



# BRIDGING DIFFERENCES

What Communities and Government  
Can do to Foster Social Capital

by Sandra Gruescu and Verena Menne

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out recommendations for local and national government as well as community groups on how to build more and stronger bridges between people from different backgrounds and in particular between migrants and British citizens. It builds on the seminal work conducted by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion as set out in its final report *Our Shared Future*, and reviews how community cohesion is built by community groups in other countries.

### Migration and local impacts

Migration is part of the every day life in big cities in the UK and across the globe. A large number of people benefits from and celebrates the resulting cultural diversity. Large cities are often proud of the way migrants shaped their inner cities, such as in Little Italy in New York or Chinatown in London. Food, music and customs from all over the world form an integral part of today's cities. In addition, migration also has economic benefits such as increased growth through the creativity and skills migrants bring to the host country.

But migration can also cause disruptions, including weaker neighbourhood relations and tensions between people from different groups. Migration has different effects for different people and places across the UK. While, for example, highly skilled engineers working in a multinational company may feel positive about their foreign colleagues, someone pressured by job insecurity and foreign competition over resources such as housing and public services is likely to feel less positive about migration. Branding those with such practical concerns illiberal or racist – a position Gordon Brown criticised as 'lazy elitism' – is not a solution. Even if the basis of some of these concerns is more perceived than real, they are still a real problem because they jeopardise community cohesion.

But diversity does not automatically lead to negative attitudes towards those who are different, negative attitudes can be found in relatively homogenous communities as well. The local history and community characteristics more generally, such as employment levels and demographic composition, will also influence the attitudes people hold towards each other. Every community is different, and the impact of diversity on communities varies.

The consequences of a fragmented society, regardless of what the dividing lines are, are likely to be severe. In neighbourhoods which are devoid of social networks between different groups, prejudices are likely to lead to distrust, fear, tensions and possibly violence. Real or perceived erosion of shared values will lead to declining trust between people as well as fragmentation of communities. These, as well as the perceptions of difference and alienation, are problems for the social fabric of society. Once community relations are dominated by negative stereotypes of others, it is very difficult to change opinions and perceptions to create a more cohesive society. Migration into the UK is set to rise over the next decades, so the challenge for public policy is to address its negative social impacts and strengthen the positive ones.

### **What can policymakers do in response?**

Limiting migration would be one option to slow down the speed of population change and lessen social unease. Across the three main parties, there is a consensus that migration should be managed, but positions vary as to how much it should be limited. In February 2008, the Government introduced a points-based system which manages migration according to the skills needed in the UK labour market. The Liberal Democrats propose to go further by controlling where migrants settle in Britain. Their aim is to reduce pressures on areas such as the South East but strengthen population growth in less densely populated areas. The Conservatives have proposed, in addition to a points-based system, a cap on immigrant numbers which would limit the number of those coming from non-European Union countries.

All three positions aim to weigh real and perceived negative effects against the social and economic benefits of migration. Important arguments for migration are to offer refuge to those who flee persecution, to allow families to live together in one place and the economic benefits migration brings. A large proportion of migration occurs because people seek better employment. This mobility on the international labour market and in particular within the EU has been beneficial to the UK, a country which has attracted migrants for many decades. Benefits such as reduced wage inflation and a more productive work force as skills shortages are resolved would be jeopardised if migration was further limited.

But there need not be a choice between economic growth and social cohesion. A social market approach allows for a flexible labour market, but also sees a mandate for government to cushion real and perceived social effects, mainly through attempts to increase understanding and relationships between people from different groups. By doing so we can ensure that the UK benefits from economic and cultural effects of migration while strengthening social cohesion.

### **Big government versus big society?**

There is a longstanding divide between those on the left who see government intervention as the solution to a range of problems, and those on the right who see government intervention under certain circumstances more as a problem than a solution. A common criticism of policy in this area is that government intervention to strengthen community cohesion is not only ineffective but it also crowds out private initiatives. In this view, 'big government' inevitably means 'small society', because people feel that they do not need to volunteer, get engaged and organise activities because government is doing it already.

