

**ACCEPT**  
PLURALISM

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5. New Knowledge.  
Applying Tolerance Indicators

**APPLYING TOLERANCE  
INDICATORS:**

**ASSESSING MINORITY  
MOBILISATION AND  
REPRESENTATION**

Angéline Escafré-Dublet,  
CERI Sciences Po



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[www.accept-pluralism.eu](http://www.accept-pluralism.eu)  
[www.eui.eu/RSCAS](http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS)  
email: [anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu](mailto:anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu)

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# ASSESSING MINORITY MOBILISATION AND REPRESENTATION

## INTRODUCTION

The European Convention of Human Rights provides each European citizen with the right to be politically represented. Exercising this right, however, can be difficult for minority citizens with an immigrant background.

The problem can be illustrated by the experience of minority citizens in France and the United Kingdom, both European Union member states and signatories of the convention with lengthy histories of immigration. But new countries of immigration, such as Ireland, or newer EU member states, such as Bulgaria, illustrate interesting counterpoints that we wish to explore in this report.

European countries display contrasting traditions of minority representation. Some, such as the UK and Ireland have a tradition of making room for the political representation of particular identity, whereas France or Bulgaria, for instance have a more universalist stance and are reluctant to let particular interests be expressed in the political realm. However, the formation of minorities as a result of immigration introduces a new challenge for European countries and states' response to minority claims may vary according to the particularities of groups making such claims.

Are European countries more tolerant towards historic minorities than migration-related minorities? Are Muslims a special case?

This report evaluates level of acceptance of minority mobilization with regards to minority groups resulting from immigration in **Bulgaria, France, Ireland**, and the **UK**.

## PART 1. THE INDICATORS

The level of acceptance of each country with regards to the mobilisation of migration related minorities will be evaluated with the two following indicators taken from the ACCEPT PLURALISM Tolerance Indicators Toolkit.

**Indicator 6.5 Minority mobilisation and claims-making**

**Indicator 6.6 Representation of minority politicians in parliament**

### 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 (for a given time period) on this aspect.

Scores represent contextual judgments by experts based on an interpretation of qualitative research and the available knowledge about the respective society in this respect backed by reference to relevant sources listed at the end of this comparative assessment. The “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 *ipso 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 can only be interpreted in a comparative way in relation to the explications and reasons provided.

In light of the above this report presents the scores on the two selected indicators in the following section. 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](http://www.accept-pluralism.eu)

## INDICATOR 6.5 MINORITY MOBILISATION AND CLAIMS-MAKING

<b>LOW – non tolerance</b>	Minority mobilizations or claims-making are generally considered illegitimate and/or formally disqualified. There is no place in political life for positions or grievances that are articulated on the basis of minority identities or concerns.
<b>MEDIUM – minimal tolerance</b>	There are no formal mechanisms to exclude a minority presence in politics, but an atmosphere that discourages activists from emphasizing concerns and grievances that specifically pertain to their minority position.
<b>HIGH – acceptance</b>	Political claims and grievances that are put forward by minority/immigrant groups are considered to be as valid as any other political position. Minority groups are free to take part in political life and to mobilize/associate on the basis of the political identities they choose.

**Table 1. Applying Indicator 6.5 Minority mobilisation and claims-making to four European countries**

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	<b>Low</b>	Despite a formal interdiction of mobilization on the basis of ethnic or religious affiliation, minority representatives have continuously expressed their specific interest and can be politically active. In recent years, there is a tendency however, to be less acceptant of minority claim making.
France	<b>Low</b>	There is a general disqualification of minority mobilization and claim-making.
Ireland	<b>Medium/ High</b>	Minorities are free to take part in political life, but some minorities are not represented at all (Travellers).
UK	<b>High</b>	The mobilization and expression of specific interest is accepted, however Muslim claims may face specific instances of stigmatization.

## INDICATOR 6.6 REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY POLITICIANS IN PARLIAMENT

<b>LOW – non tolerance</b>	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are not represented or severely underrepresented in parliament (the proportion of representatives in parliament is less than one third of the overall proportion of ethnic or native minority groups in society)
<b>MEDIUM – minimal tolerance</b>	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are present, but underrepresented in parliament (proportion of representatives in parliament is between one third and two thirds of the overall proportion of ethnic or native minority groups in society)
<b>HIGH – acceptance</b>	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are fully or almost fully represented in parliament (more than two thirds of the overall proportion of ethnic or native minority groups in society).

