous variety of competencies that can be identified here, as comprising 'intercultural competence', and I shall only mention several of them here. Here, again, the platform might consider taking on the task of further elaborating and revising this list.

– Competence in listening and role-taking, including a willingness to hear the perspective and see the reality of one's partners in dialogue;

– competence in self-expression, including the ability to express confidently and convincingly one's own perspective and values, without unduly provoking others;

– competence in non-defensively appreciating and recognizing the accomplishments of other groups;

> The 'post-conventional ego-identity' required for flourishing under modern conditions of diversity is also what is required for processes of ongoing individualization, globalization and subcultural hyrbidization.

---

[29] Jürgen Habermas, 'Individuation through Socialization: On George Herbert Mead's Theory of Subjectivity' in *Postmetaphysical Thinking* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1992), 149–204.

– competence in 'endurance', including an understanding that dialogue is not about getting one's way, as well as a willingness to accept that concessions and reasonable accommodation will have to be made;[30]

– competence in disagreeing, including the willingness and ability to raise points of dispute and to critique the current terms of the dialogue;

– competence in conflict resolution, including the ability to temper one's formulations, as well as the ability to stick with the dialogue through the strong emotions and painful accusations that are often generated in intercultural dialogue.

As this (partial) list makes clear, intercultural dialogue requires a demanding set of skills, and thus it is vitally important to attend both to means of developing it and to ways of providing 'scaffolding' for contexts in which they are not fully developed (realistically speaking, *all* contexts).

Conditions for developing competencies Given how deep and complex it is, intercultural competence is ultimately acquired only by engaging in it. This makes it vitally important that dialogue occurs in supportive contexts and in a way that takes into consideration how frightening this is for most people. Empirical research in social psychology can be helpful here in identifying the situational cues and social processes that help create the atmosphere of trust necessary for genuine dialogue. Research on 'optimal conditions' in the tradition of Allport's 'contact hypothesis' is relevant here (see the earlier citation), as well as related research in political psychology and democratic deliberation.[31] One of the further complicating factors here is that people may not be easily motivated to develop these skills. We can't place all our hopes in the mandatory situations involving schoolchildren, although such programmes are an important part of the mix. Encouraging skill development will require creative initiatives.

Two strategies are worth mentioning here. First, governments and organizations could make it a policy to reward employees, contractors, grant applicants or job candidates for the development of intercultural competence, especially for the

---

[30] On 'endurance', see Bert van den Brink, 'Liberalism without Agreement: Political Autonomy and Agonistic Citizenship' in *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays*, ed John Christman and Joel Anderson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 260–6. As Habermas puts this in speaking of cultural and social integration: 'Keine Integration ohne die Erweiterung des eigenen Horizonts, ohne die Bereitschaft, ein breiteres Spektrum van Gerüchen und Gedanken, auch von schmerzlichen kognitiven Dissonanzen zu ertragen.' ['There is no integration without an expansion of one's own horizon, without a willingness to endure a wide spectrum of smells and ideas, and of painful cognitive dissonances.'] (Jürgen Habermas 'Europa und seine Immigranten' in *Ach, Europa* (Frankfurt a M: Suhrkamp, 2008), 93f.) See also Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation* (Gouvernement du Québec, 2008).

[31] John S Dryzek, *Discursive democracy: politics, policy, and political science* (Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press, 1994); James Fishkin, *Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reform* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); Amy Gutmann and Dennis F Thompson, *Democracy and disagreement* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); Shawn W Rosenberg, *The Not so Common Sense: Differences in How People Judge Social and Political Life* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Shawn W Rosenberg, ed, *Deliberation, Participation and Democracy: Can the People Govern?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

increasing array of tasks where it is relevant. Second, there may also be indirect means to steer or 'nudge' individuals towards contexts in which they have opportunities to further develop these skills,[32] for example, by making it the default option to have a diversity of (sub)cultures represented in project teams in a job situation, rather than having it be the default that employees form their own teams.

Scaffolding and supporting conditions As in the case of the competencies required for participation, it is important to keep in mind the realistic need for supporting conditions. Structuring the context is clearly important for dialogue, and various situational cues can serve to keep people at the table and focused on the task. Several of the 'optimal conditions' mentioned in research on the 'contact hypothesis' are important here as well: equality of standing, a clear goal or task and backing by authorities. Getting people to the dialogue – and keeping them there to do the hard work involved – is a matter of highlighting the practical relevance (with a clear focus on issues participants care deeply about), building confidence and trust in the process (with clear backing from community leaders with clout), and of the work of dialogue being doable (which involves finding a balance between the demandingness of a given dialogue, on the one hand, and participants' motivation to stick with it and competence to engage in it at that level of demandingness). All of these can play a crucial role in determining the chances for success, and it is crucially important to make that clear to all the parties involved, so that overblown expectations do not lead to an overquick dismissal of intercultural dialogue as 'useless'.

> Getting people to the dialogue – and keeping them there to do the hard work involved – is a matter of highlighting the practical relevance, building confidence and trust in the process, and of the work of dialogue being doable.

---

[32] See, with caveats mentioned previously, Thaler and Sunstein, *Nudge*.

5 The platform's role in facilitating and advocating change

The complexity of the tasks involved in promoting intercultural dialogue and free, full and equal participation is enormous. When it comes to identifying an agenda for moving forward and strategic objectives, the platform must set priorities and be realistic. Although those more familiar with the platform may see different possibilities or limitations, my sense is that there are three areas in which the platform can have an impact that is significant and distinctive.

Holding European policymakers to their words

The first way in which the platform can pursue its goals is through the power of the word. A compelling articulation of the principles of intercultural dialogue and of free, full and equal participation in society can keep policymakers' attention on how to contribute to these goals. It can also serve as a trigger for criticism. The deeper and more articulate policymakers' understanding is of the goals, their importance and their practical implications, the harder it will be for them to neglect them.

To be effective in this watchdog function, such an Agenda or statement of guiding principles should certainly have the following two characteristics. First, the guiding statement of principles must be **firmly grounded in the obligations and aspirations of the European Union,** as articulated by its charters, conventions and key institutions. This is important for underscoring the status of the platform as a *European* initiative that works to promote solutions to challenges facing member states and the people residing in them. In this way, the platform can also contribute to the ongoing and complex task of defining a European identity, as including an interculturalist embrace of diversity. Something I have not been able to do here, but I think needs to be done, is to foreground the ways in which the work of the platform is distinctively European, and establish that this is a project that fits with core values of the European Union. I believe that there are ways to do this without it sounding unappreciative of the cultures of origin of many newcomers to Europe. But it remains the case that many of us who *are* newcomers came partly because of what Europe stands for, as part of an enlightenment tradition in which cultural achievements, historical heritage and linguistic pluralism are held in high regard. Perhaps it is worth

reflecting on the question of what would be different if the platform were operating within the auspices of the United Nations. If the answer is 'There would be no difference', then I think that would signal missed opportunities and strategic liabilities.

Second, the guiding statement of principles must **make clear what the benefits are of realizing these principles**. The road to an intercultural Europe is not easy, but has both intrinsic rewards (especially in the domain of cultural activities and the arts) and important benefits, in terms of reductions in unemployment, poverty, barriers to free trade and social or ethnic tensions. For example, there are benefits to reap by drawing connections between intercultural dialogue and the strengthening of democratic institutions and processes within Europe. A loss of faith in democracy is a constant threat to a stable and free Europe, and it is frequently in contexts where intercultural dialogue is lacking that distrust of democracy emerges.

The present paper lays the groundwork for several possible ways of developing such an Agenda, but actually working this out will require contributions from those closely involved in the work of the platform and fully familiar with the EU and Council of Europe context.

> A loss of faith in democracy is a constant threat to a stable and free Europe, and it is frequently in contexts where intercultural dialogue is lacking that distrust of democracy emerges.

