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Social networks, social capital and migrant integration at local level

European literature review

Marta Kindler with Vesselina Ratcheva and Maria Piechowska

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Abstract

This Working Paper examines the state of knowledge concerning the relationships between social networks, social capital and migrant integration at local level. Using a wide range of literature it focuses upon the ways in which social networks and social capital have been found to promote or hinder integration of third country nationals (migrants and refugees) into their local neighbourhood and communities across the European Union. The paper presents in brief the main concepts and debates of the reviewed studies. It also discusses the following topics found in the literature: the role of ethnic networks in social and economic integration, the influence of inter-ethnic contact in mixed neighbourhoods on building social capital, and how policy and legislative contexts affect development of social capital.

Keywords

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Introduction

This paper examines the state of knowledge concerning the relationships between social networks, social capital and migrant integration at local level. Using a wide range of literature it focuses upon the ways in which social networks and social capital have been found to promote or hinder integration of third country nationals (migrants and refugees) into their local neighbourhood and communities across the European Union. Acknowledging the controversies around the concept of integration, as well as the confusion around defining anything social (for example, social ties) as social capital, the paper presents in brief the main concepts of the reviewed studies and outlines the main debates of the reviewed literature (section 2). The paper continues with a synopsis of the role of different social networks in the development and mobilisation of social capital (section 3). It follows with the discussion of the influence of inter-ethnic contact in mixed neighbourhoods on building social capital, including consideration of the impact of the quality and character of neighbourhoods (section 4). Finally, it addresses policy contexts and how they affect development of social capital, among other things by the formation of migrant associations, and thus, integration at the local level (section 5).

In this paper migrants and refugees are defined as third country nationals, born outside their country of residence. A number of important texts have been intentionally omitted in the attempt to keep the focus of this review to local level studies undertaken within the past decade.

Concepts, main debates and methodological approaches

The two key components – the structural (including social networks) and the cognitive or attitudinal (shared norms, trust, reciprocity) - that run through most of the writings on social capital are captured in the definitions by Pierre Bourdieu and by Robert Putnam. Bourdieu (1986: 249) defined the concept as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition'. Putnam's (2007) definition of social capital extends this to include 'social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness'. However, when analysing the role of social capital in migrant integration, it is important also to mention the definition by Coleman (1990: 305), according to whom social capital constitutes 'resources that can be used by the actors to realise their interests'. The author defines social capital by its function. It is 'a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure'. Thus, for social capital to exist, relations among persons have to be changed in order to facilitate action. Coleman analyses the mechanisms that generate social capital (reciprocity expectations and group enforcement of norms), the consequences of possessing social capital (privileged access to information) and the social organisation that provides the context for both resources and effects to materialise (Portes 1998). According to Coleman (1990: 306), there are two main sources of social capital: consumerist motivation (internalised norms, bounded solidarity) and instrumental motivation (reciprocity exchange, enforceable trust). The expectation of reciprocity by those who agreed to provide someone with access to information depends on how far the possessor of social capital (the person making the claims) feels obliged to repay, when and in what form. This is influenced by the level of trustworthiness of the social environment. Thus, there are the possessors of social capital (those

making claims), the sources of social capital (those agreeing to these demands) and the resources themselves. Social capital functions among other things as a source of control (Coleman 1990) and a source of resources mediated by non-family networks (Bourdieu1986), facilitating access to jobs, market and loans.

Following Coleman, Anthias and Cederberg (2009) underline that social capital is not co-terminous with resources per se. The key is being able to use these resources for social advancement. That is why Kitching *et al.* , when describing ethnic diasporas as a form of social capital, also define social capital not only as 'resources', but also as 'opportunities available to agents occupying particular positions' (2009: 694). Thus, evaluating the quality and variety of social ties and networks is crucial in assessing the usefulness of social capital. Dahinden (2013), utilising network theory, refers to network social capital as one possible form of social capital and an asset in a network – underlining the importance of resources (variety and quality of contacts) present in networks. The more differentiated social relations, the better the quality of social capital. Thus, those networks that are characterised by a high variety of diverse ties, both 'strong and weak ties' (Granovetter 1973), and by a wide range of ties with qualitatively different connections to diverse others (in terms of gender, ethnicity, class, or more generally in terms of status, but also in terms of roles – kin, friends, etc.) are said to represent better network social capital. According to Dahinden, embeddedness in social relations produces network boundaries (i. e. structures of membership) according to the so-called homophily principle – the preference to interact with similar others (McPherson *et al.* 2001). Most of the studies also use the distinction developed by Putnam between bonding capital, connecting an individual to his/her narrow group, and bridging capital, connecting an individual to broader society.