But community cohesion is too important an issue to be left to chance – government must have a role in fostering it. A social



market approach sees state and society much more as partners than as adversaries. Community organisations face barriers and lack incentives and resources to create adequate levels of social cohesion. But the state on its own cannot simply 'provide' cohesion: relationships between people cannot be enforced but rather need to grow organically and over time. Only through working in partnership, central government, local government and community organisations can successfully augment social cohesion.

This report builds on this social market principle and analyses current community initiatives and seeks to answer the following key questions:

- How and under which circumstances do bridges between people from different backgrounds evolve?
- What do community organisations currently do to create and strengthen these bridges?
- What is the role of central and local government to foster bridge building and social cohesion?

In order to address these questions, this report draws on international experience to understand what works for community groups and public policy. Since the big cities in the OECD experience high levels of immigration, the social effects of high population turnover are most apparent in these 'melting pots'. New York's immigration history spans several centuries, and it would not be what it is today without migration. Madrid, in contrast, has a much shorter history of immigration: political liberalisation and Spain's accession to what was then the European Community have made it more attractive and immigration has increased over the past decades. London's and Birmingham's immigration experience is somewhere between these extremes, and policymakers can learn from bridging activities in all four cities.

## Bonding and bridging social capital

But in order to interpret social cohesion, we need a better understanding of what it is. In recent years, a huge literature on social capital was developed, a part of which we use to analyse the work of community organisations in the four cities. Robert Putnam distinguishes between two forms of social capital:

- **Bonding social capital** refers to relations between individuals who share certain characteristics. These are the most basic networks people rely on, in particular in times of emergency. While being vital for individuals, a flipside of bonding social capital is that it can grow very strong and exclude others, possibly leading to fragmentation.
- **Bridging social capital** refers to relations between individuals from different backgrounds, linking people for example across different ethnicities, religions or classes. These relations are vital for a cohesive society, because they bridge what otherwise might become divisive differences.

The relationship between bonding and bridging social capital is complex. Some argue that bonding and bridging social capital are negatively related, that is, the stronger the bonding social capital an individual holds grows, the weaker their bridging ties become. Bonding and bridging are in this view a trade-off, or, in other words, a zero-sum game. But there is evidence that bonding and bridging can be positively correlated too: some studies show that those who have more friends from similar backgrounds (bonding) also have more friends from different backgrounds (bridging). Bridging points – the opportunity to meet individuals from different backgrounds – seem to determine whether bonding and bridging are a zero-sum game or can be mutually reinforcing.

But the mere existence of these bridging points or opportunities is not sufficient for the creation of bridging social capital: people's attitudes are at least as important. If strong bonding social capital

is paired with negative attitudes towards those who are different, it will mean that bonding leaves no room for bridging and potentially becomes exclusive and a 'social bad'. Attitudes in turn are shaped by institutions such as family, friends, educational, religious or cultural institutions. The characteristics of these institutions determine whether bonding vehicles are negative for society or whether they foster bridging, which is seen as always positive for society.

### **Social capital and the state**

In the social market, the state's role goes further than simply creating and maintaining an appropriate legal framework for market exchange: it should limit and supplement the market when necessary and ensure the market is politically acceptable. Social cohesion, and the bridging social capital that underpins it, can be seen as a good that is provided by the interaction of people going about their daily lives. But the 'market' for bridging social capital also needs to be supplemented for the following three interlinked reasons.

First, the state should intervene to limit possible negative consequences (in economic theory, negative externalities) of bonding social capital becoming excessively strong and exclusive. This is a problem which can occur in both the permanent population and the migrant one. In a society composed of atomized groups, prejudices about 'the other' are likely to grow, leading to declining trust and tensions.