**Table 2. Applying Indicator 6.6 Representation of minority politicians in parliament to four European countries**

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	<b>High/</b> <b>Low</b>	High for Turks, Low for other minorities.
France	<b>Low</b>	Less than a third of the overall proportion of people with an immigrant background is represented in Parliament.
Ireland	<b>Medium</b>	One Muslim representative (1992-1997), 2 Protestant representative currently, but no Travellers representative.
UK	<b>Medium</b>	4 % of minority representatives in the Parliament.

**Table 3. Comparative country overview**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Indicator 6.5 Minority mobilisation and claims-making</b>	<b>Indicator 6.6 Representation of minority politicians in parliament</b>
Bulgaria	<b>Low</b>	<b>High/</b> <b>Low</b>
France	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>
Ireland	<b>Medium/ High</b>	<b>Medium</b>
UK	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>



## PART 2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Ireland and the United Kingdom score comparatively higher in terms of acceptance of minority mobilization and representation than France and Bulgaria. This has to do with the different political opportunity structures available to minorities in each of these countries. France and Bulgaria have a relatively less open structure for minority mobilization due to universalist principles anchored in their respective constitutions and political cultures. By contrast, Ireland and the UK have a tradition of representing minorities in their political institutions.

However, if we were to take these political principles at face value, Ireland and the UK should stand at the right opposite of Bulgaria and France, which is not the case. Actually, fieldwork and the analysis of minority mobilization and representation in practice indicate a nuanced picture, rather than the opposition between different 'paradigms' of minority politics.

First, there are differential treatments applied to different minority groups, depending on whether their presence can be traced back to centuries of cohabitation (the Travellers of Ireland, the Turks of Bulgaria) or are the result of past decades of immigration (Muslims in France and in the UK). It matters whether minorities have historically positioned themselves as political actors (the Turks of Bulgaria, for instance) or not (the Travellers of Ireland). This may be related to the socio-economic profile of the group in question, its numerical significance, but also its history of claims-making. A theoretical openness to minority claims does not protect minority groups that are perceived as less legitimate from the experience of stigmatization in practice (the Muslims in the UK).

Second, the formal closeness of the French and Bulgarian opportunity structure to minority claims-making did not prevent mobilizations on the part of minority activists. Fieldwork in France demonstrated that Muslim organizations have learned to articulate their claims in terms that are compatible with the French context. At the same time, an observation of political practices in Bulgaria indicates an active participation of Turkish minorities in national politics.

From a European perspective, we can conclude that minority claims may come in various forms and through various channels that are particular to political frameworks and political cultures, but are not determined by the first principles of 'national models'. European countries that have historically made room for minority groups might be better equipped to face the challenge of migration-related minority claims. However, they are not immune from stigmatizing Muslims.

## FURTHER READINGS AND COUNTRY REPORTS

### Minority Mobilization in the United Kingdom and France

By Angéline Escafré-Dublet and Rosa Ng, CERI Sciences Po', Paris (2012)

Download your copy from: <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/24317>

### 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>

### Concepts and Practices of Tolerance in France

By Riva Kastoryano and Angéline Escafré-Dublet, CERI Sciences Po', Paris (2012)

Download your copy from: <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23254>

### 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>

### Tolerance and Cultural Diversity in the UK

By Jan Dobbernack, Tariq Modood and Nasar Meer, University of Bristol (2012)

Download your copy from: <http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23256>

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Honohan, I., & Rougier, N. (2012). The Embodiment of Tolerance in Discourses and Practices addressing Cultural and Religious Diversity in the Political Sphere in Ireland. Florence: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) (2009). Directory of Migrant Led Organisations, Second Edition. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland.

Office for National Statistics. (2012) Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011. Available online at [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776\\_290558.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_290558.pdf), accessed on 15 December 2012.

Oireachtas website: <http://www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/>

Web site of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, <http://www.parliament.bg/en/parliamentarygroups>

## About ACCEPT PLURALISM – project identity

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>ACCEPT PLURALISM</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Tolerance, Pluralism and Social Cohesion: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century in Europe</b>
<b>Short Description</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.accept-pluralism.eu">www.accept-pluralism.eu</a>
<b>Duration</b>	March 2010-May 2013 (39 months)
<b>Funding Scheme</b>	Small and medium-scale collaborative project
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<b>Consortium</b>	17 partners (15 countries)
<b>Coordinator</b>	European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
<b>Person Responsible</b>	Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou
<b>EC officer</b>	Ms. Louisa Anastopoulou, Project Officer, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission