

# Beyond Assimilation and Integration: The Shift to ‘National’ and ‘Transnational’ Inclusion

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**Abstract.** One of the key concepts of the MIME (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe) project is, obviously, ‘inclusion’. However, precisely describing what the concept means is not as straightforward as it may seem. It has been used in different contexts in scientific literature. This paper attempts to contribute to the enfolding MIME-framework by critically reflecting upon the definition of ‘inclusion’. Drawing upon theories of acculturation, three core concepts in minority literature, namely ‘assimilation,’ ‘integration,’ and ‘inclusion’ will be examined, and their differences demarcated. In the light of recent developments, such as transnationalism, it will be determined which concept is best suited to analyse contemporary accommodation processes of minorities in their countries of residence. After examining the trade-off between mobility and inclusion, a central topic in all MIME-related research, some general conclusions about ‘inclusion’ and diversity-management will be drawn.

**Keywords:** inclusion, integration, assimilation, diversity policy, mobility-inclusion trade-off

## Introduction

The MIME project’s (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe) main goal is to design a linguistic policy framework that grants all EU citizens, including immigrants and national minorities, a vast amount of mobility options, whilst at the same time ensuring inclusion in their country of residence. It needs to be said that the concept of ‘minorities’ is quite vague since it encompasses groups that differ significantly from each other. There are many categorizations conceivable in order to distinguish between different kinds of minorities. To name a few examples: old/new minorities, territorial/non-territorial minorities (as is proposed in one of the MIME inception reports), national minorities/immigrants (the distinction that is used by Kymlicka (1995) among others). These categorizations have at least one major problem: it is complicated to set up criteria that determine which minority belongs to which category. For instance,

are Turkish immigrants who have lived for three generations in the same area old or new minorities? MIME has not yet developed a solid vocabulary describing different types of minorities for the MIME-framework is still unfolding.

One of the first questions that immediately comes to mind when reflecting upon ‘inclusion’ is what the concept actually entails. Can it, for example, be compared to the widely used concept of ‘integration’ or does it mean something different? This question is central to this paper. We will attempt to clearly demarcate the differences between concepts often used in literature on diversity management: assimilation, integration, and inclusion.

To address this issue, we will make a brief historical analysis of these concepts. If we look at [www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com) – one of the biggest online English synonym dictionaries –, ‘integration’ yields as its first result ‘assimilation’. In other words: the website treats integration and assimilation as synonyms. This result is symbolic to how these two concepts are being confounded in public opinion. In this paper, it will be attempted to separate them, which is needed to examine their role in current studies on diversity management.

Furthermore, it will be investigated whether ‘integration’ is the most appropriate concept to use when designing current minority policy. Recent developments of transnationalism, which stimulate cross-border activities and strengthen the identification of minority group members with their ethnic peers in other countries, and the similarities in the public eye of ‘integration’ and ‘assimilation,’ could compel us to critically review the concept. ‘Inclusion’ might be a more suitable term to analyse present-day issues surrounding cultural and linguistic diversity.

Finally, the concept of inclusion will be problematized. It is not a new concept and it has been used in different contexts with different meanings. These varying contexts have to be acknowledged if we wish to formulate our own interpretation of the concept. After sharpening our understanding of its effects, we can maybe take a more nuanced look at the trade-off between mobility and inclusion as outlined in the MIME position paper (Grin et al. 2014).

## **From Assimilation to Integration to Assimilation**

In order to understand the current usage of ‘integration’ as a concept, it is needed to delve into post-war scientific contributions on the adaptation process of minorities in majority cultures. One of the major texts on this topic has been written by the sociologist Milton Gordon (1964). In his *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*, Gordon analyses the socio-economic and cultural adaptation of immigrants in North-America. He concludes that immigrants proceed through seven stages of assimilation (Gordon 1964):

1. 'Acculturation':<sup>1</sup> newcomers adopt language, dress, and daily customs of the host society (including values and norms).
2. Structural assimilation: large-scale entrance of minorities into cliques, clubs, and institutions in the host society.
3. Marital assimilation: widespread intermarriage.
4. Identification assimilation: the minority feels bonded to the dominant culture.
5. Attitude reception assimilation refers to the absence of prejudice.
6. Behavior reception assimilation refers to the absence of discrimination.
7. Civic assimilation occurs when there is an absence of values and power struggles."