Identifying best practices (and evidence-based approaches)

The platform could make a significant contribution by collecting and distributing information about best practices regarding ways of promoting participation and dialogue, perhaps in collaboration with university researchers and with the sponsorship of research grants or community development funds. As I have noted at several points, there is a significant amount of empirical research on methods of conflict mediation, on ways of structuring intercultural contacts, and on effective 'scaffolding' of the participation of individuals, but there is currently no clear location for finding that information. In particular, the platform might consider focusing on proven methods of facilitating intercultural dialogues and on how the arts can be involved in contributing to creating the sorts of intercultural 'contacts' that improve the climate of trust, solidarity and mutual recognition at specific nodes of intercultural conflict. One source to draw on here are interfaith organizations, who have a long history of dialogue, including a variety of experiments with how to effectively institutionalize it. Given the platform's institutional affiliations, however, it makes most sense to focus on cultural activities, including particularly a wide range of innovative and socially engaged approaches to the arts.

Strengthening networks that support intercultural dialogue and full, free, equal participation

One of the challenges facing the platform has been how to find a niche within the network of organization devoted to the goals outlined above. The platform can and should partner with anti-discrimination organizations, minority rights groups and so

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

on to advance these goals, but this needs to be done in a way that allows the platform to play its distinctive role and avoid duplicating these efforts. It is hoped that some of the ideas presented here provide a framework for staking out that distinctive role. The key advantage of alliances with other organizations is the much wider audience for the platform's agenda. And what the platform has to offer is a compelling vision, insights into methods of effective intercultural dialogue, and connections with arts and cultural organizations.

Bibliography

Allport, Gordon Willard (1979) *The Nature of Prejudice* Cambridge MA, Addison-Wesley.

Amir, Yehuda (1969) 'Contact hypothesis in ethnic relations' *Psychological Bulletin* 71, no. 5: 319–342.

Anderson, Elizabeth (1999) 'What Is the Point of Equality?' *Ethics* 109, no. 2: 287–337.

Anderson, J, and A Honneth (2005) 'Autonomy, Vulnerability, Recognition, and Justice' *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays*, ed J Christman and J Anderson: 127–49. New York, Cambridge University Press.

Anderson, Joel (2009) 'Autonomielücken als soziale Pathologie. Ideologiekritik jenseits des Paternalismus' *Sozialphilosophie und Kritik*, ed R Forst, M Hartmann, R Jaeggi and M Saar: 433–453. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

– (2010) 'Review of Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein "Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness"' *Economics and Philosophy*.

Beck, Ulrich (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* London, Sage Publications.

Bellah, Robert, Richard Madsen, William Sullivan, Ann Swidler and Steven Tipton (1985) *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American life* Berkeley, University of California Press.

Berlin, I (1969) 'Two Concepts of Liberty' *Four Essays on Liberty*: 118–72. London, Oxford University Press.

Bouchard, Gérard and Charles Taylor (2008) *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation* Gouvernement du Québec.

van den Brink, Bert (2005) 'Liberalism without Agreement: Political Autonomy and Agonistic Citizenship' *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays*, ed John Christman and Joel Anderson: 245–271. New York, Cambridge University Press.

van den Brink, Bert and David Owen, eds (2007) *Recognition and Power: Axel Honneth and the Tradition of Critical Social Theory*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Clark, Andy (2008) *Supersizing the mind: embodiment, action, and cognitive extension* New York, Oxford University Press USA.

Dryzek, John S (1994) *Discursive democracy: politics, policy, and political science* Cambridge MA, Cambridge University Press.

Etzioni, Amitai (1994) *Spirit Of Community* Beaverton, OR, Touchstone.

Fishkin, James (1991) *Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reform* New Haven, Yale University Press.

Foucault, Michel (1991) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller. Chicago, University Of Chicago Press.

Fraser, Nancy (2008) *Adding Insult to Injury: Nancy Fraser Debates Her Critics*, ed Kevin Olson. London, Verso.

– (2003) 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, Participation' *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth: 7–109. London, Verso.

Fraser, Nancy, and Axel Honneth (2003) *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. London, Verso.

Friedman, Marilyn (1995) 'Codes, Canons, Correctness, and Feminism' *Political Correctness: For and Against*, Marilyn Friedman and Jan Narveson: 1–46. Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield.

Gaus, Gerald (1996) *Justificatory Liberalism* New York, Oxford University Press.

Gutmann, Amy, and Dennis F Thompson (1996) *Democracy and disagreement* Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press.

Habermas, Jürgen (1996) 'Kampf um Anerkennung im demokratischen Rechtsstaat' *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen: Studien zur politischen Philosophie*: 237–276. Frankfurt a M, Suhrkamp.

– (2008) 'Europa und seine Immigranten' *Ach, Europa*: 88–95. Frankfurt a M, Suhrkamp.

– (1998) 'Handlungen, Sprechakte, sprachlich vermittelte Interaktionen' *Nachmetaphysisches Denken: Philosophische Aufsätze*: 63 ff. Frankfurt a M, Suhrkamp.

– (1992) 'Individuation through Socialization: On George Herbert Mead's Theory of Subjectivity' *Postmetaphysical Thinking*: 149–204. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.

– (1998) *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, trans Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.

– (1984) *The Theory of Communicative Action* vol 1 Boston, Beacon Press.

Heath, Joseph, and Joel Anderson (2010) 'Procrastination and the Extended Will' *The Thief of Time: Philosophical Essays on Procrastination*, ed Chrisoula Andreou and Mark White: 233–52. New York, Oxford University Press.

Honneth, Axel (2007) *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* Cambridge, Polity Press.

– (2003) 'Redistribution as Recognition: A Reply to Fraser' *Redistribution or Recognition?: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, trans Joel Golb, James Ingram and Christiane Wilke: 110–197. London, Verso.

– (2008) *Reification* New York, Oxford University Press.

– (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* trans Joel Anderson. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Kymlicka, W (1989) *Liberalism, Community and Culture* Oxford, Clarendon.

Kymlicka, Will (1989) *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* Oxford, Clarendon.

Markell, Patchen (2003) *Bound by Recognition* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Nussbaum, Martha (2000) *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Olson, K (2008) 'Constructing citizens' *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1: 40–53.

Olson, Kevin (2010) 'Legitimate Speech and Hegemonic Idiom: The Limits of Deliberative Democracy in the Diversity of its Voices' *Political Studies,* forthcoming.

– (2006) *Reflexive Democracy: Political Equality and the Welfare State* Studies in contemporary German social thought. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.

van Parijs, Philippe (1998) *Real Freedom for All: What (If Anything) Can Justify Capitalism?* New York, Oxford University Press.

Pettigrew, Thomas F, and Linda R Tropp (2006) 'A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5: 751–783.

Pettit, Philip (1999) *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Rawls, J (1996) *Political Liberalism* New York, Columbia University Press.

Rawls, John (2001) *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* ed Erin Kelly. Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press.

Rosenberg, Shawn W, ed (2007) *Deliberation, Participation and Democracy: Can the People Govern?* New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

Rosenberg, Shawn W (2002) *The Not so Common Sense: Differences in How People Judge Social and Political Life* New Haven CT, Yale University Press.

Sen, Amartya (2001) *Development as Freedom* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Shakespeare, Tom, and Nicholas Watson (2002) 'The Social Model of Disability: An Outdated Ideology?' *Research in Social Science and Disability* 2: 9–28.

Taylor, C (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Taylor, Charles (1994) 'The Politics of Recognition' *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed Amy Gutmann (revised): 25–74. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

– (1985) 'What's Wrong with Negative Liberty?' *Philosophical Papers*: 211–29. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Thaler, Richard, and Cass Sunstein (2008) *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* New Haven, Yale University Press.