One of the main debates in the literature continues to be to what extent social capital leads through inclusion or exclusion to advantage or disadvantage. Thus, whether bonding social capital – strengthening community groups, both migrant and non-migrant – acts as a barrier to the bridging capital (seen as necessary for integration) or rather is conducive to building bridges with people outside the group and thus to a cohesive society. A number of studies, following Putnam's US based findings that high levels of diversity undermine social capital and lead to 'hunkering down' and a withdrawal from 'collective life', attempt to examine if and how ethnic diversity is negatively related to social capital in a European context. Some studies provide only partial evidence supporting Putnam's findings, while others claim that there is no evidence at the local level in Europe. A critical approach to this debate is given by Amin (2005) who claims that the question to be asked is not whether there is something wrong with a community that produces bonding social capital rather than bridging, but the focus should be on 'how community takes on different meanings in different conditions of economic and social well-being and in different institutional settings'.

Another major topic that appears in the literature is the role of ethnic networks in migrants' economic activity, their impact on economic and social integration at the local level. In general, it is believed that the social capital which migrants mobilise from their networks helps them find better jobs – thus social capital is converted into economic capital (Drever and Hoffmeister 2008; Engbersen *et al.* 2006; Van Meeteren *et al.* 2009). However, finding a job in an ethnic niche may not be conducive to successful economic integration as it may restrict individuals' access to opportunities and confine them to low-paid employment. thus undermining prospects for socio-economic mobility.

In many of the reviewed studies a very general notion of integration is given, referring to societal integration, in most cases following a Durkheimian notion of cohesion. Others focus on individual integration, analysing such aspects as the level of labour market participation or educational attainment. A few studies integrate both the group or community and individual level of integration (see Tillie 2004; Laurence 2011).

No studies were located that referred explicitly to 'local integration' or integration 'at local level', although several studies focus on the level of region, city and neighbourhood, and refer to 'community cohesion' (see Amin 2005; Laurence and Heath 2008). Few authors give precise definitions of particular types of integration (see for example Tillie 2004 or Pilati 2012 for political integration) or critically approach existing definitions and attempt to redefine integration (for example, the notion of 'everyday integration' by Cherti and McNeil 2012). Ager and Strang (2008) developed a conceptual framework of what is perceived as 'successful' integration, which includes processes of social connection – social bonds, bridges and links – and barriers to such connections in the community. However, social capital is presented by these authors in the context of interrelated integration domains, thus rightly avoiding the assumption that integration and social cohesion can be achieved through social connection alone. According to Ager and Strang (2008), processes of social connection (various forms of social ties, networks and social capital) provide what they refer to as 'connective tissue' (p. 177), and relate to outcomes of integration in employment, housing, education, health and other sectors.

The role of social networks in the development and mobilisation of the different types of social capital

Types of social networks

Types of networks may be related to the length of residence of migrants and the size of the migrant group, with social capital playing a crucial role in the initial period of migration when the migrant group is still small. For example looking at Polish migrants in Brussels, Grzymała-Kazłowska (2005) found the initial broad co-operation among co-ethnics changed over time and with size of the group into competition and reliance on family and close kin. Roggeveen and van Meeteren (2013) also point to the establishment of the migrant group as crucial in the different role of social networks. In their study of the Brazilian community in Amsterdam, they found that lack of legal status (strongly linked to establishment) and education were the main barriers for social capital to be mobilised and to circulate via networks. The division between established migrants and newcomers was confirmed by the results of Dahinden's (2013) research into the personal social networks of 250 inhabitants (migrants and non-migrants) of a small city in Switzerland. Dahinden's findings point to the difference between established groups and newcomers, with established groups – primarily of transnational guest workers who have already experienced upward mobility – closing ranks, stigmatising the newcomers, keeping them at the bottom of the social hierarchy and thus reinforcing internal cohesion.

Dahinden (2013) analysed not only the networks of migrants, but of all inhabitants. She found high volumes of network social capital were conditioned by nationality (country of origin), level of education, religion, type of mobility and level of earnings. The most important factors segregating

networks are—in this order—nationality, regional origin, education and residence status. However, Dahinden's (2013) study shows that ethnicity was relevant within a boundary perspective solely in combination with other categories—for instance, with education, establishment or residence permit.

According to Dahinden (2013), highly educated migrants were strongly embedded in transnational networks but not very well anchored in the city. She points to this enhanced mobility of the highly skilled as a challenge—theoretically but also on a policy level. Although these migrants were not integrated into the local context, it made no sense to speak of non-integration, given their high network, economic and cultural capital.

Santelli (2012) studied the labour market integration of young adults of Maghrebi origin from the French *banlieues* (suburbs), and created a typology of occupational integration, which was later compared to the parents' occupational status in order to track social mobility. The typology summarises modes of entry into the labour market accessed through place of residence and educational qualification. From Santelli's analysis, for three of her 'types' social networks play a considerable role as a source of social capital. The second type ('the insecure moving towards emancipation') was integrated into a denser network of social relations, especially family network, which they used as a resource (assistance, support, role models – particularly in the case of family businesses) to change their employment situation. The next type, 'the invisible proletarians', apart from a more structured social environment – family – also received support or assistance from teachers, advisors at educational institutions and social services. Santelli calls those interactions 'milestones towards entry into adulthood'. They felt they belonged to society, which occurred thanks to reaching a stable position more quickly both through employment and sociability networks and activities such as sport. And finally, young adults belonging to the fifth type ('the stable employed'), experienced upward occupational mobility, thanks to family support, and broad extended sociability networks which facilitated integration into social groups outside the banlieue neighbourhood. However, although they lived outside the neighbourhood, they were convinced that having lived in the banlieue environment provided them with essential life skills.

