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ACCEPT PLURALISM

APPLYING TOLERANCE INDICATORS:

LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLICIES OF EXCLUSION OF MINORITIES AND IMMIGRANTS IN PUBLIC LIFE

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5. New Knowledge.
Applying Tolerance Indicators

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LOCAL AND NATIONAL POLICIES OF EXCLUSION OF MINORITIES AND IMMIGRANTS IN PUBLIC LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The integration of migrants and minorities is a national issue, and relevant policies and legislation are formulated and defined at the national level. The actual implementation of these policies, however, takes place at the local level, in the cities and towns where migrants and minorities live. The need to address challenges to social cohesion has, therefore, entered the political agendas of many city councils throughout Europe, and indeed, many municipalities have taken initiatives in the area of housing, ethnic entrepreneurship, intercultural and inter-religious relationships, and education.

As city councils have to act within their national frameworks, they often try to compensate for the limitations and shortcomings of national policies and may stray away from the official national approach to integration (Alexander 2003). For years, scholars and political actors have considered the role of local policies and local authorities in integrating migrants and minorities. While some research has suggested that local policies have often been more inclusive (Penninx et al., 2004; CLIP, 2010; UNESCO, 2010), other has highlighted the difficulties and obstacles encountered by local governments in implementing these inclusive policies (Triandafyllidou, 2003; Penninx et al., 2004).

In more recent years, however, there seems to be a shift. Local policies are becoming more restrictive, either reinforcing national policies or becoming even more limiting than the national ones. This change is linked to a growing xenophobia and an anti-immigration backlash across most of Europe.

This comparative report focuses on six European countries: **Bulgaria, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece, Spain** and **Italy.**

It examines whether local policies are more or less restrictive than national towards migrants and minorities. The aim is to analyze whether local policies and local actors favour the integration of migrants and minorities or oppose it, and whether they reflect national legislation, or distance themselves from it.

The focus is on key challenging dilemmas which emerge at the local level and raise issues of intolerance, tolerance or recognition towards migrants and minorities. Our analysis is based on the research conducted by six research teams participating in the ACCEPT PLURALISM Project in Bulgaria, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece, Spain and Italy. The project, funded by the European Commission under the seventh Framework Program, aimed at investigating the responses to ethnic and religious diversities in 15 European countries in the fields of education and politics.

PART 1. THE INDICATORS

Our Tolerance indicators on local policies are based on the empirical and theoretical analysis of political challenges in Bulgaria, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece, Spain and Italy, as studied in the ACCEPT PLURALISM Project. We have selected four indicators to analyze the ways in which the local policies deal with religious and ethnic diversities:

> **Indicator 5.1 Accommodating the need for a public place of worship**
>
> **Indicator 5.2 Special requirements for ethnic or religious business**
>
> **Indicator 6.2 Existence of official institutions for the representation of migrants,** and
>
> **Indicator 6.4 Access to local voting rights for non-nationals**.

We consider these four indicators to be particularly useful for understanding the extent to which local policies are tolerant towards ethnic and religious minorities in terms of their social integration (i.e. places for worship), and their participation in economic (i.e. ethnic business) and political life (i.e. local voting rights and official representative institutions).

Scores (low, medium or high) were assigned by the ACCEPT PLURALISM teams for each national case study.

What the indicators can and cannot show

Country scores on individual indicators should be interpreted as very condensed statements on the situation in a particular country (and for a given time period only) on a particular issue. Scores represent contextual judgments by experts based on an interpretation of qualitative research and the available knowledge about the respective society in this respect. These "scores" cannot be understood and should not be presented without the explanations provided by the researchers.

Scores cannot be aggregated. Scores on individual indicators may help to analyze the situation in countries in a comparative perspective, but from the fact that countries score higher or lower across a number of indicators we cannot infer that ipse facto a particular country as a whole is "more or less tolerant".

Scores on individual indicators are not necessarily comparable, because different factors and reasons may have resulted in a particular score for a country (e.g. it may be that the score in one country only

refers to a particular region). This means that scores cannot necessarily be compared and they can only be interpreted in a comparative way in relation to the explications and reasons provided.

For more information about each national case study please refer to the individual reports listed in the Annex. For the Toolkit of the ACCEPT PLURALISM Tolerance Indicators please see here: www.accept-pluralism.eu

INDICATOR 5.1 ACCOMMODATING THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC PLACE OF WORSHIP

LOW – non tolerance	Minority religious groups are not allowed to have any public places for worship, formal or informal.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	Minority religious groups are allowed to have informal places for worship or are allowed to have formal places of worship but requirements are so stringent that in practice this is not possible. Informal public places of worship are however de facto tolerated.
HIGH – acceptance	Minority religious groups can have their formal places of worship.