Second, the market for bridging social capital needs to be supplemented, because social capital has positive effects even on those who do not invest in it (in economic theory, positive externalities). That means that not all benefits of social capital are captured by those who make the efforts to build bridges, making it likely that people will invest less time doing so than would be valuable from a social perspective. This means that there is a role for the state to ensure that social capital provision is at the optimal level for society.

Third, there is a role for government to cushion disruptions to community life that migration might cause through population churn. Rapidly changing populations in a local area exacerbate the under-provision of bridging social capital because incentives to invest in neighbourhood relations tend to be weak since the population is always changing.

In order to intervene in an effective way, we need a better understanding about how social capital grows.

### What can be done by society to foster social capital?

Schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, leisure or religious activities all represent **opportunities** to engage with people from other backgrounds. Opportunities can directly or indirectly foster social capital. Direct opportunities are explicitly designed to build bridges between people; indirect ones can have anything as an ultimate objective – playing football or public campaigning, for example - bridges between people from different backgrounds are built as a by-product of such activities.

Beyond simply having opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds, motivation and trust are the key **attitudes** necessary for the creation of bridging social capital. Without an initial level of trust towards strangers, new bridges will not evolve. Similarly, individuals need to be motivated to take up opportunities. Fighting prejudices to create positive attitudes towards those from different backgrounds is crucial to ensure that people are in a position to use these opportunities to build bridges. Community organisations play a key role in this because prejudices and stereotypes are shaped by experiences and therefore best influenced on a local level.

Even if opportunities are in place and people are open minded to those from different backgrounds, a third ingredient is necessary to develop bridging social capital: the **ability** to do so.

For new migrants, language skills are crucial. Without being able to communicate, bridges are difficult if not impossible to build. Local groups can help in two ways: they can point new arrivals in the direction of language classes, and they can offer supplementary language classes run by volunteers.

### **Society and the state: partners to build social capital**

There is a clear role for government to support the creation of bridging social capital. But bridging social capital cannot just be provided like policing or education. What government can do is limited because social cohesion is ultimately about people engaging with each other. Evidence on the success of central government campaigns to change public attitudes has been mixed at best – changing existing perceptions is difficult and can even be counterproductive, but there are some mechanisms which work better than others to achieve change. Central government needs to further engage with local authorities to learn about specific local needs, while local authorities need to maintain close links with community organisations.

The least government should do is not to harm any existing bridging social capital. While public services have the potential to increase social capital, they can also curtail trust and harm existing relations between people. People having to move because of demolition and regeneration projects are just one example. New policies should therefore be subject to an assessment to ‘community proof’ them.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities and national government should ‘community proof’ their policies, that is to ensure that they do not harm any existing social networks.

In addition, government should use public services as touch points to create bridging social capital where possible. Public services can be designed as an opportunity to build bridges. With the *Duty to Promote Community Cohesion*, schools for example are obliged to review the relations amongst the learners and whether they respect differences amongst each other. This is a step in the right direction, but particularly in primary schools, a social capital audit could go even further and include parents of the learners, because they are the main influence with whom their children spend their free time.

**Recommendation:** All schools should establish a social capital audit to review bonding and bridging social capital within the school and amongst the parents.

New policies should be designed with a view to increasing social capital. School admission policies, for example, have the potential to bring children from different backgrounds through broader use of lotteries to allocate school places together. Such a system is fairer because it means that those who cannot afford to move into the catchment area of a good school still stand a good chance of getting a place there. In addition, lottery schools will only partly reflect the composition of their area, giving families living in homogenous areas the chance to mix with others.

**Recommendation:** Government should use public services to provide an opportunity for individuals to establish bridges between each other. School admission by catchment area should be replaced by broader use of lotteries to allocate school places.

But government should also engage in more direct measures to increase bridging social capital. Newly arrived migrants in particular might lack the opportunities to meet people, learn about the culture in the receiving country and practise the language. A nationwide mentoring scheme for new migrants could match those who are attending English classes with long-term residents. Such a scheme would benefit both mentors and mentees: allowing the former to learn about different cultures and broaden their horizons and supporting the latter in integrating in their new home.

**Recommendation:** Government should introduce a national mentoring scheme which matches volunteers with migrants.

For migrants language skills are absolutely crucial to establishing relationships. There is a broad consensus about the importance of language and most migrants are very eager to learn English, which is reflected in oversubscribed ESOL courses. Against this backdrop, calls to make language classes compulsory are missing the point. The problem is not too little demand, but too little supply. Local authorities should therefore allow and encourage volunteers to do language training: not replacing existing classes, but supplementing them.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should encourage volunteers to teach English by providing them with some training and the necessary facilities to run classes.

In 2006, £100m was spent on translation and interpretation services. This money is intended to include those whose first language is not English. This inclusive policy, however, can have perverse and

unintended consequences, leading to exclusion if it means that less money can be spent on language classes, which give new arrivals the tools to understand the country they are living in, rather than just one specific form. The impact of language classes is therefore much wider than the impact of translations. While some interpretation services, for example in the NHS and the criminal justice system are vital and should not be cut, government should move some of the money currently spent on translation and interpretations to English language classes, a recommendation also put forward by the Darra Singh report. In spring 2009, the Government launched *A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages* (ESOL),<sup>1</sup> with a focus on how to reach those currently excluded from ESOL classes. It calls for better and more targeted service delivery within current funding levels. But this need not be – some funds could be shifted from translations to language classes.

**Recommendation:** Government should use part of the money currently used for translation services to offer additional language classes.

Leisure activities such as sports or music are powerful in bringing people together, but they often also cost money. It falls to local authorities to ensure that disadvantaged migrants and refugees have access to these activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Innovation, University and Skills, *A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages* (ESOL), (London: HMSO, 2009).

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should liaise with existing partners in leisure and culture as well as establishing new partnership with providers in the private sector to ensure free access for disadvantaged migrants to sport and cultural activities.

## Conclusion

Community cohesion has many angles as diversity is based on different characteristics such as ethnicity, religion and migration status. Diversity enriches people's lives but it can also lead to disruptions and unease. Central and local government as well as communities have a role to play in reducing this unease by fostering relationships between people from different backgrounds. There is no single idea, guideline or policy that community leaders and government can follow to increase community cohesion. Responses to migration and diversity need to be as varied and as dynamic as the places where people live. The recommendations in this report aim to inform this response with practical policy suggestions, most of them workable in a difficult fiscal climate.

A national mentoring scheme and a shift of funding from translations towards language classes are two steps which could have a big impact on bridging differences between people. They could bring society closer to the vision set out by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, which envisaged a shared future where "people themselves are the catalyst for change in their communities – working to bridge gaps between groups."<sup>2</sup>

Some of the measures proposed in this report will have to rely on additional funding such as the recommendation for a

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<sup>2</sup> Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future* (London: Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007), 2.

social capital impact assessment of future policies. In times of fiscal austerity, it might seem too expensive to implement such measures, but it is short-sighted to only think about their costs and not the benefits they bring. The impact these policies can have on cohesion and prevention of tensions might in certain areas well offset the costs.

As emphasised throughout the report, bridging social capital is built on a local level and what works best is dependent on local conditions. There is, however, one overarching lesson the social market approach holds for central and local government and those engaged to build it: neither the market, nor the state nor civil society can succeed on their own. Only with government supporting community organisations will society be able to benefit from a flexible labour market as well as a cohesive society.