Types of network and capital possessed and how they are utilised may differ substantially by gender. Looking at refugees in the West Midlands, Goodson and Phillimore (2008) found that women were more likely to develop networks around schools and home while men built networks around employment. Further gender differences were found when exploring the roles of networks for undocumented migrants. Men were more likely to connect with co-ethnic groups while women depended on a smaller network of friends and civil society organisations. Indeed while men could use networks to access informal work which could help them pay their way, women were often asked for sexual favours in exchange for resources (Phillimore 2010). Gender differences also surface in Cheung and Phillimore's (2013) analysis of the UK's Survey of New Refugees, with men and women both connecting with, and seeking help from, friends, family and faith organisations but accessing different kinds of resources from those networks.

Ethnic or diaspora-based networks as social capital

Danzer and Ulku (2011) analysed the joint impact of integration as well as local ethnic, familial and transnational networks on the economic success of Turkish immigrants in Berlin. According to their results local (ethnic and familial) networks were positively associated with the economic success of

'unintegrated' migrants, while maintaining a transnational ethnic network was negatively correlated with economic integration. The authors argued that integration was a choice coming at a certain cost. Poorer migrants used ethnic networks to facilitate earning money (providing them with access to ethnic goods, labour market niches and informal insurance) rather than attempting to integrate (and gain access to the labour market in general). For them using local networks was the optimal economic strategy, while wider integration was a positive determinant of economic success only for those migrants who were already wealthier.

Drever and Hoffmeister (2008) analysed the role of social capital in finding employment for migrants living in the 20 largest cities in Germany, and discovered that nearly half of all migrant-origin job changers found their positions through 'networks and that the most vulnerable to unemployment – the young and the less educated – were especially likely to rely on them. Also, jobs found through networks were as likely to lead to improved working conditions as jobs acquired through more formal means' (p. 425). Social networks served as a functional equivalent to the formal degrees and training migrants had difficulty obtaining in Germany. The neighbourhoods in which persons relying on networks lived had only a slightly higher percentage of non-nationals than the others. They found that 'the less assimilated (as measured by whether a person of German nationality was listed among an immigrant-origin's three closest friends) were more likely to end up in jobs involving mundane tasks, otherwise the ethnic makeup of an immigrant's network affected neither the conditions of employment obtained nor the improvement in working conditions' (p. 442). These findings contradict Jones *et al.* (2012), who examined changes in ethnic minority businesses in new migrant firms in the East Midlands region (UK) and claimed that only a radical change in resources made a difference in the functioning of migrants in the labour market.

According to Kitching *et al.* (2009) researching Chinese and Vietnamese businesses owners (first-generation migrants) in London, commercial exploitation of ethnic diaspora-based networks meant that 'under certain conditions, diaspora-based networks enable higher levels of business competitiveness'. However, the exploitation of networks was dependent on the character of the diaspora or migrant community – its size, geographical and sectoral location. For that reason, with a diaspora having restricted resources and markets, networks might actually constrain business competitiveness. Breaking out of ethnic market niches required business owners to exploit diaspora-based and non-diaspora networks, including the regulatory context, and depended on owners' capacities and motivations to do so as well as finance, skills (including English language skills) and time.

Anthias and Cederberg (2009) found ethnic ties were a form of social capital used in self-employment. Employment of ethnic staff meant an assumption of trust and facility in communication. Level of education affected links to the ethnic community and use of ethnic ties as social capital. Those educated in the UK were distanced from their ethnic community (lack of direct identification) and instrumentally used ethnicity for the development of their business.

For ethnic entrepreneurs, their minority position and the low valuation of the networks with which they are involved may have given them poor access to dominant networks (Anthias and Cederberg 2009). The negative role of social networks was also visible in the study with regard to women migrants, who saw them as a form of social control by the ethnic community and thus were more selective in the reproduction and transmission of ethnicity. Holgate *et al.* (2012), studying the work-

related aspects of self-help networks and community organisations of Kurds in Hackney (London), points to the link between the level of exploitation at work and the tight character of social networks (mainly based on kin).

Whether one is first or second generation has an impact on the attitude toward the ethnic community and dominant ethnic group (Anthias and Cederberg 2009). They find that being second generation was flagged as a source of distance from the 'traditional' and thereby 'less modern' way of life by the first generation. Here there is a distancing from both the main society and migrant ways of life and a sense of belonging to something that is neither one nor the other.

