

# Can Immigrant Integration Policies Mitigate the Risk of Radicalization?

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# Roadmap

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- ▶ Motivation and Research Question
- ▶ Literature review
- ▶ Approach and Methodology
- ▶ Research Gaps/Questions

# Motivation – Whither Integration Policy?

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- ▶ **Implicit connection between immigrant integration policy and violent extremism in popular discourse**
  - ▶ On one hand, notion that facilitating integration might assist in decreasing likelihood of radicalization. Conversely, idea that the wrong kind of policy creates the conditions that enable radicalization
- ▶ **Academic discussions of immigrant integration generally do not delve into the study of violent extremism (and vice versa)**
  - ▶ Opportunity to build linkages between these literatures
- ▶ **The inherent challenge of integrating very large numbers of migrants and refugees has been exacerbated by recent violent extremist attacks**
  - ▶ There is a real need to think through the relationship between integration policy and the prevention of violent extremism

# Motivation – The Limits of Integration?

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- ▶ What of violent extremism undertaken by otherwise “integrated” individuals?
  - ▶ Literature on radicalization makes it clear that there is no common socio-economic profile of violent extremists
- ▶ What do such cases suggest about the ability of integration policy to mitigate the risk of radicalization?
  - ▶ What can we reasonably expect of integration policy with respect to mitigating the risk of radicalization?
  - ▶ As importantly, might certain inflections of integration policy exacerbate risks?

# Research Question

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- ▶ What is the role of integration policies in mitigating the risk of radicalization to violent extremism among migrants and the second generation?
- ▶ Preliminary considerations:
  - ▶ What is integration? What is integration policy?
  - ▶ Who does it apply to?
  - ▶ How is it supposed to mitigate the risk of radicalization?
  - ▶ Given what we know about radicalization to violent extremism, are these realistic/sensible expectations?

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- ▶ Motivation and Research Question
- ▶ Literature review
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Expected results

# Literature – What is Integration?

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- ▶ “Integration occurs when all barriers to full participation in a society have been dismantled” (Kymlicka 1995)
  - ▶ Integration measured with respect to participation in labor market, housing, education, civic life/politics
- ▶ But how do we know that someone is **truly** integrated?
  - ▶ Integration, as it is usually deployed, is a relational concept: “With the passage of time and the exertion of effort, immigrants come to resemble ‘natives’ – the greater the resemblance, the greater the [putative] degree of integration” (Triadafilopoulos 2013).

# Integration and Social Cohesion

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- ▶ “Integration, then, is also a highly normative concept. A well integrated immigrant is employed, makes a decent living, supports and identifies with his or her adopted country, is able and willing to naturalize and, having done so, participates politically through voting, running for elected office, and taking part in civil society organizations. The poorly integrated immigrant exhibits precisely the opposite characteristics and attitudes: he or she is under- or unemployed, poor, does not identify with his or her adopted country (and may even be actively hostile to it), does not speak its official language(s) well, and does not take part in its political life. At an extreme, the poorly integrated immigrant constitutes a threat to the proper functioning of the receiving society – to its ‘social cohesion’” (Triadafilopoulos 2013)



# Literature – Integration Policy

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- ▶ **Multiculturalism vs. Civic Integration**
  - ▶ Multiculturalism: Integration through accommodation and support for a degree of cultural maintenance
  - ▶ Civic Integration: Integration through language acquisition and adoption of core civic values (e.g. gender equality)
    - ▶ Proponents see civic integration as being more ‘muscular’
- ▶ **Measuring Integration – Indices**
  - ▶ MPI, MIPEX, CIVIX, etc.
- ▶ **Boundary Approaches: Crossing, Blurring and Shifting**
  - ▶ What are the dynamics of integration, especially as regards language and religion?
  - ▶ Emphasis on barriers to participation and efforts to either blur or harden boundaries through policy interventions