Young, Iris Marion (1990) *Justice and the Politics of Difference* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Engaged Europe:
The role of intercultural dialogue in developing full, free and equal participation

Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs

Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs is the chair of Volunteering England, and was previously chief executive at the Barrow Cadbury Trust from 2001 to 2009 and prior to that, chief executive of the Runnymede Trust. Sukhvinder was twice elected the founding chair of ENAR. Currently, she is managing a portfolio of projects including the Government's Administrative Justice and the watchdog Consumer Focus. She is also trustee at the Social Care Institute for Excellence and non-executive director at the Office for Public Management. Her areas of specialization include governance, not-for-profit leadership, regulatory reform, user engagement and major change programmes.

Contents

Summary

As the European Union's (EU) principal vehicle for understanding and addressing diversity, much is expected of intercultural dialogue. Despite an EU commitment to social justice, equality and solidarity in reality, discrimination prevails and minority ethnic groups remain disproportionately represented among the disadvantaged and disenfranchised. Against this backdrop, the soft skills associated with intercultural dialogue struggle to provide tangible evidence of impact. Compared to the scale and circumstances of entrenched inequalities, the aspiration of intercultural dialogue to achieve 'positive social ties' appears somewhat limited.

But intercultural dialogue retains a compelling narrative and remains a potent influence. Clearly articulated in the Rainbow Paper and well supported by the human rights community is a set of principles and values about establishing 'free, full and equal participation'. The consensus captured by the Rainbow Paper lays a strong foundation to develop intercultural dialogue still further.

Inevitable increases in ethnic and cultural diversity, the emergence of 'super-diversity' and the growth of middle class minority ethnic communities provide new challenges to the traditional perspectives of intercultural dialogue. This paper explores the external trends in diversity and argues for an emphasis on the bread-and-butter issues around disadvantage rather than a continued obsession with identity.

This paper supports the intentions expressed by the Platform for Intercultural Europe to develop structured and principled processes. The model proposed here categorizes a broad range of community-based development. Adopting or adapting defined methodologies enables standards of good practice to be set and outcomes to be monitored.

Intercultural dialogue helps to develop the skills and abilities of individuals. The paper flags up the need for an even more comprehensive range of initiatives targeting not just individuals but also the institutions around them. Intercultural dialogue can also work with organizations like museums, civic bodies and other employers to build their capacity to be more inclusive and representative.

Complementary to intercultural dialogue are the activities of advocacy groups promoting positive actions. This paper highlights the benefits of aligning the work

of the Platform for Intercultural Europe with agencies that are more pro-active in challenging prevailing power structures.

Active engagement of all the diverse people of Europe is the hallmark of a strong democracy and the foundation of a community committed to justice, equality and solidarity. Intercultural dialogue can contribute to the realization of an engaged Europe, where all its residents are enabled and empowered to participate in, and contribute to, the development of society, economy and good governance.

1 Introduction

Can the creation of positive social ties ever form the basis for raising equal rights and opportunities?

In 2008, the Platform for Intercultural Europe captured the voice of civil society organizations in the Rainbow Paper.[1] This ambitious initiative brought together a diverse set of views, ranging from community arts organizations to equal rights activists. Their aim was to articulate a cross-sector approach to addressing the needs arising from cultural diversity.[2] Organizations working in arts, heritage, education, sports, youth and social work, minority rights and on anti-discrimination and human rights all called for social action and change under a common framework of intercultural dialogue. Migrants and minority groups were placed at the centre of the framework as the target group for dialogue initiatives.

Although progressive in tone and passionate in intent, the collective thinking was necessarily founded on convivial compromise. Two years on, critical questions remain about the power and positioning of intercultural dialogue as an EU policy domain and its ability to work across sectors. The extent to which intercultural dialogue can embrace such a wide range of civil society activity and still maintain a sharp focus for the development of policies relating to migrants and minorities remains a challenge.

The Platform for Intercultural Europe commissioned this research to develop and refine its approach. Even in the short time since the platform was established, the diversity of Europe has changed substantially. The analysis presented here considers the European Social Model as the context within which intercultural dialogue operates. It goes on to review the emerging social and demographic trends, likely to influence subtle shifts in the principles of intercultural dialogue. In support of the platform's desire for a more structured approach, a model is proposed of a scale of intercultural dialogue that encompasses and categorizes a broad range of community-based

> "The extent to which intercultural dialogue can embrace a wide range of civil society activity and still maintain a sharp focus for the development of policies relating to migrants and minorities remains a challenge."

---

[1] The Rainbow Paper (2008), *Intercultural Dialogue; From Practice To Policy and Back*, Platform For Intercultural Europe.

[2] The term 'minority ethnic' is generally used in preference to 'cultural diversity' in this report. 'Culture' can be widely interpreted and often dynamic in nature. 'Diversity' can refer to all nature of differences including gender, sexual orientation, age and disability. In the British context at least, minority ethnic status can be measured. For the purpose of this report, it is used to include migrants and people of different faiths.

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

activity. This provides a framework for setting standards of good practice, monitoring progress and demonstrating tangible outcomes.

Alongside the case for a more structured approach, the recommendations point to partnership with campaigning organizations. Partnership, collaboration and perhaps even co-production have the potential to align resources for systemic change, in a way that addresses the societal barriers to inclusion, equality and participation.

2 Equal rights and opportunities

The European Social Model 'reflects a common set of values, based on the preservation of peace, social justice, equality, solidarity, the promotion of freedom and democracy and respect of human rights'.[3] In the last 60 years this set of common values has allowed a growing EU to become an area of greater economic prosperity and social justice. The model is based on the idea that social policies, when appropriately designed, 'cannot be regarded as a cost but, instead, as a positive factor in the EU's economic growth'.

In practice, solidarity and social justice are far from preserved. Profound inequalities and entrenched discrimination blight the experience of many Europeans and threaten to undermine the safety and stability of our towns and cities. From time to time, the tensions foment into riots and disturbances, as witnessed in Paris, Bradford and Berlin during 2006 and in the Balkans and Caucasus before that.

However, the problems are more pervasive. One of the largest surveys of discrimination, harassment and racially motivated violence was conducted by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency.[4] Based on the views of over 23,000 people across Europe, it indicates that around 55 per cent of minority residents and migrants felt ethnically inspired bias was widespread. Around 12 per cent said they had witnessed a racist crime within the last 12 months, but 80 per cent did not report this to the authorities.

The survey results confirmed that an overwhelming majority of Roma and Africans feel they face acute discrimination in nearly all facets of daily life in the EU.

Around 90 per cent of North Africans in Italy and France reported discrimination, while around 85 per cent of Roma living in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Greece said they had been treated with prejudice because of their ethnicity. In Germany, just over half of all Turkish residents surveyed said discrimination based on ethnicity was widespread.

Minorities reported racially motivated obstacles when looking for work or a home to rent or buy, when trying to open a bank account or get a loan, or when dealing with

---

[3] Peneda and De Rossa (2006) *A European Social Model For the Future*, European Parliament.

[4] Goodey (2009) *EU Migration Survey on Discrimination*, Fundamental Rights Agency.

healthcare, social services or school officials. They also experienced discrimination when entering cafes, restaurants and shops.

The EU's admirable commitment to solidarity and social justice will be further tested by demographic change, migration and new technology. Research conducted by the Barrow Cadbury Trust[5] reveals that a large number of British cities are due to become 'majority-minority'. This means that their 'indigenous' communities will constitute less than 50 per cent of the total population. The tipping point beyond 50-50 is imminent in cities across Europe, too.[6] Notwithstanding the difficulties in obtaining reliable and comparable data, Malmö in Sweden is expected to become majority-minority this decade. All the major towns and cities in Germany (except for Hamburg) will probably become majority-minority by 2040. Birmingham in Britain is estimated to reach this point by 2024. Paris is already described in some quarters, as the largest Muslim city in Europe. Even without any further migration, demographic growth, especially among the younger minority populations, means that increasing ethnic diversity across Europe is inevitable.