From diversity to deprivation: what impacts social cohesion and neighbourhood attachment

Diversity, compositional effect or beyond: mixed neighbourhoods and social cohesion

Lancee and Dronkers (2011) found, after controlling for economic disadvantage, partial support for Putnam's thesis: in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods in the Netherlands mutual contacts declined among all residents. According to Gijsberts *et al.* (2012), studying the relationship between ethnic diversity (in socio-graphically defined neighbourhoods) and four dimensions of social cohesion (trust, informal help, voluntary work, and neighbourhood contacts) for the 50 largest cities in the Netherlands, ethnic diversity (the presence of many ethnic minority groups) had a negative effect on the degree of mutual contacts in the neighbourhood. However, they did not find any impact of ethnic diversity for other dimensions of cohesion. This contrasts with the findings by Lancee and Dronkers (2011), who claim that while diversity can undermine mutual contacts, it can also build various aspects of trust. For example, economic diversity positively impacts on trust in the neighbourhood and inter-ethnic trust. They refer to the inter-group contact theory exploring whether diversity in the neighbourhood fosters or discourages social trust and find it depends on equal status between groups, common goals to be reached, inter-group cooperation, support of laws and customs and the potential for friendship. They see as an explanation the different values and norms that accompany ethnic and religious diversity. Laurence and Heath (2008) point to the character of ethnic diversity and found 'Once other factors are accounted for, ethnic diversity is, in most cases, positively associated with community cohesion' (p. 7). The positive effect of diversity partly results from increased proportions of inter-ethnic friendships. This emphasis on friendship contrasts with the approach by van Eijk (2012), who claim that neighbourly relations are not based on affective (involving emotions), but on affinitive ties. He underlines that 'neighbour interactions are often shaped by chance encounters and ideas about "good neighbouring" rather than by affectivity or attempts to establish friendships. Many respondents did not seek connectedness with their neighbours and maintained neighbourly relations despite interpersonal differences or dissatisfaction with the neighbourhood' (p. 3022). Laurence and Heath (2008) point to the importance of the type of ethnic mix in an area: a positive predictor of cohesion is living in areas which have a great variety of residents from different ethnic groups, while a negative predictor is an increasing number of migrants born outside of the UK. Laurence (2011; 2013) on the one hand shows that increasing ethnic diversity in a community was related to inhabitants reporting lower levels of social capital, but at the same time inhabitants of such communities were also likely to have more positive interethnic contact and interethnic ties in their social networks. Those with 'bridging' ties experienced the effect

of rising diversity less negatively than those without such ties. Thus, 'diversity erodes interconnectedness and the level of interaction between community members, as it is those who have no 'bridging' ties (who are therefore less likely to be connected in a diverse community) that experience the lowest level of social capital' (Laurence 2011).

Meanwhile, according to Gijsberts *et al.* (2012) the fact that trust in others, doing voluntary work, and giving informal help are all lower in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods is due to more people living in these neighbourhoods who achieve low scores on those dimensions. This is thus a compositional effect, not a diversity effect. There is less social cohesion in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, but this is simply because more people live in these neighbourhoods who are in a disadvantaged position. A different finding comes from Boschman (2012) – ethnic composition of the neighbourhood studied had no effect on contact, so segregation at neighbourhood level did not necessarily hinder integration. Her results indicate that globalisation and communication technology have diminished the influence of the neighbourhood on contact between individuals. Thus, contrary to earlier research, Boschman does not expect the share of Dutch people within the neighbourhood to have a significant influence on interethnic contact. Similar findings are found in the UK in Clayton's (2012) study of the city of Leicester, as well as in Petermann's (2013) study of spatial contexts on inter-ethnic contact in Germany. These findings have significant impact on restructuring policies, attempting to enhance interethnic contact.

Sturgis *et al.* (2013), looking at the perceived level of social cohesion in neighbourhoods by residents in London, showed that when area-level economic deprivation was controlled for, diversity emerged as a positive predictor of social cohesion. Meanwhile, ethnic segregation in communities was associated with lower levels of expressed social cohesion. These authors point to the overlooked part of Putnam's (2007) original thesis that 'in the short run there is a trade-off between diversity and community, but that over time wise policies (public and private) can ameliorate that trade-off. ' Their findings, that ethnic diversity seems to be challenging for majority white cohorts who were raised with less contact with ethnic minority groups, confirm Putnam's expectation. They claim that once adequate account is taken of the spatial distribution of migrant groups in neighbourhoods and the degree of social deprivation, ethnic diversity increases community cohesion and trust. This is to some extent confirmed in the study by Lolle and Torpe (2011) based on data from eight European capital cities (Paris, London, Vienna, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Amsterdam/Rotterdam and Berlin). They claim that it is not generally the case in Europe that trust is less among the ethnic majority population living in ethnically mixed areas.

Sturgis *et al.* (2013) point to the moderating effect of age on the relation between diversity and social cohesion – 'the positive effect of diversity and the negative effect of segregation among the youngest adults both weaken over successive cohorts, until the direction of the association is reversed among the oldest residents of London's neighbourhoods' (p. 17). The study by Schaeffer (2013), analysing the roles of children and interethnic partners in explaining inter-ethnic neighbourhood acquaintances, finds people living in regions with larger shares of children had more inter-ethnic neighbourhood acquaintances. He underlines the importance of context, however – 'the brokering role of inter-ethnic partners is evident particularly in interaction with interethnic encounters at local bars and restaurants, while that of children is evident particularly given their frequent inter-ethnic encounters in public parks and playgrounds' (p. 1219).