## 1. MIGRATION IN CONTEXT

Patterns of migration have changed in the United Kingdom in recent decades. Some areas are now entering a phase of 'super-diversity'. This term refers not only to the number of different languages, countries of origin and religious practices represented by the local population, but also to migration status, entitlements and labour market experiences.<sup>3</sup> The UK has benefited substantially from this diversity. Economically, migration is associated with growth, but there are also cultural benefits. As Robin Cook, then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said in a speech to the Social Market Foundation in 2001:

*It isn't just our economy that has been enriched by the arrival of new communities. Our lifestyles and cultural horizons have also been broadened in the process. ... It reaches into every aspect of our national life. Chicken Tikka Masala is now a true British national dish, not only because it is the most popular, but because it is a perfect illustration of the way Britain absorbs and adapts external influences. Chicken Tikka is an Indian dish. The Masala sauce was added to satisfy the desire of British people to have their meat served in gravy.<sup>4</sup>*

There are certainly reasons to celebrate culinary and cultural vibrancy as well as economic benefits of migration, but migration and diversity can also present a set of difficult, often seemingly intractable, challenges. Martin Wolf of the Financial Times has recently called for a debate on migration to address concerns about the real or perceived social effects of migration, such as declining trust and an erosion of shared values, about which many people feel uneasy.<sup>5</sup>

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3 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *New Complexities of Cohesion in Britain: Super-Diversity, Transnationalism and Civil Integration*, by Steve Vertovec (London: Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007), 9.

4 Robin Cook, Speech to the Social Market Foundation, April 2001.

5 Martin Wolf, "Time for a Debate on Immigration", *Financial Times*, 5 November 2009.

## THE LOCAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION

The effects of migration differ for places and people across Britain. In some communities, new arrivals integrate easily, while in others, housing shortages and the decline of local economies contribute to a frosty reception.

Highly skilled people in the permanent population undoubtedly benefit from migration – they perceive the cultural diversity brought by their foreign colleagues as enriching, and are often able to benefit from cheaper services that lower skilled migrants provide. However, those already under economic pressure feel that migration increases the competition for jobs, housing and public services, and, because of these practical concerns, are less open to it. Ipsos MORI research found that the higher the proportion of people without qualifications in a local area, the less likely residents are to feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together.<sup>6</sup> In addition, what might be perceived as a positive outcome of migration on a national level might be perceived differently on a local level. Politicians need to acknowledge these differences and address them, rather than branding those who are critical of migration as illiberal and narrow-minded. Gordon Brown strongly argued against “lazy elitism that dismisses immigration as an issue, or portrays anyone who has concerns and questions about immigration as a racist.”<sup>7</sup> Ignoring these concerns is likely to lead to severe consequences for social cohesion in the long run.

Both economically and socially, some effects of migration are real, while others are mainly perceived. In times of weak economic growth, newcomers are a convenient scapegoat for rising unemployment. Competition over public services in particular is an area of concern for long-term residents. One of the key messages of

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6 Bobby Duffy and Debbie Lee Chan, *People, Perceptions and Place* (London: Ipsos-MORI, 2009), 21.

7 Gordon Brown, Speech on immigration, November 2009.

the Darra Singh Report was that “settled communities are worried about the fair allocation of public services – with some thinking that immigrants and minorities are getting special treatment.”<sup>8</sup>

Even if these individual experiences are not corroborated by macro-level data, this does not mean that local concerns need not be addressed. As John Denham, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said in a speech on the welfare impact of migration:

*If people believe that others are benefiting from jobs, homes, training – things that we and our families have to wait for and work for – that understandably fosters a sense of unfairness. If the perception is that certain groups are not only able to jump the queue but actually benefit from privileged treatment, then that problem is magnified. The problem here is one of perception, but we shouldn't dismiss it – because it is a problem.*<sup>9</sup>

Changes in communities and how people live their daily lives are a challenge for most individuals. As one member of our expert seminar said: “What does immigration mean to people? ‘Change’ and ‘Difference’ – these are challenges for humans in general. This is a difficult issue and there is a need to understand this very natural response from populations.” In some areas in Britain, population changes have occurred rapidly, with adjustments to public services lagging behind. “Left unchecked, we know that this can have a damaging impact – particularly on community cohesion.”<sup>10</sup> If community cohesion is already under threat, the danger of a downward spiral arises: prejudices grow easily in societies where different groups do not talk to each other and negative stereotypes often become self-fulfilling. Once such stereotypes

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8 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, 33.