This is a substantial challenge and opportunity for the EU. Cosmopolitan cities such as London, New York, Toronto, Berlin and Amsterdam demonstrate that, successfully harnessed, diversity is an asset that can promote productivity and enrich communities. Realizing this asset requires recognition of diversity and pro-active management of the barriers that minority ethnic groups can face. There may for example, be language and value differences that need to be overcome. Levels of social capital and social mobility will vary. Access to education and employment will be uneven. Such variances often result in ethnic minorities being disproportionately represented among the people with high unemployment, low income, poor health and sub-standard housing.

At EU level, the principal vehicle for understanding and addressing diversity is intercultural dialogue. In November 2006, the Council of Europe defined intercultural dialogue as 'an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's world perception'.[7]

The text adopted by the European Union on the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue[8] does not use any specific definition, but it underlines the role of intercultural dialogue in:

– Building respect for cultural diversity in the complex societies of today;
– improving mutual understanding and developing equal opportunities for all;
– supporting the EU's commitment to solidarity and social justice;

---

[5] Dorling (2007) *Cities in Transition: Britain in Increasing Plurality*, Barrow Cadbury Trust.

[6] Griffith (2006) *Cities in Transition: Report of the Global Exchange Forum*, Barrow Cadbury Trust.

[7] Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment GR-C (2006) 32 rev 2, *Preparing the Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue*, Council of Europe.

[8] 'Decision 1983/2006/EC of the European Parliament and Council of Europe', *Official Journal of the European Union*.

– Enabling the EU to forge partnerships with other countries and make its voice better heard in the world.

Although the Rainbow Paper develops a more robust framework, the concept of intercultural dialogue has been strong in ethos but vaguely defined and lacking clarity of purpose. The term 'culture' is itself open to many different interpretations, from expression through art to ethnicity, faith and nationality. Equally, the term 'diversity' can embrace socio-economic difference, individual perspectives and community traits.

Often, activists have been suspicious of the motivations behind intercultural dialogue. It risks compromising equality and communality with cultural conformism. The emphasis on cultural identity implies that individuals and their personal attributes, rather than the structure and practice of institutions around them, influence the opportunities available to them. Celebratory events such as various religious festivals tend to be the most visible types of intercultural activity and this can hide the stresses and pressures that many migrant and minority ethnic communities endure. Nebulous in nature, intercultural projects can be perceived as extraneous to campaigns that secure legal rights and achieve social reform.

At a seminar held in February 2010, the Platform for Intercultural Dialogue drafted a new narrative to develop the concept of intercultural dialogue.[9] The proposed text sets the vision for 'an intercultural Europe, where diversity is respected and valued. This requires free, full and equal participation of all its citizens. Active and passive exclusion by law, discrimination and culture have to be overcome by building the competencies of individuals, organizations and institutions through intercultural dialogue in structured and principled processes.'

The narrative aligns intercultural dialogue more closely with the EU commitment for peace, social justice, equality, solidarity, the promotion of freedom and democracy and respect of human rights. Free, full and equal participation is the hallmark of a strong democracy and the foundation of a community committed to equality and social justice. The challenge this presents is *how* intercultural dialogue can help overcome exclusion and contribute to an engaged Europe, where all its residents are enabled and empowered to participate in, and contribute to, the development of society, economy and governance.

---

[9] Frank (2010) *Developing the Concept of Intercultural Dialogue*, Platform for Intercultural Europe.

3 Principles of intercultural dialogue – new considerations

Building the competencies of individuals, organizations and institutions is the core activity of intercultural dialogue. The principles behind it have been well debated and are clearly articulated in the Rainbow Paper. However, there have been significant changes to the diversity of European communities in recent years. Some subtle shifts in emphasis might help to realign intercultural dialogue with external developments. This section identifies five related and overlapping trends.

- Focus on disadvantage rather than heritage or ethnicity so that structural barriers may be addressed.
- Prioritize the bread-and-butter issues – for example income, education and housing – and move away from the obsession with identity.
- Recognize that societies are now characterized by 'super-diversity', which complicates the traditional approach to ethnic group-based interventions.
- Promote sustainable dialogue, which can demonstrate behaviour change at individual, community and institutional level.
- Mobilize the small-scale localized and granular activity through connections and partnerships.

Each of these points is discussed in more detail below.

Diversity and ethnicity

> Disadvantage is at the heart of the debate.

Culture as faith, heritage or ethnic background is not the determining factor in intercultural dialogue. Disadvantage is at the heart of the debate.

Although migrants and minority ethnic groups are disproportionately represented among the poorest and most disenfranchised groups, they are not always disadvantaged. Indeed many migrants possess high skills and display high levels of social mobility. Burgeoning middle class minority ethnic communities flourish across Europe.

High levels of diversity exist within different minority ethnic strands. The Runnymede Trust report on British Muslims and Islamophobia[10] highlights the difference even within Muslim groups and the huge disparity in education, income,

---

[10] Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (1997) *Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*, Runnymede Trust.

social mobility and aspiration among them. Overlooking this point can stigmatize minorities.

Ethnically based initiatives can also foment resentment from disadvantaged indigenous groups such as the white working classes (in Britain, especially, the D/E socio-economic classes). In poorer communities, where resources such as housing and jobs are scarce, such indigenous groups can perceive ethnic specific interventions as privileges.

Focusing on ethnicity can be introverted and inward-looking. A spotlight on cultural values places attention on the individual and their communities. It draws away from external barriers that need to be overcome in order to help increase participation.

For these reasons, intercultural dialogue can be a more effective tool if it specifies target beneficiaries based on socio-economic status and not ethnic background, faith or nationality.

> *Intercultural dialogue can be a more effective tool if it specifies target beneficiaries based on socio-economic status and not ethnic background, faith or nationality.*

Bread-and-butter issues

> *While there is no imperative to abandon traditions or dilute values, the aspic preservation of culture and inherited practices is to be resisted.*

For all migrants and minority ethnic groups, certain cultural attributes are bound to be important. While there is no imperative to abandon traditions or dilute values, the aspic preservation of culture and inherited practices is to be resisted.

An emphasis on tradition and heritage can 'seal' cultures. Closing off community practices to the natural forces of change can mythologize cultures, condemning them to folklore. In my own experience of travelling back to my village in the Punjab, I have found the evolution in language, dress codes and values to be more substantial than among some of my migrant UK peers. In an attempt to preserve fragments of the homeland, the diasporas can become 'more Indian than the Indians'.

Attempts to insulate culture from development can prove detrimental to women and young people. Gender and generational divides can undermine social and economic development.

A singular obsession with identity should not be allowed to cloud the more important issue of how to improve the everyday lives of disadvantaged migrants and minorities.[11] Focusing on bread and butter issues, like jobs, schools and housing, provides a more inclusive foundation for intercultural dialogue.

> *Cooperating on projects of mutual concern enables poor people to develop more profound connections. It encourages people to make small concessions over cultural practices*

Cooperating on projects of mutual concern enables poor people to develop more profound connections. It encourages people to make small concessions over other matters. Small concessions around prayer times, clothing and certain cultural practices need not impinge heavily on others but can make a huge difference to relationships between diverse groups. Small concessions, rather than tolerance or integration, can foster harmonious living. Small concessions are more easily made when people come to know, rely and confide in each other.

---

[11] Stubbs (2005) in *Islam, Race and Being British*, ed Bunting. *The Guardian*, in association with Barrow Cadbury Trust.

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

Equality and super-diversity

Over and above the challenges presented by disadvantage and temporal development, there is the increasing diversity of diversity.