Gordon considered his seven-stage model an empirical reality rather than a normative policy ambition. His view on assimilation could be seen as a natural law: it is *inevitable* that all minority groups, both autochthonous minorities (e.g. black people in the U.S.) and immigrants (e.g. Puerto-Ricans) go through these seven stages of assimilation. This is naturally only the case if the majority (or in a few historical cases the minority (e.g. the Romans in Gaul, Hellenic culture in the Middle-East)) group is socio-culturally and politically dominant. Gordon's text was rather revolutionary in his time for it is one of the first works that emphasizes the importance of 'culture' in research on assimilation and citizenship.

Gordon's view has been criticized both on normative and empirical grounds. Starting with the latter category, social psychologist Berry observed that the adaptation process of immigrants is more complex than suggested in Gordon's theory. He formulated an alternative model, which he refers to as the 'four strategies of acculturation' (Berry 1980). Acculturation needs to be understood as 'the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members' (Berry 2005). Contrary to Gordon, he argues that if different cultural groups come into contact, potential cultural clashes might emerge, which need to be solved through negotiation in order to achieve outcomes that are acceptable for all parties involved. Immigrants can opt for four different acculturation strategies, namely 'assimilation,' 'separation,' 'marginalization,' and 'integration'. The individual's chosen strategy will be determined by (1) a preference for the majority or for the heritage culture and (2) a preference for having contact with and participating in society with other cultural groups (Berry 1980). Assimilation generally still has the same meaning as in Gordon's work: complete adaptation of the minority to the majority culture. Those who opt for this strategy have a preference for the

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1 The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007–2013) under Grant Agreement No 613344. Gordon's definition of 'acculturation' should not be confounded with Berry's interpretation of that concept. The latter will be discussed further in the article.

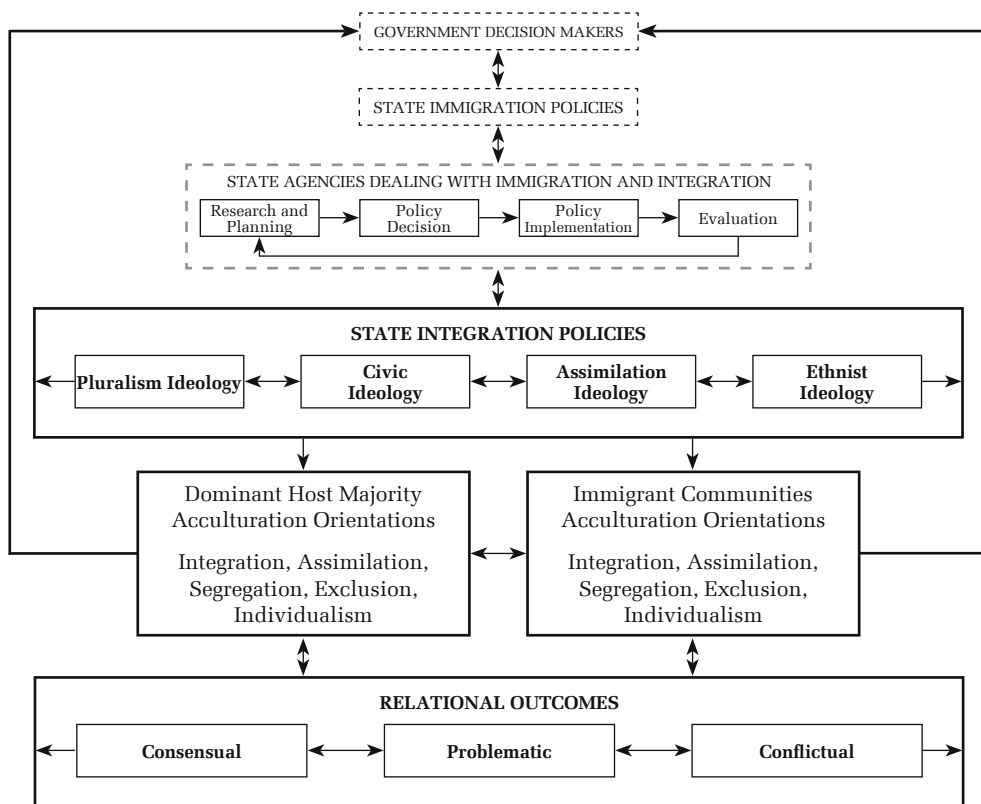
majority culture and actively wish to engage with other groups. Separation means that individuals wish to exclusively orient themselves towards their heritage culture, having little desire to come into frequent contact with other groups. Marginalization occurs when new arrivals deny both their heritage culture and other cultural groups in society, resulting in a solitary cultural existence. Concerning integration, this strategy is preferred among those who both value their own cultural heritage but also wish to get in contact with other groups.