9 John Denham, “Managing the Welfare Impact of Migration During the Recession”, Speech to the Policy Network Conference, December 2009.

10 Ibid.

become entrenched, they can be difficult to overcome, leading to permanent fragmentation.

In addition, ideas, beliefs and types of behaviour are reinforced by their social milieu.<sup>11</sup> Negative consequences are reinforced when separation is multifaceted – that is, when different divisions such as religion, housing, education and culture, as well as social life, reinforce each other. As the media tells us almost every day, religion can be divisive: religiously motivated terrorist attacks and the territorial dispute between Israelis and Palestinians are just two examples. But even in the absence of any violence, religious adherence can contribute to segregation. A 2009 Ipsos MORI poll for the government's Equalities and Human Rights Commission shows that the majority (60%) of the general public view religion, not race, as the most divisive factor in society. More people were happy for their child to marry someone from another ethnic group rather than from another religion.

Super-diversity, be it generated by migration or based on ethnicity or religion – or a combination of the three – is likely to create dividing lines and other social problems in society. Real or perceived erosion of shared values will lead to declining trust between people as well as fragmentation of communities. These, as well as the perceptions of difference and alienation, are problems for the social fabric of society. What should policymakers do in response?

## SOCIETY, THE MARKET AND THE STATE

Further limiting immigration is one option to slow down the speed of population change and reduce social unease. There is a political consensus that immigration should be managed to some extent.

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11 Ronald Van Kempen and A. Sule Ozuekren, "Ethnic Segregation in Cities: New Forms and Explanations in a Dynamic World", *Urban Studies* 35: 10 (1998).

The points-based system, which was introduced by the government in February 2008, intends to make the migrant labour supply more responsive to the labour market needs of the UK. The system awards points according to workers' skills, aptitude, experience, age and also the demand for those skills in any given sector. Through these methods the government intends to keep flexible control of a fair immigration system.

The Liberal Democrats are very much in favour of immigration and emphasise the need for migrant workers: "With a quarter of the doctors and half the nurses in London having been born overseas, the NHS would collapse without migrant workers."<sup>12</sup> They support a points-based system, but in addition propose a scheme that manages where migrants settle in Britain in order to reduce pressure on services and infrastructure in overcrowded regions such as the South-East.

Another possible policy approach is to set a fixed limit on immigration overall in response to concerns about diversity, the result of which would be to slow down the process of change. An incoming Conservative administration would introduce a cap on the number of immigrants from non-European Union countries. The suggested figure is in the tens of thousands of immigrants per year, although no exact number has been given. This has to be seen in relation to the current figures on immigrants from non-European Union countries, estimated to be 334,000 in 2008 and 333,000 in 2007.<sup>13</sup>

But it is far from certain that slowing down the speed of migration by a cap will increase cohesion. In addition, the flexibility of the UK labour market would be affected, since one of the main

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12 Chris Huhne, Debate on the Queen's Speech, November 2009.

13 ONS, "Long-term International Migration from International Passenger Survey (IPS) Tables: 1991–latest". See <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15054>.

reasons why people migrate is to seek employment.<sup>14</sup> Opponents criticise the cap therefore on economic grounds, as, amongst other issues, inflationary pressures and skills shortages would be more difficult to address.

Is there a way the state can achieve the wealth-creating benefits of immigration while, at the same time, enhancing social cohesion? Limiting immigration is not the only lever government can use to address its effects, it can also try to foster cohesion in communities across the country. A key element of this attempt is to support initiatives which are aimed at promoting community activity and networks between citizens to reduce fear and increase understanding, trust and cooperation. In doing so, the social marketeer can achieve the best of both worlds: labour market flexibility *and* a cohesive society.

Relationships between people from different backgrounds can be fostered. Segregation and discrimination do not develop because of a hate of those who are different, but because of a lack of “positive emotions such as admiration, sympathy, and trust.”<sup>15</sup> Building relationships can increase trust, eliminate fear and demystify the ‘other’. Stronger relationships help to diminish stereotypes and prejudices and replace them with individual stories, personal links and greater understanding for those who are different. But are these things that government can or should have any influence over?