In his book *A New Politics of Identity*, Professor Bhiku Parekh famously articulates the need for 'globally orientated citizenship'.[12] Dr Steven Vertovec coined the terms 'super-diversity' and 'hyper-diversity' to describe the layered, even chaotic, nature of cultural diversity today. Quoted in an interview in the *Finnish Journal of Ethnicity and Migration*,[13] Vertovec states that:

'Given the nature of recent immigration, let's say over the past ten years or more, there are so many different variables coming into play in the UK but also other places, not least different migration channels and legal statuses. In the UK, you have eighty different legal statuses. People from the same country not only have different human capital but also different legal statuses. This adds another dimension of complexity.'

Fanshawe and Siskandarajah develop this point further by bringing into debate not just the axis of differentiation among ethnic groups but also multiple identities at individual level. In their IPPR pamphlet[14] they write:

'Today, identities are more complex and fluid than they used to be, reflecting shifting interests and allegiances. For those of us interested in equality, this new situation presents some difficult challenges. While inequality and discrimination manifest themselves along all too familiar lines (for example, racial or sexual minorities remain targets of much discrimination), identity-based campaigns seem dated in an age of super-diversity, where people do not identify around single identities and feel conflicted allegiance (if any allegiance at all) to pre-defined groups, activism around particular 'strands' seems irrelevant to many people and may not even be that effective in addressing the true causes of inequality. Even the very categorizations that we often rely on (for example 'black', 'Asian', 'gay' or 'disabled'), no longer seem to be able to tell us much about who people are, what lives they lead, who they identify with or what services they need from society.'

The ongoing struggle for equality requires a more nuanced approach. Hyper-diversity and the differences in capability and opportunity within minority groups need to recognized. Super-diversity and the prominence of multiple identities need to be understood.

> The ongoing struggle for equality requires a nuanced approach. Hyper-diversity and the differences in capability and opportunity within minority groups needs to recognized.

Sustainable dialogue

According to the Rainbow Paper, intercultural dialogue is a 'series of specific encounters, anchored in real space and time between individuals and/or groups with

---

[12] Parekh (2008) *A New Politics of Identity*, Palgrave Macmillan.

[13] Vertovec (2007) *Super-diversity and Its Implications*, Ethnic and Racial Studies 30 (6).

[14] Fanshawe and Sriskandarajah (2010) *You Can't Put Me In A Box: Super-diversity and The End of Identity Politics in Britain*, IPPR.

different ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic background and heritage, with the aim of exploring, testing and increasing understanding, awareness, empathy and respect'.

Intercultural dialogue has been implemented in many divided communities to foster understanding and familiarity. In Israel and Ireland, they famously developed student exchange programmes to build respect and tolerance among younger generations. Unfortunately, progress has often been slow. Among certain communities, new attitudes were barely sustainable once the young people returned to their families. In the northern towns of England, following the violence between Asian and white communities, women from both families were encouraged to spend more time with each other. This involved activities where they were taken into each other's kitchens to learn their cooking styles.[15] It would be unrealistic to think that sharing popodams and pancakes will overcome the entrenched hostilities of such deprived and poorly resourced communities.[16]

Contact theory, as espoused by Hewston and others,[17] has shown great potential in overcoming intergroup hostility. However, the examples frequently cited tend to be designed and delivered at a fairly superficial level. Activities can be deemed somewhat passive or consensual. Exchanges involving sports, arts and education have their place in promoting harmonious living, but effects can be short-lived. However, there are other types of activity not normally associated with intercultural dialogue that have demonstrated sustainable results.

One of the most impressive examples of cross-community engagement and action is displayed by London Citizens. The project is based in the east end of London where the corporate headquarters of Barclays, HSBC and other major financial institutions tower over some of the poorest communities in the city. Deploying a technique imported from the United States called 'citizen organizing', London Citizens formed a multi-faith coalition including Christians, Muslims, trade unions and civic groups to force local employers to pay a 'living wage' for the menial and blue-collar jobs undertaken by local residents. Not only did this high-profile and substantive movement win its campaign, the connections they forged between and across diverse communities have been sustained. Since then, they have gone on to fight for other resources, including land development trusts.

This type of project would not normally be defined as 'intercultural' because of its campaigning nature and emphasis on economic development. However, its outcomes are what intercultural dialogue aspires to achieve: the creation of positive social ties as the basis for raising equal rights and opportunities. A rich seam of community-based activity exists that is multi-faceted and far from being passive or merely consensual. Embracing this wider scope of activity could contribute to the development and practice of intercultural dialogue.

> "A rich seam of community based activity exists that is multi-faceted and far from being passive or merely consensual. Embracing this wider scope of activity could contribute to the development and practice of intercultural dialogue."

---

[15] Cantle (2001) *Community Cohesion*, Home Office.

[16] Stubbs (2008) *Beyond Pancakes and Popodams* (with Populus), Barrow Cadbury Trust.

[17] Hewstone (2003) 'Intergroup Contact: Panacea For Prejudice', *The Psychologist* 16 (7).

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

Scale and impact

> Connecting and networking the individual projects would help mobilize sharing and learning of experience, enable diverse voices to be heard and encourage collaboration and cooperation in efforts to overcome entrenched structural barriers.

Explicit in the Rainbow Paper is the assertion that intercultural dialogue focuses on *local* diversities. As a result, projects can be customized to very specific neighbourhood needs and to emulate the granularity of community circumstances.

Small-scale operation allows some of the problems caused by broad-brush ethnic and cultural generalizations to be avoided. It enables engagement at individual level and not just among group based identities. Some of the complexities caused by super-diversity can be overcome by local level engagement developed by and from communities and individuals who are directly affected. It allows for self-definition and self-determination rather than conformity to external expectations.

However, the compound effect of small scale and disparate activities can be limited. Individually, projects can be isolated. Good and bad practice ends up falling below the radar of visibility. Voices and views of those involved can remain hard to hear. Opportunities to learn from each other and to mobilize resources are constrained.

Localized projects can become diffuse and amorphous. Connecting and networking the individual projects would help mobilize sharing and learning of experience, enable diverse voices to be heard and encourage collaboration and cooperation in efforts to overcome entrenched structural barriers.

4 A more structured approach

So much complexity and so much emphasis on the so-called 'soft skills' have tended to marginalize intercultural dialogue in the policy domain. Social outcomes can be intangible and thereby undermine the status of intercultural activity. But, unlike the term 'multi-culturalism' that preceded it, interculturalism has not yet outlived its purpose.

It is possible for the language and discourse of intercultural dialogue to achieve greater currency with a more structured approach. Three key components of this approach include:

– Setting standards for good practice;
– asserting a more comprehensive approach targeting both individual and institutional development;
– complementing intercultural dialogue with positive actions.

Each of these components is described in more detail below.

Setting standards

The vast array of small-scale initiatives can appear elusive and irrelevant to mainstream interests. Adopting a framework that clearly defines categories of activity would provide a more structured approach. It would facilitate standard setting, monitoring and the demonstration of tangible outcomes.

Up to now, there has been very little analysis of the activities and outcomes associated with intercultural dialogue. Among the exceptions is the work of the Baring Foundation. In 2008, they published a report based on the submission received for a funding programme called Awards for Bridging Cultures.[18] They identified three main types of activity:

– Cohesion initiatives responding to perceived tensions by building good relations. Within these projects, 'culture' is viewed as synonymous with fixed ideas of ethnicity and solutions are based on 'contact' models to bridge between problem 'cultures';

---

[18] James (2009) *Interculturalism: Social Policy and Grassroots Work*, Baring Foundation.

- anti-racism submissions engaged with the categories of 'race', how they are historically constructed and how they oppress people;
- broad-based approaches that encompass the many different ways in which we are different and the same, live our lives and make meaning in the world. 'Culture' (as ethnicity) was not fundamental to these projects.

This categorization is based on purpose and is helpful in relation to considering the policy implications of intercultural dialogue. However, at European level, a more appropriate categorization might be based on the outcome of the activity and the methodology.

One example of an outcome-based categorization was developed at the Barrow Cadbury Trust. In 2007, the trust developed a funding programme called 'Habits of Solidarity' (now renamed 'Bridging Cultures').[19] The objective was to identify a variety of community-based interventions that unify and unite local groups. It was hoped that fostering common cause among residents would result in more sustainable communities. Sustainability in this context refers to the social aspects of community such as safety, stability and harmony.

Based on this approach, I propose a scale for intercultural dialogue that might include the following categories:
- **Outreach** For example, community arts, sports and school-based programmes to engage marginalized/disenfranchised people.
- **Confidence building** For example, single identity projects such as women suffering domestic abuse, Bangladeshi Resource Centres or various Roma rights groups.
- **Mediation and conflict resolution** For example, between hostile or extremist groups.
- **Inclusion** For example, cross-sectoral projects to improve and develop access to education, employment and public services.
- **Respect and understanding** For example, educational exchange programmes and art exhibitions/performances introducing different aspects of less familiar cultures.
- **Celebration** For example, events to showcase and embrace specific festivals and traditions.
- **Civic participation** For example, the efforts of museums, performing arts, democratic/political structures and public services to engage with and accommodate the diversity of their hinterlands.

While there is no official research on the range and rate of projects across this spectrum of activity, unpublished documents indicate a spread biased in favour of projects focused on inclusion, celebration and respect. Examples of projects deploying mediation techniques were less evident but beginning to increase in number. Confidence-building work, especially among single identity groups (in the

[19] Grants guidelines (2009), Barrow Cadbury Trust.

UK), was diminishing due to lack of state funding and only patchy examples of good outreach can be identified.

Diagram 1 illustrates the approximate proportion of activity that could be placed in each category.

Diagram 1

Categories of dialogue by outcome
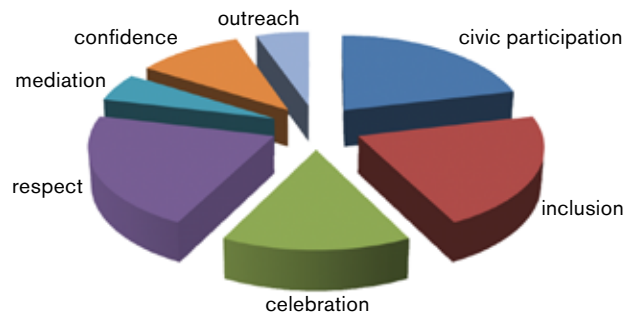
The opportunity for the Platform for Intercultural Europe is to adapt this typology. This provides a more inclusive platform for a comprehensive range of community-based projects.

As Vertovec states, the perceptions, capabilities, skills and aspirations of groups differ substantially. Different types of dialogue are more likely to be effective in specific circumstances. Communities with greater social capital, assertiveness and resources can more readily overcome barriers to economic and social engagement. Celebratory events or initiatives to improve civic participation may be well received within such groups. Refugee groups who have experienced trauma, or marginalized youth groups, might require intensive outreach efforts before they are ready to participate in other forms of engagement and inclusion programmes.

Customizing intercultural dialogue to individual/group needs in this way suggests that certain types of activity need to precede others. Teenagers who have fled from Somalia for example might first require outreach and social work to overcome any trauma they have suffered. They may require a familiar person to help them make initial connections with the strange institutions and procedures around them. Confidence-building measures like sports and youth groups might then help them feel more settled and begin to trust the structures around them. At any point they may experience hostility and require protection from harassment/violence. In due course, they may appreciate mediation and conflict resolution efforts to enable them to live safely. Given time, other communities around them may want to learn about their background and respect may grow out of 'contact'-based initiatives. Once settled, they may feel more confident and assertive about publicly celebrating aspects of their life and history. They will want a good education and fulfilling jobs, and inclusion projects could provide pathways to employment. Ultimately, it is hoped they will become good citizens: politically engaged, participating in mainstream society, visible in all aspects of civil life.

Customizing intercultural dialogue to individual/group needs suggests that certain types of activity need to precede others.

Despite the crudeness of this linear example, it does suggest a hierarchy of different forms of intercultural dialogue that propel individuals/groups through a path of engagement. The Rainbow Paper identifies a constructive path for the intercultural movement. A similar trajectory can be traced for individuals/groups based on their emotional, social and economic needs.
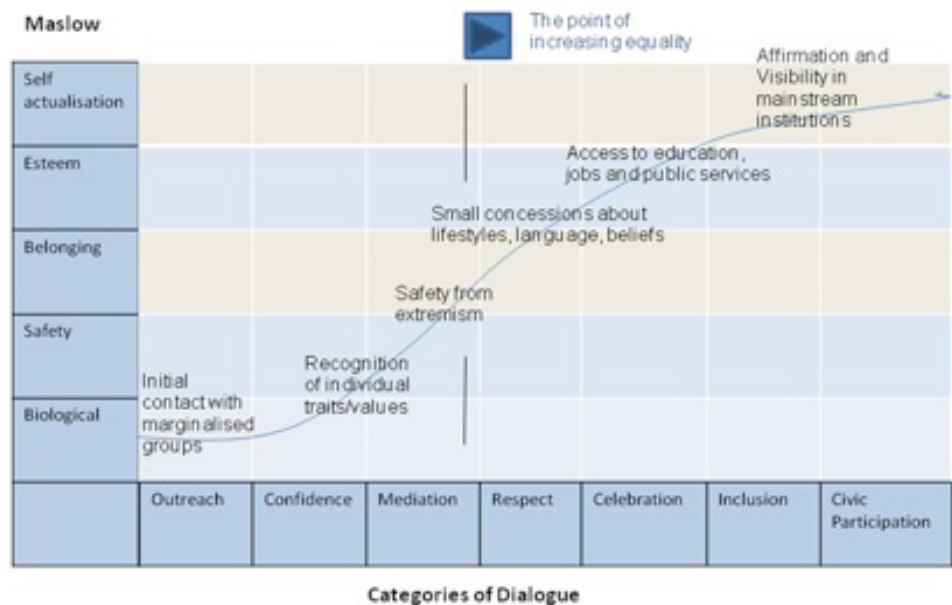
Diagram 2 shows how these categories of intercultural dialogue can be plotted against Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's work is undisputed in representing the basic states that we must satisfy before aspiring to higher order concerns.[20] This diagram illustrates that free, full and equal participation cannot be achieved until: trust is established; confidence is developed; hostilities are overcome; recognition is provided for the attributes and values important to individuals; access to education and jobs is readily available; and visible engagement of peers is secured in mainstream society.

In this model, intercultural dialogue is not just about building familiarity and exchange between diverse groups, it is a structured process that builds the capacity of marginalized and disadvantaged people and enables institutions and mainstream organizations to break down the barriers that exclude and alienate.

By no means is this scientific, but a line could be set in the middle of the path to indicate when equality starts to become meaningful. Only when respect, inclusion and civic engagement are evident does equality start to manifest itself. To the left on Diagram 2, activities are predisposed to partnership working with community development agencies and social services. On the right, collaboration with equal rights campaigns becomes more meaningful. Intercultural dialogue can therefore be deployed both to develop equality of opportunity and to strengthen it.

Diagram 2

The Constructive Path

Maslow		The point of increasing equality					
Self actualisation						Affirmation and Visibility in mainstream institutions	
Esteem			Access to education, jobs and public services				
Belonging			Small concessions about lifestyles, language, beliefs				
Safety			Safety from extremism				
Biological	Initial contact with marginalised groups	Recognition of individual traits/values					
	Outreach	Confidence	Mediation	Respect	Celebration	Inclusion	Civic Participation

Categories of Dialogue

[20] Maslow (1954) *Motivation and Personality*.