Berry was one of the first to define the concept of integration, which has been widely used in the public and scientific debate ever since. For example, the Dutch integration policy of the 1980's, which promoted 'integration with preservation of the own identity,' could have been inspired by Berry's work. By carrying out a survey research, he investigated the effect of each strategy on 'acculturative stress' (loosely defined as 'the psychological, somatic, and social difficulties that may accompany acculturation processes, often manifesting in anxiety, depression and other forms of mental and physical maladaptation' (Berry 2006)). Integration yielded the 'best' results: those who opted for this strategy suffered the least from acculturative stress. In contrast, marginalization and assimilation were the sources of relatively high stress levels (Berry 2006).

Berry's theory is not undisputed. His model has been criticized both on theoretical and empirical (e.g. the 'marginalized' group has never been found) grounds. One point of criticism is particularly relevant for our analysis, namely Berry's original assumption that individuals have considerable amount of agency to 'pick' the acculturation strategy of their choosing. In other words, the core of Berry's model is somewhat based on free choice. However, in practice, the range of choices is frequently quite limited, as Berry later agreed with himself (Berry 1990, 1997). It is questionable whether cultural minorities in general are in the position to freely choose their own acculturation strategy. The society in which they live might have already pre-established norms on how to manage diversity and could (gently) force its newer members to adapt to them, effectively limiting freedom of choice.

Bourhis et al. (1997) succeeded in making a model which accounts for the contextual factors that are somewhat lacking in Berry's theory. They designed the 'Interactive Acculturation Model' (IAM) to explain changes in norms of diversity by looking at the stance of the majority culture, the minority cultures, and the government. The model can be found in *Figure 1*.

The model offers a perspective on how factors other than the immigrants' own preference can influence their acculturation process. Without elaborately discussing all different concepts mentioned, it is important to realize that Bourhis et al. view the norms and values on dealing with diversity as intrinsically dynamic and interactive. Norms of the best way to manage diversity are not set in stone and the three main actors (the government, members of the majority, and members of the minorities) constantly influence each other's stances.



**Figure 1.** Bourhis et al.'s Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al. 1997)

The model can provide clarification in the conceptual debate on ‘integration’ if we take into account two empirical findings. First of all, members of the minority culture generally have a strong preference for ‘integration’ as a desirable acculturative strategy (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver 2003, Hehman et al. 2011, Rojas et al. 2014). Secondly, members of the majority culture usually favour immigrants to follow the ‘assimilation’ and in some instances the ‘integration’ strategy (Horenczyk 1996, Van Oudenhoven, Prins & Buunk 1998, Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver 2003). Some analyses found a clear connection between the preference for assimilation and the degree of prejudice towards minorities (Kosic et al. 2005, Zagefka et al. 2014, López-Rodríguez et al. 2014, Rojas et al. 2014). It seems inevitable that these different stances of majority and minority group members spark conflict. An important question then would be what kind of state ideology – the government being the third major actor – of the management of diversity is in place. Answering this question takes us a step closer towards tracing the evolution of the concept integration in the public and scientific debate.

To address this issue, we need to shortly review the four state ideologies as distinguished by Bourhis et al. (1997). *Pluralism* refers to an ideology that seeks to actively promote cultural diversity. Citizens should be granted much freedom to express their own cultural identity. An important distinction between pluralism and the other ideologies is that the state is willing to support private initiatives of cultural minorities, hereby thus effectively helping them gain a foothold in society. Pluralism is inspired by the ideas of communitarian philosophers such as Charles Taylor, who is a strong advocate of a ‘politics of difference’ wherein minority culture vitality is guaranteed by the state (Taylor 1994). The *civic* ideology, which seems inspired by Jürgen Habermas’ ‘politics of dignity’ (Habermas 1994), shares almost all premises with pluralism. Cultural minorities do have the freedom to organize themselves within the ‘civic’ framework. However, unlike pluralism, this ideology advocates a strict policy of non-intervention in the cultural identity of all citizens, and thus financially supporting them is not an option. The *assimilation* ideology expects the state to intervene in some areas of its citizens’ private values. Minorities are expected to forsake their cultural and linguistic identities and adapt themselves to the prevailing norms and values of their country of residence. This adaptation could happen naturally (in line with what Gordon observed) but can also be imposed via laws and regulations. Lastly, the *ethnist* ideology, which is related to ethnic nationalism, also expects immigrants to completely adapt themselves to the norms and values of the cultural majority. However, in some cases, it is impossible for ‘outsiders’ to ever become a genuine part of the nation. Policies of *ius sanguinis* can prevent immigrants to be fully accepted for they do not share the same ethnic kinship as the autochthonous population.

Analysing a country’s state ideology is of crucial importance in understanding its policy towards minorities. Similar to the acculturative preferences of minority and majority group members, state ideologies on acculturation are subject to change. Many European states are currently converging towards an assimilation ideology. Since approximately fifteen years, mandatory citizenship courses in most European states aim to teach immigrants the host society’s language and the presumed highlights of the dominant culture (e.g. important national historical events, norms and values). The citizenship regime in Europe has been described by Van Houdt, Suvavierol & Schinkel (2011) as ‘neo-liberal communitarianism’: immigrants are expected to willingly assimilate completely within the dominant culture. Still, despite the shift towards assimilation ideology, most countries still refer to their approach as ‘integration policy’. These changes partly explain why the concept of ‘integration’ has deviated from Berry’s original definition (engaging with both the heritage and majority culture) in the public debate, and thus consequently show why a new concept may be more appropriate.

## **Beyond 'Integration,' towards 'Inclusion'**

The shift towards assimilation as a policy principle in our current time is problematic. In order for assimilation to succeed, immigrants need to forsake their cultural identity. This has always been complicated, but in present time assimilation becomes even more difficult. Due to advancement in communication, transport, and media technology, it is simpler than a few decades ago to maintain long-distance contact with friends and relatives in the country of origin or with other immigrant communities in western societies.<sup>2</sup> This development is recently commonly understood as 'transnationalism'. Transnationalism, or 'the process by which migrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Basch, Glick Schiller & Szanton Blanc 2008), is an important development to consider when analysing minority adaptation processes. Vertovec (1999) points out that due to the connectivity of individuals through increased physical mobility, but also via the Internet, telecommunications, and satellite TV, notions of 'place' and 'locality' are reconstructed: current communication technology allows individuals to form their own transnational 'fora' to communicate and express their identity. Minorities can easily read newspapers in their native language on the Internet, contact their relatives in their country of origin (or their 'heritage' country in the case of some autochthonous minorities) via Skype, and cheaply travel as well, a process which is called 'virtual mobility' by Urry (2002). In this respect, national boundaries are steadily losing part of their relevance. This evolution has consequences for concepts such as integration and inclusion, which are tightly intertwined with the nation-state.

Striving for a near-complete adaptation of minority communities has therefore become near impossible. The question whether or not it is desirable for minorities to maintain their own cultural identity has become largely irrelevant due to technological advancement. Instead, it might be wise to reflect upon new ways to cope with diversity. This need to renew our thinking on the acculturation of minorities is one of the most important reasons for promoting MIME's concept of inclusion that may better mark the change from a state-centric to a transnational view.