# Literature – Radicalization to Violent Extremism

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## ▶ Theories of Anomie

- ▶ “Radicalization is not a reaction to political repression or economic deprivation in any simple sense.... Instead...radicalization occurs as individuals seek to reconstruct a lost identity in a perceived hostile and confusing world” (Dalgaard Nielsen 2010)

## ▶ Networks

- ▶ “Violent radicalization is about who you know – radical ideas are transmitted by social networks and violent radicalization takes place within smaller groups” (Dalgaard Nielsen 2010)

## ▶ Profiling: Reconstructing Individual Motivations

- ▶ Focus on motivations and catalysts for action at the individual level

- ▶ **Bottom Line: No clear explanation of why a very few individuals engage in violent extremism while the overwhelming majority of similarly situated individuals do not**

# Literature – Case Studies: Integration Policy and Counter-Radicalization Strategies

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- ▶ Granting Islamic communities a seat at the corporatist table in Germany, France, Italy etc. (Jonathan Laurence)
- ▶ “Multicultural Governance” at the local level – building relationships between public actors and migrant communities (Triadafilopoulos and Korteweg)
- ▶ Shift to “Community Cohesion” in Britain
- ▶ A “National Integration Plan” in Germany
- ▶ Community-based radicalization prevention strategies (Britain, Canada, Stuttgart, etc.)

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# Approach and Methodology – Questions to Explore and Hypotheses to Test

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- ▶ Question 1: What are the prevailing **assumptions** regarding the relationship between integration policy and the mitigation of risk to violent extremism?
  - ▶ Among the public, politicians/policymakers and academics
- ▶ Question 2: What does the literature on radicalization suggest about these assumption?
- ▶ Hypothesis 1: The link between immigrant integration policy and the mitigation of radicalization to violent extremism is tenuous – no clear path forward
- ▶ Question 3: If hypothesis 1 is born out, what, if any role, can integration policy play?

# Approach and Methodology – Argument/Recommendation 1

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- ▶ **Argument/Recommendation I: Do no harm!**
  - ▶ Encourage policies that assist in enabling participation: language acquisition, securing housing and employment, navigating public services – may have not “solve” the problem but are worthwhile regardless
  - ▶ Encourage multicultural governance initiatives: Work with communities to address issues of mutual concern, including radicalization – through partnerships and not top-down, command-and-control initiatives
  - ▶ Resist “integration” policies that activate group boundaries, inflame passions, and likely discourage integration
    - ▶ Bans, prohibitions, boundary imposition for imposition’s sake: e.g. withdrawing pork free meal options for school children in name of encouraging secularism

# Approach and Methodology – The Paradox of Integration Policymaking

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- ▶ At the moment, in many countries, the political incentives for introducing integration policies that are more likely to do good are low; the opposite is true for policies that are likely to do harm
  - ▶ Policies based on cooperation and compromise are easy targets for populist politicians who prefer to seize the moment by “laying down the law”
  - ▶ There are, sadly, too many examples to cite
- ▶ Therefore, highlight cases where enlightened policy has been pursued, especially at the local level – what factors account for these outcomes and how might they be replicated elsewhere?
  - ▶ Canada: Settlement of Syrian refugees
  - ▶ Multicultural governance initiatives at local level in Germany, Netherlands, Britain
  - ▶ Anti-radicalization programs that enjoy community support

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# Research Gaps and Questions

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- ▶ **What of the radicalization of non-migrants/second generation?**
  - ▶ Immigration raises threat of violent extremism perpetrated **against** migrants, ethnic-religious minorities and supporters of multiculturalism
  - ▶ There is a clear link between migration and this form of extremism: How might it be integrated into a paper focusing on immigrant integration? How does Anders Behring Breivik fit into our discussion?
- ▶ **How important is economic integration?**
  - ▶ Given the very dire condition of many immigrant groups in Western Europe, one might expect **MORE** violent radicalization; is the emphasis on economic integration overstated, or is work on radicalization downplaying the importance of integration, generally, and economic integration, in particular?
- ▶ **Are policies aimed at building civic competencies at all useful or might they be doing more harm than good?**