Table 1. Applying Indicator 5.1 Accommodating the need for a public place of worship to six European countries

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	High	All minority religious groups have their formal places of worship. Constructing new ones is usually not a problem, although in recent years, there is a growing resistance towards the construction of additional mosques in some parts of the country (e.g. in Sofia).
Greece	Medium	Minority religious groups are allowed to have formal places for worship after applying for permission to the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports. Issuing and gathering the necessary documentation can prove to be impossible in practice. Informal places of worship operate around the country, many of them without any administrative permit but with the tolerance of the police.
Ireland	High	The Irish Constitution provides for freedom of worship, prohibits the establishment or endowment of any religion, and rules out religious discrimination. Minority religious groups are free to set up formal public places of worship, and there are many such places of worship throughout the country.
Italy	Medium	The Italian Constitution provides for freedom of worship but, in practice some

		religious minorities (especially Muslims) are often impeded in constructing their mosques. As a consequence, informal places of worship operate without formal recognition.
Netherlands	**High**	Minority religious groups, including religious groups of immigrant origin can have their own (formal) places of worship. There is a constitutional right to religious freedom. The construction of mosques is often a cause for public debate, but on the whole the comparatively high number of newly built mosque illustrates that the Netherlands scores high on this indicator.
Spain	**Medium**/ **High**	Despite social and administrative obstacles to the opening of formal Mosques in Spain, minority religions are legally free to establish new places of worship.

INDICATOR 5.2 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS BUSINESS

LOW – non tolerance	The municipality imposes very stringent requirements regarding opening hours or types of business with a view of driving out of the area businesses that are typically ethnic or religious such as corner shops which stay open late, ethnic restaurants or butchers providing for halal meat.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	The municipality does not impose requirements and restrictions, and provides no subsidies and support. Minority or ethnic businesses operate as any other business.
HIGH – acceptance	The municipality provides for subsidies and support to ensure that shops that are catering to the needs of specific minority or immigrant groups (e.g. halal butcher shops or other types of shops) exist in the area. The municipality sees such ethnic entrepreneurship and the existence of such shops as an added values for the neighborhood recognizing the diversity of its population and perhaps even creating 'business' by the local and tourist population.

Table 2. Applying Indicator 5.2 Special requirements for ethnic or religious business to six European countries

Bulgaria	Medium	There are no special requirements and restrictions for opening and conducting ethnically or religiously specific business – either at the national or the municipal level. On the other hand, there are also no subsidies and support.
Ireland	N/A	The Irish team could not apply this indicator as the material required to establish this is not readily available in the Irish context.
Italy	Medium	There are no special requirements for ethnic businesses but in some regions, local policies of exclusion have been enacted to impede ethnic businesses (e.g. restrictions on opening hours for kebab shops).
Greece	Medium	Minority or ethnic businesses operate as any other business, no special legal provisions are required, and no subsidies or support are provided either.

Netherlands	Medium / High	Minority or ethnic businesses operate as any other business. Needless to say that all business are subject to public scrutiny with regard to hygiene, financial administration, personnel policy etc. There are no subsidies for halal butchers in the Netherlands. Some cities try (or have tried) to stimulate the forming of "ethnic neighbourhoods" that can also become "tourist attractions" (e.g. "Chinatowns").
Spain	Medium	Minority or ethnic businesses operate as any other business, no special legal provisions are required, and no subsidies or support are provided either.

INDICATOR 6.2 EXISTENCE OF OFFICIAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF MIGRANTS (E.G. LOCAL MIGRANT COUNCILS)

LOW – non tolerance	There are no such official institutions for the representation of migrants at local or national level.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	There are such official institutions but are only of a consultative character. They have no power. Their role mainly pertains to migration related issues not to mainstream issues.
HIGH – acceptance	There are such official institutions and they have real administrative local political power (migrants here are intended as non-citizens but they may be able to vote at local elections). They form part of the national political system and consider both migration related and mainstream general issues.

Table 3. Applying Indicator 6.2 Existence of official institutions for the representation of migrants to six European countries

Bulgaria	N/A	There are no official institutions for the representation of migrants at the local or national level. However, Bulgaria still cannot be considered a destination country for immigration as immigrants represent below 1.5% of the population. Therefore, no score is assigned to this indicator.
Greece	Medium	Local reform project Kallikratis in 2010 introduced the establishment of Migrant Integration Councils at the level of municipalities to represent migrants. However, their role is just consultative, while only a minority of municipalities has taken the decision to actually set up these Councils.
Ireland	Medium	A Ministerial Council was established in 2010 to advise the Minister of State for Integration on issues faced by migrants in Ireland, and meetings of the regional fora took place in 2010, but the Council is now defunct. There are six Local Authority Integration fora funded by local authorities. These are non-statutory, loosely consultative bodies with elected steering committees.

Italy	Medium	There are local representative bodies of migrants but they are only consultative and their immigrant members often are not elected but chosen from the migrants' associations (so they are not completely representative). In practice they have not proved to be really effective and in many cases they have been dismissed by the local authorities.
Netherlands	Medium	During the period of Ethnic Minorities Policy (1983-1989) ethnic organizations and representative councils for immigrants were seen as important. Since the mid-1990s most municipalities have ended subsidies for this type of institution. The remaining official institutions mostly have a consultative character. At the national and municipal level several platforms still exist and they are usually important for municipal authorities when discussing specific policies and issues related to immigrant communities. However, these platforms do not have "real administrative local political power".
Spain	Medium	There is a widespread presence of consultative bodies at the national, regional and local levels, but these councils and forums are mainly consultative and migrants' participation and institutional empowerment remain limited.

INDICATOR 6.4 LOCAL VOTING RIGHTS FOR NON NATIONALS

LOW – non tolerance	No local voting rights for non-nationals.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	Local voting rights for non-nationals subject to 5 or more years of residence, with additional requirements (e.g. a certain type of permit), and/or subject to reciprocity clauses (i.e. that the country of origin reciprocates such rights).
HIGH – acceptance	Local voting rights for non-nationals exist for people who have been living in the country for 5 years or less without any special additional requirements.

Table 4. Applying Indicator 6.4 Local voting rights for non-nationals to six European countries

Bulgaria	Low	Local voting rights (municipal elections) are limited only to those non-nationals who are citizens of a Member State of the European Union. Non-nationals from third countries have no local voting rights regardless of the length of their residence in Bulgaria.
Greece	Low	Local voting rights were granted in 2010 to foreign residents who have lived in the country for more than 5 years depending on stringent provisions. The impact of this change was still quite small, when the Council of State judged the law as unconstitutional in 2012 and the current government interrupted its implementation until a new law is voted.
Ireland	High	Since 1963 Ireland grants political rights to vote and stand in local elections to those who have been resident for a minimum of six months, and has thus one of the more inclusive voting systems in the EU.
Italy	Low	Local voting rights are limited to European citizens (but in practice not enacted). Non-nationals from third countries have no local voting rights. It is only by naturalization that they can acquire voting rights, and naturalization can be obtained after 10 years of legal residence (after four years if they are EU citizens).
Netherlands	Medium	Since 1985 non-nationals who have been residing legally in the Netherlands for minimum 5 years have the right to vote in municipal elections.
Spain	Medium	The right to vote in local elections is conditioned by reciprocity clauses.

Table 5. Comparative country overview

	5.1 Public place worship	5.2 Ethnic/ religious business	6.2 Official institutions representing migrants	6.4 Local voting rights
Bulgaria	High	Medium	N/A	Low
Greece	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Ireland	High	N/A	Medium	High
Italy	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Netherlands	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium
Spain	Medium / High	Medium	Medium	Medium

In this comparative assessment of local policies indicators, the six European countries taken into account have different immigration histories and different kinds of native minorities. In this section we briefly summarize the main results that emerged from our research in Bulgaria, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece, Spain and Italy and present the scores attributed to each indicator in every country.

Bulgaria

At the local level, minorities coexist with majorities, even though there are still difficulties in accepting and recognizing them. Relationships worsen in some occasions, e.g. during the political campaigns and elections, in which the rights or claims of minorities (particularly of the Turkish minority) are discarded or dismissed. Nevertheless, minorities can have their formal places of worship and they operate their businesses freely. As regards immigrants, Bulgaria is not yet a destination country for immigration. There are no official institutions for the representation of migrants and third country nationals do not have local voting rights; however, these issues do not yet concern the public debate.

Greece

There is a discrepancy between the legislation and the real possibilities of tolerance and recognition. Even though minorities can formally ask to build places of worship and open ethnic business, actually there are obstacles (e.g. to obtain the necessary documentation to open a place of worship causes delays, additional obligations are requested to start a business). Representative institutions of migrants are consultative, whereas political debates on the need to grant migrants local voting rights have been underway during the past five years. It is worth noting here that the economic crisis and the rise of the nationalist far right party Golden Dawn have exacerbated relations with minorities and particularly migrant communities.

Ireland

National legislation is particularly inclusive. Minorities are free to build their places of worship, ethnic business are active in many towns, some official institutions for the representation of migrants exist (even though they are only consultative bodies), and the legislation on local voting rights is one of the most inclusive in Europe. In contrast with many other European countries, there are neither influential anti-immigrants parties nor xenophobic movements. Intolerant events are isolated incidents.

Italy

Similarly to Spain, local policies have become more restrictive towards migrants in specific local contexts as regards the freedom of religion and economic freedom. For example, the construction of mosques is impeded by not giving building permits, while ethnic businesses are limited in their activities by introducing restrictions to their opening hours. Migrant representative institutions are consultative and local voting rights are granted to non-nationals only after 10 years of residence.

The Netherlands

Local policies regarding the freedom of religion and economic freedom are tolerant towards ethnic and religious minorities. Minorities can build places of worship and open ethnic business without restrictions. Institutions for the representation of minorities have a consultative character, and non-nationals can vote in local elections after 5 years of residence. In recent years, some interventions made at the national level

show a tendency towards a more restrictive and less tolerant approach to migrants and minorities. The case in point is the introduction of stricter rules about asylum seekers.

Spain

Spain is a new immigration country which until recently was characterized by significant tolerance towards migrants. There has been a turn towards a more restrictive approach in recent years, (e.g. the ban on *burqa* in Catalonia, the exclusion from municipal census of undocumented immigrants). The construction of mosques is also a debated issue, even though the freedom to establish new places of worship is legally recognized. At the political level there are only consultative bodies which represent migrants and voting rights are regulated on the basis of reciprocity clauses. Intolerant discourses have emerged in the political arena and have influenced local policies (which have become more restrictive).

PART 2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

To better understand each country's approach to migrant and minority integration, the local level is crucial. The local level is in fact the context in which institutions have to deal with practical problems and claims, expressed both by minorities and majorities' representatives (e.g. the opening of faith schools, places of worship, ethnic shops and activities, etc.).

The four indicators considered in this report let us focus on the local dimension and on particular issues that could lead to conflicts among minorities and majorities. They could be used as complementary to other indicators, such as the MIPEX or the EUDO indicators. In fact, the ACCEPT PLURALISM Indicators look at the policies but also at the practices (thanks to the empirical research done in the project); they analyze the local level and go deeply into some issues which are relevant at the local level and occur in people's everyday life. The analysis of the national legislation is not enough as in principle, most legislative frameworks are inclusive and tolerant towards migrants and minorities.

Nevertheless, when we take into account the local level, we realize that national rules are not always implemented.

Minorities' claims often provoke public and political debates, and city governments enact local policies which can exacerbate or bypass the national ones. Italy and Spain are cases in point. At the same time, restrictions enacted by national regulations may be opposed in their implementation at the local level (as in the Dutch case, for what concerns refugees).

Given the importance of the local level for the integration of migrants, refugees and minorities, the role of local civil society actors is particularly salient. The success of civil society actors in some countries (e.g. Italy, the Netherlands) shows their importance in the process of accommodating ethnic and religious diversities.

The application of these indicators has highlighted four important aspects in evaluating the countries' situations. First, the immigration history of each country influences its approach towards migrant minorities. Countries with an old immigration history (e.g. the Netherlands) seem to be more tolerant towards minorities, even though conflicts and tensions have increased in the last few years. Countries with a newer immigration history (e.g. Italy, Greece) seem to be less tolerant and less prepared to accommodate the claims and needs of migrant minorities. There are, however, other countries such as Ireland that are also new immigration countries and they have adopted a more inclusive and tolerant approach in comparison (e.g. on the legislation on voting rights), or Spain, which had a tolerant approach but is now becoming more restrictive.

Second, the presence of xenophobic political forces influences politics, the general climate and people's attitudes towards immigration. Immigration has become a politically sensitive issue, and xenophobic political parties have been influencing the political agenda of governments and traditional parties across Europe and particularly in Italy, Greece. Similarly, in the Netherlands, the xenophobic Party for Freedom has influenced the political arena and became the third largest political party in the 2010 elections. Finally, in Bulgaria, the rise of two populist parties (the GERB -Citizens for European Development of

Bulgaria, and the extreme nationalist party Attack) succeeded in limiting the voting rights of the Turkish minority. Among the six European countries considered here, the only exception is Ireland, a new immigration country where there is no real populist party.