## **Inclusion: Contemporary Issues**

Obviously, simply replacing 'integration' with 'inclusion' does not solve all potential analytical problems. Taking a brief look at the conceptual history of 'inclusion,' it is apparent that the concept has been used in different contexts,

2 Manuel Castells (2011) described this development in his work *The Rise of the Network Society*.

in many different fields (e.g. health justice, organization science, education). In the study of minorities, inclusion usually entails feelings of belonging (when analysing the minorities' perspective), the acceptance of minorities in institutions (e.g. the army (Burk 1995)), the judicial system (Potash 1973), politics (Pedrini, Bächtiger & Steenbergen 2013)), or an observation of their participation in society (Markus, Steele & Steele 2000, Habermas 2008). Deriving one precise definition from all these different fields is complicated. However, the different acceptations do share one common characteristic: inclusion entails a degree adaptation of the majority group, be it a company, the army, the political community or society as a whole, to accommodate members of the minority. It usually refers to the efforts society makes to allow minorities to participate. We could illustrate this interpretation of inclusion with how many societies try to 'include' people with disabilities: it is logically not asked of the latter to adapt to the former. Instead, facilities are set up to allow the disabled to participate in society as well. Inclusion is in its 'classical' meaning mostly a one-way process, from majority to minority.<sup>3</sup>

Concerning our field of investigation, the incorporation of immigrants and the willingness of society to accommodate and accept cultural minorities is also an important aspect of inclusion. It can be expected of an inclusive society to facilitate the cultural and linguistic expression of all its citizens, by, for instance, making room for minority-language acquisition in education curricula and/or implementing a multilingual civil service. However, our interpretation of inclusion involves a two-way relationship: minorities are also required to adapt to their country of residence to a certain extent, without resorting to complete forced assimilation. The precise adaptation requirements will vary depending on social context, but in most cases learning the dominant language and respecting (not necessarily adopting) the values of the majority culture will be two of the most important pillars. This idea of adaptation as a reciprocal process is similar to Berry's original concept of 'integration'. Since integration in popular understanding has deviated from its original definition, we propose to replace the concept with 'national inclusion'. 'National inclusion' would be defined as an acculturation process wherein a nation-state facilitates the cultural and linguistic expression of its minorities, whilst the minorities in turn adapt to the mainstream society. However, in the age of transnationalism, mere national inclusion will suffice neither as a policy goal nor as an analytical lens. We therefore propose to add 'transnational inclusion' to the scientific vocabulary. Admittedly, transnational inclusion is a bit vaguer than its national counterpart. It can be defined as 'the possibilities of cultural minorities to express their heritage culture across the borders of the nation-state'. Policy goals of national inclusion

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3 A second definition of inclusion refers to the incorporation of minorities in their country of residence (Hugo 2005). Inclusion is then simply a container concept for all different kinds of adaptation strategies, comparable to acculturation.



and transnational inclusion might overlap (e.g. facilitating minority-language education can improve both national and transnational inclusion), but separating the two concepts underlines that we come to terms with the new transnational reality. 'Inclusion' would thus have a 'national' and 'transnational' component, hereby marking the shift to the paradigm of transnationalism.

After fine-tuning our definition of 'inclusion,' there are still some issues remaining that we need to discuss. Firstly, we need to acknowledge the connection between citizenship and inclusion. Even though we established that our interpretation of 'inclusion' is very similar to Berry's ideas on 'integration,' opinions on 'the best road to inclusion' may vary in different social contexts. Practical realizations of inclusion are dependent on three actors: government, members of the majority, and the minorities. Inclusion, as we have defined, is a two-way process, wherein belonging but also acceptance by the majority group members are important. It can be questioned whether acceptance by the state – by providing basic cultural and linguistic rights to minorities – is enough to forge an inclusive society. Or is it worthwhile to strive for a deeper bond between citizens, sometimes referred to as 'social cohesion'?

A second issue is of a more practical and empirical nature: namely, what would the concrete effects of an 'inclusion-proof' policy be for both the majority and minority members? A few characteristics of an ideal type of inclusion policy can be distinguished. First of all, as a policy principle, transnationalism should not be rejected but embraced because transnational identities will inevitably form in our current time. Trying to prevent this development will only result in frustration for all three actors. The minority population would experience a lack of acceptance and discrimination of its heritage culture, whilst the majority population and the state will be frustrated because their assimilation efforts cannot change new realities. Denying transnationalism can thus potentially be a recipe for cultural tension. Secondly, if we focus on linguistic inclusion, the state should facilitate the education of minority languages to the second generation and not exclusively emphasize national language acquisition. Thirdly, empirical evidence shows that the effects of current 'integration' policies are shrouded in a veil of uncertainty. The beneficial effect of citizenship courses has barely been proven convincingly (Ruedin & D'Amato 2011). This does not necessarily mean that those courses are by definition ineffective, it just implies that their usefulness is uncertain.

Acculturation is a psychological process that all immigrants have to face. Berry and many of his peers investigated the relationship between policies and the psychological disposition of immigrants. Changes generate a considerable amount of 'acculturative stress,' sometimes resulting in serious mental health problems (Sirin et al. 2012, Goforth et al. 2014, Yoon et al. 2013). Putnam (2007) has highlighted the potential advantages of what he calls 'bonding' social capital: immigrants can benefit from an already existing ethnic network that facilitates

adaptation in the host society. After having spent some time within their own ethnic niche, the step towards connecting with mainstream society ('bridging' social capital) is relatively small. Evidence of this development has been found among Poles in England (Ryan et al. 2008). Furthermore, Wright and Bloemraad (2012) concluded that there is no connection between strict assimilation policies and feelings of belonging to the majority culture among minorities. In addition, minorities living under a multicultural system do not significantly feel less attached to the majority culture compared to their peers residing in 'assimilation countries'. These results would thus suggest that policies of multiculturalism have many benefits and few disadvantages for both immigrants and the society. However, when looking at the socio-economic aspect of inclusion, results are slightly different. Swedish integration policy is often cited as an ideal model for EU countries. Sweden is one of the few countries that did not implement compulsory citizenship courses. In addition, it provides many opportunities for minority languages to be integrated in the official education system. Koopmans (2010) and Wiesbrock (2011) investigated the effects of this policy and both concluded that policies allowing for much cultural diversity are not necessarily in the best economic interest of the minorities. This shows that diversity-promoting policies can have unpredictable and not always positive effects. Further reflection on how to retain the positive effects whilst minimizing the downsides is necessary.

## **Trade-off Mobility versus Inclusion**

One of the key challenges faced by MIME is the trade-off between 'mobility' and 'inclusion'. Mobility is preferred over migration since the former concept can better explain movement in the transnational world (e.g. see the discussion on mobility vs. migration in Grin et al. 2014 and Houtkamp 2014). It does not only refer to the physical movement from one country to another, but it also implies a virtual aspect: virtual mobility (i.e. communication through the Internet) as described by Urry (2002) is gaining in importance in our era. The core idea of the trade-off is that mobility and inclusion can pull in non-converging, potentially opposite directions (Grin et al. 2014). For example, highly mobile individuals might simply lack the time or the need to fully become acquainted with the cultural norms and values of the country wherein they reside.

Mobility-enhancing policies can thus sometimes have negative effects on inclusion. Another example concerns promoting the acquisition of several languages, which can evidently increase one's mobility options. This may mostly benefit the higher educated part of the population, deepening the rift between social classes in society. In addition, promoting mobility will obviously not diminish the perceived threat of migration present among populist voters, which will not

improve the inclusion of minorities. These observations show the required delicacy when dealing with the mobility-inclusion trade-off. However, some remarks can be made in the light of our previous fine-tuning of the concept of 'inclusion'.

To better understand the trade-off, we should not ask the question 'do mobility and inclusion pull in non-converging directions,' but instead 'what kind of mobility pulls what kind of inclusion in non-converging directions'. The realization that the two concepts have both different, context-dependent meanings is vital. For instance, does virtual mobility, e.g. a migrant skyping with relatives from his/her country of origin, always pose a threat to his/her transnational inclusion? The answer will most likely be negative. Virtual mobility has actually the potential to render frequent corporeal mobility unneeded since minorities can easily remain in touch with their social network in the country of origin via technological means. The question whether this kind of mobility would hamper – or improve – national inclusion is not simple to answer because of the variety of societal contexts.