A number of authors came to the conclusion that diversity in the neighbourhood meant something different and had a different impact for the social capital of migrants and native inhabitants. According to Lancee and Dronkers (2011), for natives, ethnic diversity was positively associated with interethnic trust, whereas for migrants there was no effect. Religious diversity negatively affected the quality of contact of natives with neighbours and inter-ethnic trust, whereas for migrants this effect was positive. The same conclusion was reached in the comparative study of 18 urban areas in different European cities (Górny and Torunczyk-Ruiz 2014). Having interethnic relations 'neutralised' the eroding effect of ethnic diversity on neighbourhood attachment for natives, while the opposite was the case for migrants - having no inter-ethnic relations 'neutralised' the negative effect of ethnic diversity on neighbourhood attachment.

Neighbourhood structure and quality

Letki (2008), looking at the impact of racial context on various dimensions of social capital in British neighbourhoods, found when the association between racial diversity and economic deprivation was accounted for, there was no evidence of the eroding effect of racial diversity on interactions within local communities. According to Letki there was no deficiency of social capital networks in diverse communities, but a shortage of them in disadvantaged ones. The same was found by Laurence and Heath (2008), who systematically examined community cohesion at the individual and the community level in the UK and claim 'irrespective of the level of ethnic diversity in a community, disadvantage consistently undermines perceptions of cohesion'. More importantly, deprived areas that are diverse have actually higher levels of cohesion than deprived, homogenous 'White areas'. They recommend reducing individual level of disadvantage (a negative predictor of cohesion) by increasing income or improving the level of qualifications. In terms of inclusion and ability to use resources, the studied group showed that 'feeling able to influence local decisions is a strong positive predictor of community cohesion' (p. 8). Those individuals who engaged in volunteering had more positive views on cohesion.

Fleischmann *et al.* (2011) analyse the impact of neighbourhood stability and quality on educational attainment of second generation migrants. The assumption is (based on previous research results) that stable residential areas are more conducive to the development of local social support networks of co-ethnics and that the quality of the neighbourhood has an impact on the so-called positive ethnic density effects, meaning that co-ethnic neighbours gain access to valuable local resources via social connections, which in turn impact on individual outcomes such as school completion. Overall, the authors found that 'ethnic educational inequality in Belgium is systematically linked to the ethnic stratification of municipalities in terms of residential stability and quality' (p. 421). The authors compared the housing situation of migrants. Neighbourhood structure may turn the presence of co-ethnic neighbours into an advantage or a disadvantage for the second generation. According to these results, above a certain threshold of neighbourhood stability, Turkish migrants effectively supported their children through local co-ethnic networks, improving secondary school completion. The 'social enclave' model – focusing on co-ethnic social capital and a high level of cultural preservation – might lead to economic upward mobility in the long run. However, ethnic capital may turn into a 'mobility trap' for the children of first generation Turkish Belgians, when residential profile was not accompanied by labour market inclusion of the first generation and an increase in human capital. Italian Belgians living in less advantaged neighbourhoods used co-ethnic networks as a buffer against

the effects of poor quality of neighbourhood conditions; however, for those living in more privileged areas co-ethnic concentration became a disadvantage.

The importance of spaces of encounters and association in neighbourhoods is analysed in the research by Wessendorf (2013) who studied four groups of Hackney's inhabitants, including Vietnamese people and Turkish speakers, and found that social relations in this neighbourhood were characterised by a co-existence of separation and mixing. Vietnamese people and Turkish speakers did not mix, many did not speak much English, both groups had self-sufficient support networks, but at the same time they were not perceived by Hackney's inhabitants as breaking the 'ethos of mixing'. These separate worlds are accepted, as long as they participate in one way or another in associational spaces or in the public realm. Turkish speakers and Vietnamese people interact in mainstream society in the context of residential mixing and institutions (e. g. nurseries, schools), as well as in business and trade (restaurants, corner shops, nail parlours). Such 'ethnic' places as restaurants or grocery shops formed 'bridges' between these groups and residents of other origins. These findings are similar to the research results by Van Eijk (2012), looking at practices of neighbourly relations in two neighbourhoods in Rotterdam. Being 'good neighbours' also meant working out a balance between proximity and privacy so 'keeping oneself to oneself' is important, too (p. 3022). However, Wessendorf's (2013) study shows that non-participation in local life, ranging from economic activities to participation in civil society or institutions such as schools, met with limited understanding. Encounters in public and associational space do not necessarily enhance deeper intercultural understanding, but the absence of such encounters can enhance prejudice.

Policy, organisations and integration: bridging and linking social capital and the legal/institutional context

Policies stimulating inter-ethnic contact and critique

Many integration policies actually follow Putnam's thesis on the reciprocally enriching relationship between participation in civic associations and good governance, as well as between mutual trust and economic dynamism. They are also increasingly sensitive to Putnam's distinction between bonding and bridging social capital. Essentially, bonding capital is characterised by so-called 'strong ties', like those that connect family members or close friends. Bonding capital thus brings together people who are alike. Meanwhile, bridging capital refers to the weak ties that link people who are different from each other. Thus, it may link people of different social or ethnic groups. For example, according to the UK Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC 2007) report 'only bridging capital is about people from different groups getting on' and is regarded as the key measure of cohesion. Their study results also show that for almost every ethnic group, cohesion is higher among those who have bridging social capital. However, they 'have found that bonding capital can give people the confidence they need in order to bridge. ' They thus propose a new approach to integration and cohesion, based among others on articulating what binds communities together. In Germany, policy makers have endorsed direct measures to improve personal networks within low-income, predominantly migrant communities. These 'Quartiersmanagement' neighbourhood management programmes attempted to strengthen personal networks by initiating volunteering and social events. However, few migrant residents participated in these activities (Drever and Hoffmeister 2008).

Amin (2005) presents a critical analysis of New Labour policies in the UK directed at generating social capital in poor neighbourhoods. His main critique of the government, when dealing with the most deprived areas, is their conviction that the local community lacks social capital and their focus on community cohesion as the panacea. He claims that social exclusion at the local level does not have solely local origins and thus cannot be challenged by local means only, but has to be part of a wider political economy of decentred power and redistributive justice. Another critique comes from Letki (2008), who argues that the British government, instead of attempting to stimulate interethnic contacts, should combat economic disadvantage, which in her opinion is the main reason behind lowering of social capital and social cohesion (see also critique by Cheung and Phillimore 2013).

The impact of policy contradictions and institutional incoherence on integration

According to Schrover and Vermeulen's (2005) findings the nature of the relationships between the character of the migrant community, the political opportunity structure and migrants' organisational activity is bell-shaped: 'too much and too little competition (from governments and others) leads to reduced organisational activity. Too small and too large communities experience problems in maintaining organisations' (p. 823). Two main features of the legal and institutional environment characterising opportunity structures and migrant organisations appear in the literature: first, lack or limited power of those at the local level to handle integration, and second, scarce number of stable, professional migrant organisations. The first point includes such aspects as policy contradictions between the local and the national level, lack of governmental bodies responsible for such activities, and lack of funds for integration.

Contradictions between different levels of policy were encountered in the study of the role of multi-agency networks in supporting asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow (Wren 2007). There was disjuncture in Scottish and UK policy goals, lack of communication between the government department (then NASS) responsible for the resettlement process and the agencies on the ground, and absence initially of host community preparation. Several goals of the new policy, among others placing asylum seekers in language clusters and in multi-ethnic communities, were not met. Wren points to the severe deprivation of particular areas in Glasgow, where resettled asylum seekers experienced very negative responses from local communities who had misplaced beliefs about preferential resource allocation. The service providers were funded to carry out integration work among recognised refugees. Meanwhile, the main users of the services were asylum seekers, who awaited decisions on their status while housed in communities. Another example of unclear distribution of powers regarding migrant integration policies and an overall limitation of powers of regional governments was found in the study by Morales and Ramiro on Spain (2011). One of the main factors hampering the effectiveness of the policy process is that social consultation and intermediation has no clear procedure. Pilati (2012) criticised the lack of a policy base for the involvement of migrant organisations in local politics, both in terms of participation in consultations and the decision-making process. She points to the lack of a specific service or department dealing with migration.

According to Pilati (2012), in Milan very limited funds were used for migrant integration. Similar findings regarding Milan and two other Italian cities are in the study by Caponio (2005). In their review of literature on civil society in the UK, McCabe *et al.* (2010) point to other studies that

underline the fact that refugee community organisations (RCOs) do not have the resources to contribute to long-term integration of refugees, having to compete with wider civil society for limited funding (see Phillimore and Goodson 2010; Zetter *et al.* 2005;). According to Zetter and Pearl (2000), the most comprehensive review of the situation of refugee organisations in the UK to date, financial and legal constraints in place since the mid-1990s meant RCOs provided poor quality service provision, 'very limited access to public resources, lack of co-ordination and networking, and limited professional capacity', placing them in a position of being sub-contractors and not equal partners to mainstream service providers.

Social capital and organisations: between importance of participation and quality of functioning

Before presenting the critique of weakness of migrant organisations and linking it to the existing opportunity structure and the character of the migrant community, it should be noted that a number of studies also provide evidence that migrant organisations, both in terms of membership and services provided by them, play an important role in the settlement process and in integration. An important study by Tillie (2004) shows that political participation of migrants at the individual level is increased by being a member of an ethnic organization, cross-ethnic organisation or trade union, as well as by having active friends (social activities in the social network of a person). Levels of political participation of ethnic groups can be explained by the social capital at ethnic group level. The higher the social capital at group level, the higher is the level of political participation. Similar findings come from Berger *et al.* (2004), who carried out research among ethnic communities in Berlin and found that those who were better educated and were members of cross-ethnic networks were better integrated politically. The important role of migrant organisations is also presented in the study of RCOs providing pre-arrival assistance (Phillimore *et al.* 2009); initial reception in the form of translation, interpretation, and support, assistance with building of skills and the provision of cultural knowledge (Challenor *et al.* 2005; Phillimore *et al.* 2009); facilitating access to volunteering opportunities, as well as providing opportunities of social space and social contact (Hunt 2008). However, in general according to most of the findings RCOs, but also other minority organisations, lack individual social capital and their access to broader governance networks is weak (Phillimore and Goodson 2010).

According to the study by Zetter *et al.* (2005), the UK Border Agency policy of asylum-seeker dispersal supported the emergence of strong RCOs in London, but insecure and unstable RCOs in other cities. The authors claim that due to the hostile policy environment RCOs could not be regarded as 'formally constituted organizations of social capital which crucially mediate the process of integration'. RCOs continue to resist institutionalisation. In addition, Zetter *et al.* (2005) discuss the fact that although dispersal has stimulated the establishment of RCOs in new localities, they see this production of 'social capital' as a response to social exclusion and overall crisis (financial, institutional) and not the positive result of the state or civil society providing such incentives and opportunity structures for social integration. They claim that many of the asylum-seekers organised informally and 'there is little evidence of either linking or bridging social capital as a convincing explanation of the current forms of associational organization amongst asylum-seekers'.

Pilati (2012) studied the role of ethnic networks in creating political contacts and opportunities important for participation of migrant organisations, based on data from a survey carried out among immigrant organisations in Milan. According to these findings the new multi-ethnic landscape was hardly recognised in Milan as institutions considered the role of Italian organisations in the field of migration to be more legitimate. Caponio (2005) finds migrant associations had weak organisational structures and played a peripheral role in the local decision-making process. In general, local governments favoured Italian organisations providing services to migrants, both in terms of funding and tendering for public contracts. Thus, national welfare associations – especially experienced lay and Catholic associations – crowd out migrants' own initiatives. Caponio shows that due to the diversity of migrants (in terms of nationalities, culture) no migrant organisation was truly representative. Meanwhile, initiatives aimed at encompassing this complexity (either by simplifying or channelling) proved contradictory.

Morales and Ramiro (2011) analysed the ways that political capital might be gained through social capital. The authors considered the types of connections which led to the largest degree of impact on policy, bearing in mind that a lot of migrants' associations are established for different purposes. They concluded that social capital of the migrant organisations determined their access to local policymaking. This is particular to places where the policy process 'is characterised by a lack of clear procedures, structures and practices of social consultation and intermediation' (p. 149).

Conclusions

The literature shows a to some extent contradictory role of the networks among migrants and native inhabitants in the development and proliferation of social capital in the various localities in the EU. The quality and scope of networks, which determine whether they become a source of social capital, differ not only between migrants and native inhabitants, but also among the migrants. There is an important differentiation between the various national/ethnic migrant groups, but also within the same national/ethnic group (among others along the lines of legal status, education and gender).

On the one hand networks do play a significant role among migrants in the initial settlement process, helping to find a job or accommodation and giving support – especially buffering to some extent the negative effects of weak cultural and economic capital, as well as lack of a stable legal status. At this stage ethnic networks do constitute a source of bonding social capital. With time, these can lead to the development of ethnic places, such as shops, business and restaurants, where migrants and native inhabitants meet, and which can then become a source of bridging social capital. The extension of good quality ethnic networks, based on strong ties and mutual trust (which thus constitute bonding capital), via weak ties to wider social networks, seems to provide the best of the two types of capital – in an optimal form of providing opportunities for chance encounters, leading to attachment to place and social integration.

However, on the other hand, establishment of the group (both for migrants and non-migrants) in the country of migration and increase in size of the community can cause networks to be exclusive rather than inclusive, limited to very small groups and divided along lines of residence status and education. Membership in such networks is characterised by distrust towards other groups, so they can become a negative form of bonding capital, through stigmatisation of others while increasing inner group cohesion. Such networks may also be characterised by distrust towards one's own national/ethnic

group, thus are neither a source of bridging nor of bonding social capital. Ethnic networks, especially when it comes to economic participation of migrants, may become exploitative rather than a source of social and economic improvement.

Those migrants who are highly mobile and educated seem to use transnational networks as a source of bonding capital, thus are not tied to place and one can refer to a trans-local form of integration. Of crucial importance in future studies is the differentiation between what people (whether migrant or not) declare – in terms of having ties and trusting others – and what they actually practice (which may significantly differ from the declarations).