The third aspect to take into account is the public perception and self-representation of the religious homogeneity of the country and its importance in defining the national culture. The perception of Greek and Italian majorities as a religiously homogeneous country, influences national and local policies, and renders the acceptance of different religious claims difficult. In Bulgaria, the Turkish minority religious identity is also treated with suspicion by the majority. Ireland is again an exception. Although the country is perceived as religiously quite homogeneous and it is a new immigration country, (public and/or political) tensions and conflicts on immigration issues have not yet emerged. This is partly due to the inexistence of xenophobic parties and movements.

Finally, the way in which each country's administration is structured is also relevant. Where local administrations have a certain degree of autonomy there is greater scope for local policies of exclusion to be pursued (Ambrosini 2012), and a sort of "localism of rights" may take place (as in Italy or Spain). The opposite is also possible: the autonomy of local authorities can favour the implementation of local policies aimed at opposing restrictive national policies (as in the case of the Netherlands, where some city governments bypassed the restrictive national rules on asylum seekers; or Spain, where in many cases local policies are more tolerant or favorable to migrants than national ones).

In addition to these four aspects, the role of the economic crisis should not be overlooked. In some countries (Greece, Spain) the crisis has led to a worsening of national migration policies and the general public's attitudes toward immigrants; by contrast, in other countries it has contributed to move the attention to other issues (e.g. in Italy, where the worries about immigration have decreased, probably also because of the change of government and of public discourses).

Regardless of the crisis, minority rights claims and tolerance towards cultural and religious diversities have grown in importance on the political agenda in the last few years. They have become sensitive issues, and they often are at the core of election campaigns and public debates.

Drawing from our research findings, we argue that there is no clear trend toward more tolerance; rather, there is a battlefield in which different positions compete. In this context, in addition to the political forces, institutions which monitor the democratic regimes (i.e. the courts) and civil society actors (pro-immigrants movements or movements against immigrants, trade unions and religious organizations, NGOs) grow in importance in the immigration governance. They contribute to the construction of more open and tolerant contexts, or more rigid and nationalist societies.

FURTHER READINGS AND COUNTRY REPORTS

The Role of Local Authorities in the Politics of Exclusion
By Elena Caneva and Maurizio Ambrosini, University of Milan (2012)
Download your copy from: http://www.accept-pluralism.eu/Dissemination/EuropeanPolicyBriefs.aspx

ACCEPT PLURALISM Tolerance Indicators Toolkit
By Anna Triandafyllidou, European University Institute (2013)
Download your copy from: http://www.accept-pluralism.eu/Research/ProjectReports/ToleranceIndicatorsToolkit/ToleranceIndicators.aspx

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Bulgaria
By Marko Hajdinjak and Maya Kosseva with Antonina Zhelyazkova, IMIR (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23257

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses and Practices in Greece
By Anna Triandafyllidou and Hara Kouki, European University Institute (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23261

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity in Ireland. Concepts and Practices
By Iseult Honohan and Nathalie Rougier, University College Dublin (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23258

Overview Report on Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Concepts and Practices in Italy
By Maurizio Ambrosini and Elena Caneva, University of Milan (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23259

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in the Netherlands
By Marcel Maussen with Thijs Bogers and Inge Versteegt, University of Amsterdam (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23514

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By Ricard Zapata-Barrero, Flora Burchianti, Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas, GRITIM – Universitat Pompeu Fabra (2012)
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About ACCEPT PLURALISM – project identity

Acronym	**ACCEPT PLURALISM**
Title	**Tolerance, Pluralism and Social Cohesion: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century in Europe**

Short Description

ACCEPT PLURALISM questions how much cultural diversity can be accommodated within liberal and secular democracies in Europe. The notions of tolerance, acceptance, respect and recognition are central to the project. ACCEPT PLURALISM looks at both native and immigrant minority groups.

Through comparative, theoretical and empirical analysis the project studies individuals, groups or practices for whom tolerance is sought but which we should not tolerate; of which we disapprove but which should be tolerated; and for which we ask to go beyond tolerance and achieve respect and recognition.

In particular, we investigate when, what and who is being not tolerated / tolerated / respected in 15 European countries; why this is happening in each case; the reasons that different social actors put forward for not tolerating / tolerating / respecting specific minority groups/individuals and specific practices. The project analyses practices, policies and institutions, and produces key messages for policy makers with a view to making European societies more respectful towards diversity.

Website	**www.accept-pluralism.eu**
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Funding Scheme	Small and medium-scale collaborative project
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Consortium	17 partners (15 countries)
Coordinator	European University Institute
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Person Responsible	Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou
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