Many of the important factors when assessing the trade-off are mentioned in the acculturation scheme as outlined by Berry and Bourhis et al. It is important to know the preferred acculturation strategy of the state, the majority population and the minorities. If both state and majority population prefer minorities to assimilate in order for them to be 'included,' then nearly all kind of mobility, both corporeal and virtual, may be considered a threat. Maintaining relations with the country of origin is then a sign of a lack of adaptation. There are numerous different mobility-inclusion trade-offs that could be formulated. In addition, one can wonder whether a totally cohesive society, which would be the result of inclusion, can and should actually exist. Social cohesion could be defined by 'the fact that individuals feel [to be] part of society and trust each other. This means that different groups are accepted as full members of society' (Ruedin & D'Amato 2011). In social cohesion literature, the distinction is sometimes made between 'communities' (based on close social ties) and 'associations' (based on collective support for laws and values) (Tönnies 1974). Different countries may lean more towards one of these 'ideal types'. The 'chosen' form of social cohesion in a country has implications for the required adaptation of minorities: in the case of associations, less adaptation is needed than in the case of communities. Whether minorities live in an 'association' or a 'community' will have consequences for the mobility-inclusion trade-off.

## **Conclusion**

This paper aimed to disentangle some key concepts in the 'diversity management' debate: assimilation, integration, and inclusion. Assimilation and integration are often confounded. Berry's original definition of integration as an acculturation strategy wherein both heritage and majority cultures are valued can barely be heard

in the political debate. To better understand how concepts such as ‘integration’ and ‘assimilation’ can develop over time, Bourhis et al.’s model is a useful framework. It helps analyse the development of acculturation regimes, emphasizing the dynamic and interactive nature of integration policy. A wide array of factors can explain the convergence in Europe towards assimilation-oriented approaches.

However, due to the rise of transnationalism – a consequence of globalization –, assimilating minorities within a national culture is becoming increasingly problematic. For that reason, it is proposed to critically review the concept of assimilation and its present-day euphemism, ‘integration,’ and to speak of ‘inclusion’ instead. Simply making this semantic shift is obviously not sufficient to solve all problems with diversity management, but it is more than a merely symbolic gesture: it should mark the shift to a transnational way of thinking.

A key challenge for scholars and policy-makers is to design a diversity policy that can (1) be accepted by both majority and minority cultures, (2) is fit for the new transnational times, and (3) combines successful participation with a feeling of belonging and acceptance among the minorities. A fourth important consideration is the trade-off between mobility and inclusion. It is likely that in the globalizing world people will tend to be more mobile, which can have a detrimental effect to their inclusion in their countries of residence. We outlined the complexities involved when the trade-off is formulated in general terms: both ‘mobility’ and ‘inclusion’ are context-dependent concepts. Each trade-off should therefore be subject to a very judicious analysis, while differences in individual and social contexts should also be taken into account. Depending on what the key-concepts actually mean per situation, the trade-off could pan out in diverse ways. The challenge for scholars and policy-makers is to promote the ‘right’ kind of mobility and inclusion to reach the optimal ‘trade-off’ result.<sup>4</sup> Additional empirical research on, for instance, the effects of multilingual education, the effectiveness of citizenship courses, and the perspectives of immigrants on these issues could provide necessary clarification.

An important consideration for all those who either make diversity policy or formulate policy proposals is the stance towards migrants of majority populations. In many countries, they have a preference for minorities to assimilate within the dominant culture. We could wonder whether in such a socio-political climate even a well-developed diversity policy is beneficial for minority inclusion. The question how diversity policy can be implemented and accepted by a public opinion that clearly favours assimilation is probably as important as the actual policy content.

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4 An issue to reflect upon regarding the trade-off could be whether it can be defined in ‘implicational’ terms. To name an example: is an increasing amount of immigrant school children associated with a decreasing amount of autochthonous school children? What social factors would influence this relationship? Posing such questions could grant a more refined insight in the mechanisms of the trade-off.

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