With this type of categorization for intercultural dialogue activity, setting standards for good practice and measuring outcomes becomes somewhat easier. Standards for good practice might include:

– user participation in the design and delivery of projects;
– clearly identified beneficiaries, agreed outcomes and a well-articulated methodology;
– self-evaluation against SMART criteria (simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, timed);
– transparent and accountable governance;
– commercial awareness and sound financial planning.

Outcomes can be measured using research developed in related fields. There are now well-established indicators for assessing the level of integration of minorities across Europe. The British Council, in partnership with Migration Policy Group, publishes the Migration Index of Exclusion (MIPEX).[21] MIPEX aims to improve migrant integration policies by providing objective, accessible and comparative data for scrutiny and debate. The index covers seven policy areas that shape a migrant's journey to full participation as a citizen. These include labour market access, family reunion, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality, anti-discrimination and education. This benchmarking tool can provide comparative data to scrutinize and develop intercultural dialogue.

In addition, the Structural Indicators Database and the LIME Assessment Framework and other existing data sources (such as Eurostat) could be useful in developing measures. In addition, longitudinal surveys including the opinions of migrants would reflect that the journey towards inclusion can be a long-term process involving all citizens and residents.

Indications of the disciplines that might be probed further to extract appropriate measures are summarized in Diagram 3 below.

Diagram 3 Potential Measures for Categories of Intercultural Dialogue

Category of ICD	Source for Measures
Outreach	Segregation levels and exclusion indicators
Confidence	Social Capital theory (Putnam etc)
Mediation	Peace Studies Programmes (eg Bradford University)
Respect	Surveys of public attitudes
Celebration	Incidence of public events
Inclusion	Education & Employment indicators
Civic Participation	Representation of minorities on Governing bodies, voting records etc

[21] Integration Index (2007), British Council and www.integrationindex.eu

A comprehensive approach

The Rainbow Paper presents the 'intercultural experience' as a rounded approach where **dialogue** is augmented by **competence** activity to build capacity and practical **action** to create peaceful and cooperative communities. Such different approaches can be developed in a complementary way to secure tangible change for disadvantaged migrants and minorities.

Securing an intercultural Europe where diversity is respected and valued requires changes in both national policies and shifts in public attitudes. These changes then need to be manifest at social/community level, and also structurally within institutions and organizations. These dimensions are captured in Diagram 4. Horizontally, the axis spans the range of activity from individual and community to institutional. Vertically, the axis highlights the focus between policy and more widely held public attitudes.

Competence measures that help build the skills and capacities of minorities sit in the top left quadrant. They are social/community level measures that target people, and they require policies to harness resources.

Diagram 4   Comprehensive approach

Actions such as employment and educational targets are in the top right quadrant. They are structural as they relate to institutions, but they also have policy implications.

Dialogue is about changing attitudes. As it stands, it is usually directed at community groups and so it sits in the bottom left quadrant. However, it should also occupy the bottom right quadrant. This is where institutions are engaged in the need for change. Developing such a broader underpinning from intercultural dialogue would have two major advantages:

– it would reinforce that inclusion is not just about minorities becoming more skilled and competent, it is also for organizations to recognize the barriers they create and undertake to remove them;
– it would give intercultural dialogue greater visibility among mainstream institutions and thereby increase the salience of its work.

Most initiatives will occupy one or two quadrants. However, certain initiatives can incorporate the entire range of activity simultaneously. The previously quoted example of the Living Wage Campaign undertaken by London Citizens demonstrates this point. They started by bringing local communities together over a common cause, which was the need for a fair wage in return for their work. Using workshops and seminars, participants came to understand the policies and opposing arguments. Individuals learned to articulate their concerns, clearly and consistently. With the support of trade unions, London Citizens engaged employers and other major institutions. Helped by a media campaign and public and political pressure, they secured action from the employers.

Complementary action

> Intercultural dialogue on its own is incapable of addressing entrenched disadvantage and removing the barriers to participation. Constructive actions are required alongside intercultural dialogue.

Irrespective of how comprehensive or effective intercultural dialogue becomes, it may still be unable to tackle the fundamental issues leading to disadvantage and inequality. Philosopher and UK academic Ranjit Sondhi writes:

'Without the elimination of discrimination, the removal of historical disadvantage, the according of respect in the public and private sphere and the right to self-determination, any attempt at intercultural dialogue would at best remain aspirational.'[22]

Even when supplemented by capacity-building measures, intercultural dialogue on its own is incapable of addressing such entrenched disadvantage and removing the barriers to participation. Constructive actions are required alongside intercultural dialogue.

Such action, commonly known as affirmative or positive action, is widely misunderstood. It is largely discredited by the media, due to fears about reverse discrimination and the unfairness of quotas.

Yet, in order to remove structural barriers, some types of positive actions are essential. This is recognized at the most senior levels within the EU. Speaking at ENAR's conference Understanding Positive Action,[23] Vladimir Spidler, commissioner for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, highlighted the importance of positive action as a supplement to legal measures:

'The Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives have not so far obliged member states to put in place positive action measures to compensate for objectively ascertained disadvantages. Yet the experience of implementing this legislation shows

---

[22] Sondhi (2008) in *Interculturalism: Theory and Practice*, Baring Foundation.
[23] *Understanding Positive Action: From Theory to Practice* (2007), ENAR.

that, despite the fact that member states are required to apply certain measures, legal change alone is not adequate to ensure equality. It is also necessary to raise awareness among victims of the discrimination they face and of their options for redress. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear just how far-reaching structural discrimination is.'

Positive action is already practised in the majority of member states. The recent Eurobarometer survey (2007) shows that Europeans are largely in favour of positive action.[24] Barbara Cohen, an expert on EU anti-discrimination law, identifies eight types of positive actions that are practised across the EU.[25] I have simplified and adapted Cohen's definitions of intercultural dialogue as shown in Diagram 5 below.

Diagram 5 Positive actions

Action	Description	Application	Dialogue
Legal recourse	Outlawing discriminatory practices	Employment, education, delivery of public services	Campaigns to strengthen protection
Regulation of practice	Enforcement of the law and promotion of good practice	Employment, education, delivery of public services	Increases awareness among the public of their rights and forms of redress
Targeting	Culturally neutral recruitment that identify particular localities (eg specific postcodes) or general groups (eg long-term unemployed)	Employment	Provides distribution points for specific communities of interest
User engagement	Face-to-face and more intensive engagement to increase uptake	Public services	Infrastructure that improves access to isolated groups
Adaptation	Minor changes are made to accommodate differences in language, faith (eg prayer room) etc	Employment and Public services	Builds understanding of and empathy with the needs of minorities
Affirmative Action	Cannot be done without conditions and must meet the test of proportionality eg the under-representation of women.	Employment, governance of public bodies	Raises awareness of the need for proportionality in the mainstream institutions

[24] *Eurobarometer* (2007) EUMC.

[25] Cohen (2005) 'Positive Obligations; Shifting the Burden In Order to Achieve Equality', *Roma Rights Quarterly* (1).

Merit Plus	Where ethnicity is a criterion alongside other factors – each applicant is evaluated as an individual and not in a way that makes race or ethnicity the defining factor. Also termed 'cultural competence' and required in many consumer-orientated roles where professionals have direct contact with diverse clients.	Employment, education and public services	Increases confidence among minority groups

The diagram identifies different types of positive action and the sectors where they might be best applied. Most of the measures are readily used and non-controversial. However, the list becomes incrementally more interventionist. Most pro-active and often misapplied measures are 'Affirmative Action' and 'Merit Plus'. These warrant clearer articulation.

Neither Affirmative Action nor Merit Plus can be applied without stringent conditions. Affirmative Action is justified when there is disproportionate representation among the staff and board compared to the population. Merit Plus is about specifically recruiting people with the additional skills and cultural experience to understand and sympathize with customers from diverse backgrounds. It is an approach that helps build the cultural competence of the organization to deal more sensitively with diverse communities. These measures are not about preferential treatment but about meeting the objectives of the organization to respond to and reflect the broad range of its constituents.