As in the studies focusing on social networks, the evidence from research focusing on neighbourly relations in mixed neighbourhoods gives us a rather complex picture. Studies show that although diversity leads to a decline in mutual contact and trust, under certain circumstances it actually leads to an increase of these aspects of social cohesion. Research also shows that diversity in the neighbourhood, although it may affect group social capital negatively, might not affect individual social capital negatively. It seems that the assumption that social cohesion has to be based on in-depth relations is false – people will feel and regard others as integrated when they have the opportunities for encounters (not necessarily leading to relationships based on strong, intimate ties).

The evidence suggests that deprivation, rather than diversity should be the focus in terms of the level of social capital. Various authors point to the importance of the composition of the neighbourhoods – that there is less social cohesion in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, but this is simply because more people live in these neighbourhoods who are in a disadvantaged position. Structural deprivation in neighbourhoods – such as poor quality of housing, education and employment possibilities - is the main reason behind the perception of areas as having little social cohesion. However, again, it is crucial to distinguish between the perceptions of neighbourhoods – their quality – and the actual contacts people have in them. Also important is the finding that focusing solely on the level of neighbourhood may be misleading, with people having networks and ties extending beyond their locality.

Several main findings can be presented regarding the policy and institutional settings' role in enhancing social capital and thus integration. According to the evidence, policy-makers favour fostering bridging social capital through direct policy intervention at local level. Meanwhile research points to the importance of taking a broader approach (not only local) and of providing opportunities for encounter rather than stimulating inter-ethnic contact directly. There are contradictions in integration policy at different levels of government, with local government often lacking the necessary powers to provide proper integration assistance. At the same time lack of trust of local governments in migrant self-help organisations combined with lack of organisational strength and knowledge about how to compete with mainstream organisations results in a scarce number of trustworthy organisations and limits the possibilities of accessing funds and/or organisational development. Migrants' communities are also on the one hand very diverse and on the other also very divided, so it might be the case that organising around particular causes rather than nationalities/ethnicities may be more effective. Meanwhile, organisational membership (whether ethnic or not) increases participation of migrants at the individual level.

Discussing the findings in this section it is worth pointing to the recommendations made by researchers. Kitching *et al.* (2009) recommend that policy-makers working with 'London's minority

businesses should encourage owners to view diaspora-based networks as potential assets for business development purposes, enabling access to resources and/or the identification and exploitation of new markets. ' They claim that diaspora-based networks are not a substitute for engaging with mainstream networks, but should be seen as complementary. The character and scope of network contacts and other resources should be identified by business advisers and use made of these resources at different stages of business development. They propose policy-makers consider providing financial support to proposals of exploitation of transnational diaspora-based networks for minority business development. Overall, they claim that 'Identifying diaspora networks and encouraging and enabling business owners to utilise them can contribute to the achievement of economic competitiveness and social inclusion policy objectives. ' According to Drever and Hoffmeister (2008), policies seeking to improve migrants' labour market integration should take into account the importance of social networks as ways of linking migrants to the job market, but also as means of occupational mobility. They play a crucial role in the case of individuals without (or with unrecognised in Germany) formal degrees or formal training. They suggest the need to fund football clubs and cultural clubs, which indirectly improve the labour market integration of migrants. Engbersen *et al.* (2006) recommends policy measures that would decriminalise irregular migrants. For example, the expansion of labour migration programmes (both temporary and permanent) would enable some irregular labourers to work legally, and might help to counteract the development of informal labour markets. They also propose the selective legalisation of irregular migrants, as well as systems of earned regularisation, and realistic return programmes that stimulate people to go back voluntarily.

The literature points to the following evidence of factors supporting the development of different kinds of social network and capital and types most useful in integration terms.

First, the formation, use and meaning of social capital not only differ between migrants and natives, but also within migrant groups – with legal status and education being important dividing factors.

Second, bonding social capital, including in the form of ethnic networks, can be conducive to integration at the local level; however, it has to be accompanied by a particular context – or opportunity structure. Bonding social capital leads to the establishment of spaces of encounter, which are essential for the formation of bridging social capital.

Third, social capital – its formation and development – is age and generation dependent and people's social networks that are sources of social capital extend beyond the locality, creating even trans-local places of reference and attachment.

Fourth, for those who primarily have access to local social networks and spaces, what impacts social capital is not so much diversity, but the quality of neighbourhoods.

Fifth, instead of directly attempting to foster inter-ethnic contact, policies should provide such opportunities by creating places of potential meeting between different groups.

Sixth, the overview of the literature from the last decade studying the role of social networks and social capital in the integration of migrants at the local level has demonstrated the importance of taking a broader spatial perspective than neighbourhood or locality. Not only in terms of actual

research, showing the importance of the broader context, including the institutional context, but also in terms of policy design and implementation.

Seventh, membership in any form of organisation (ethnic or non-ethnic) increases political participation and integration.

The literature provided little evidence about the impact of the character of migration on the development of social capital and integration at the local level, focusing primarily on already settled migrants, distinguishing solely between 'established' groups and 'newcomers', but not looking at for example the temporary character of most labour migrants. A critical discussion of the notion of locality seems to be missing. The same can be said about the notion of community – which is somehow assumed to be given.

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