One of the most successful examples of Affirmative Action has been implemented in Northern Ireland. The official evaluation, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, was undertaken by Prof Anthony Heath from Oxford University[26] and demonstrates a remarkable and innovative programme that uses legal enforcement measures to ensure that both communities in Northern Ireland – Catholics and Protestants – are ensured 'fair participation' in employment.

Politics and historical circumstance led to the establishment of two distinct religious communities in Northern Ireland. The peace process has resolved much of the conflict. Further mediation required a visible rebalancing of power in the decisionmaking structures. As a result, robust legislation was introduced, including a duty to carry out regular reviews of the composition of workforces in order to establish whether there is fair employment. Where this has not been achieved, remedial action was prescribed. This was applied equally to the private and public sectors.

Legally binding agreements were used to improve the representation of the under-represented group. While the majority of agreements have been established

[26] Heath (2009) *Assessing the Affirmative Action Programme in Northern Ireland*, Oxford Network for Social Inequality Research (Department of Sociology).

to remedy Catholic under-representation, there have also been a number designed to remedy Protestant under-representation in specific concerns.

Actions implemented included improvements to processes, particularly around personnel recruitment and management, and targeted advertisement. Desirable 'goals' and not essential 'quotas' were agreed that had clear timetables and plans.

Reverse discrimination or quotas were not permitted. A major exception to this approach involves the police force, where a form of quota system has been in operation since the implementation of the Patten Report of 1999.[27]

Although the circumstances of Northern Ireland are fairly specific, the level of tension in many EU inner cities suggests that more pro-active strategies could be desirable. There is much to be learned from the Northern Ireland model. Heath's research identifies six important factors when developing positive actions. I have summarized these in Diagram 6.

Diagram 6 Positive action success factors

Success Factor	Application
Symmetrical character	The legislation applies both to minority and indigenous under-representation
Outcome orientation	Issues of process are not ignored but the focus is on the desired results
Monitoring	Annual monitoring of concerns, composition and the publication of these returns identifying individual issues
Fair employment	A definition of fair employment that takes account of the availability of suitably qualified personnel in the relevant geographical area
Binding agreements	The use of legally binding or voluntary agreements to achieve compliance and redress under-representation
Benchmarks	Recognition that the limited measures that employers were permitted to take in order to redress under-representation in comparison with other countries such as the USA or India adopting affirmative action measures

Many opponents of positive action can be found in progressive and even anti-racist circles. This attitude stems from a perceived contradiction between notions of freedom and equality. It is based on the idea that one is promoted at the cost of the other. In reality, it is important for greater freedom and greater equality to be promoted simultaneously.

Intercultural dialogue and positive actions can complement each other to tackle the active and passive exclusion that results from weak legislation, discrimination and the primacy of indigenous cultures.

Turning back to Diagram 5, the fifth column, headed 'Dialogue', indicates the potential role of intercultural dialogue in reinforcing positive actions.

– **Legal recourse** Intercultural dialogue can provide a grassroots base of projects with evidence of the need for change and the capacity to mobilize for new legislation.

[27] Patten (1999) *A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland*, HMSO.

PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

- **Regulation of practice** Through its grassroots constituency, intercultural dialogue can provide channels for information about rights and forms of redress so that there is better adherence to agreed standards and codes of conduct by institutions.
- **Targeting** Intercultural dialogue can provide points of access for disadvantaged communities.
- **User engagement** Intercultural dialogue can develop codes of good practice and provide an infrastructure for more systematic engagement.
- **Adaptation** Voices and experiences of intercultural dialogue can indicate the small concessions that could result in big differences in the employability of minorities and the relevance of public services.
- **Affirmative action** Communication through the network of grassroots groups can help to ensure people are not *mis*informed about the action and stem any potential backlash.
- **Merit Plus** Intercultural dialogue can give individuals the confidence and belief that they are worthy alongside other candidates in contributing to the organization.

One or more strategic alliances could be forged to strengthen the power and potential of intercultural dialogue in securing free, full and equal participation of citizens. There are various possibilities.

Especially during the current European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, there is potential for collaboration with advocacy bodies such as ENAR, the anti-poverty movement and representative groups of the most disadvantaged communities such as the Roma. One approach could be a common call for the commission to produce guidelines on how institutions could be more inclusive in their governance and operations. The guidelines might recognize the importance of intercultural dialogue in preparing disadvantaged people and supporting their journey to active participation.

5 Concluding points

Increasing diversity across Europe is inevitable. It presents an energetic and enriching resource for member states. But stable, secure and sustainable communities have to be fostered. Frequently, migrants and minority ethnic groups are disadvantaged and fail to enjoy rights that others take for granted. They are often marginalized for their difference.

Intercultural dialogue can play a valuable role in building social ties that improve equality and opportunity for disenfranchised groups. In order to do so, the challenges for the Platform for Intercultural Europe are fourfold.

1 To what extent can the platform help the European Union lose its obsession with identity? Disadvantage and not just diversity is at the heart of exclusion. Common cause is forged by tackling the common complaints. Bread-and-butter issues such as education, employment and income are paramount, and override day-to-day differences in how people live their lives. **Common cause over exclusion, poverty and marginalization can help diverse communities to make the small concessions in culture and values that can enable people to live their lives freely and fully.** Common cause can shift emphasis towards structural and institutional exclusion rather than on individual culture and attributes.

2 Scale and impact need to be balanced. Intercultural dialogue is effective because it operates at the local level, where interactions among individuals take place. The granularity of this micro-scale working enables individual concerns to surface and avoids the crass generalizations that sometimes occur with ethnic specific initiatives. But small-scale activity can fall below the radar of influence. **Connecting up local projects virtually or through face-to-face contact is necessary in order to harness the breadth of experience.**

3 There is the need for a cogent framework that provides a typology for community based activity. The platform itself identifies the need for 'structured and principled processes'. Without this, it remains difficult to set standards, support projects and demonstrate impact.

4 There is the **leverage** that **comes from more comprehensive and complementary approaches.** Forging partnerships with advocacy bodies and with community development agencies would mobilize local efforts. It would substantiate

the value of intercultural dialogue in creating a European community where diversity is respected and valued.

The resource implications of this approach are limited. Investment in the website and database would be critical and could be secured as part of an evaluation project. In the year when social exclusion is at the top of the agenda, nominal resources can be justified to understand and develop the role of intercultural dialogue in building more inclusive communities.

Even more important is the internal position of the Platform for Intercultural Europe and its ability to accept the impact of super-diversity, place greater emphasis on systemic failure and find ways of collaborating with others to achieve change.

Platform for Intercultural Europe Discussion Papers
Developing understanding of the concepts behind intercultural dialogue and action

> The two discussion papers at hand – one building on academic scholarship in social and political philosophy, the other steeped in practice-led expertise in community development – are not only very welcome exercises in putting the 'intercultural' to the test. They provide an intellectually and empirically rigorous, if necessarily challenging, insight into the nature and the difficulties of the field. Carefully read and addressed, they can provide a real opportunity to make the debates and practices of individuals, organizations and institutions involved in this field more focused, self-reflective and structured.

Uta Staiger, European Institute, University College London

> Intercultural dialogue has become an urgent issue in European cultural life. But the complexities of the concept are not always well understood, or understood in the same way. These papers offer important contributions from two outstanding writers who effectively link philosophy with the practical realities of policy at neighbourhood level. Anybody concerned with culture in contemporary society will benefit from their rich insights.

François Matarasso, independent researcher and writer specializing in community cultural practice

PLATFORM FOR
INTERCULTURAL EUROPE

ALLIANCE
PUBLISHING
TRUST

www.intercultural-europe.org

www.alliancepublishing.org