## BIG SOCIETY VERSUS BIG GOVERNMENT?

There is a longstanding divide between those on the left who see government intervention as the solution to a range of problems,

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14 European Council on Refugees and Exiles, *Good Practice Guide on the Integration of Refugees in the European Union* (Brussels: European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 1999).

15 Marylenn B. Brewer, “The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love and Outgroup Hate?”, *Journal of Social Issues* 55: 3 (1999), 438.

and those on the right who see government intervention under certain circumstances as more of a problem than a solution.

A common criticism of policy in this area is that government intervention to strengthen community cohesion is not only ineffective, it also crowds out private initiatives. In this view, 'big government' inevitably means 'small society', because people feel that they do not need to volunteer, get engaged and organise activities because government is doing it already. As David Cameron said in a recent speech:

*As the state continued to expand, it took away from people more and more things that they should and could be doing for themselves, their families and their neighbours. Human kindness, generosity and imagination are steadily being squeezed out by the work of the state. The result is that, today, the character of our society – and indeed the character of some people themselves, as actors in society – is changing.<sup>16</sup>*

But community cohesion is too important an issue to be left to chance – government must have some role in fostering it. A social market approach sees state and society much more as partners than as adversaries. And the evidence that government intervention in this area does harm civil society is contested. Studies show that a strong civil society and government action are not a trade-off, but rather that government can support civil society to reach its full potential. As one of the studies concludes: "For immigrant communities – and perhaps also for the general population – a helping hand might be necessary for full participation in a polity's civic and political life."<sup>17</sup> Community organisations face barriers and lack incentives and resources to create adequate levels of social cohesion. But nor can the state on its own simply provide cohesion:

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16 David Cameron, The Big Society Speech, November 2009.

17 Irene Bloemraad, "The Limits of De Tocqueville: How Government Facilitates Organisational Capacity in Newcomer Communities", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31: 5 (2005), 883.

relationships between people cannot be enforced but, rather, need to grow organically and over time. Only working in partnership can central government, local government and community organisations successfully augment social cohesion.

Government should therefore take a supporting role, partnering up with local organisations to achieve community cohesion. Liam Byrne, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has argued for state intervention to foster a strong civil society. He described it as the “greatest myth in modern politics, that the answer for our poorest places is a choice between the state and society. ... They’re not alternatives, they are partners.”<sup>18</sup> This belief is built on the idea that, when interacting, state and society produce synergies, which would otherwise have been absent.<sup>19</sup>

In some policy areas, the Tories seem to be moving in that direction, with David Cameron emphasizing in his Big Society Speech:

*But I also want to argue that the re-imagined state should not stop at creating opportunities for people to take control of their lives. It must actively help people take advantage of this new freedom. This means a new role for the state: actively helping to create the big society; directly agitating for, catalysing and galvanising social renewal.*<sup>20</sup>

The state has an interest in addressing these issues as migration causes social problems, some of them real, some of them perceived. The fact that networks between groups of people from different backgrounds are beneficial to society as a whole implies a need

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18 Liam Byrne, “No Place Left Behind – How We Use New Growth to Fight Poverty?”, Speech to Progress, October 2009.

19 For a discussion of different social capital concepts, including that of synergies, see Peter Evans, “Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy”, *Global Area and National Archive* (1997).

20 The Big Society Speech, November 2009.

for government intervention in some form if such networks are to develop as they should.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report analyses current initiatives and programmes and provides a number of case studies to illustrate how government and community organisations can work together to build communities where people engage with each other. It seeks to answer the following key questions:

- How and under which circumstances do bridges between people from different backgrounds evolve?
- What do community organisations currently do to create and strengthen these bridges?
- What is the role of central and local government to foster bridge building and social cohesion?

Chapter 2 looks at the economic and social impact of migration on the receiving countries, and explores the challenges posed by migration.

Benefits as well as tensions often arise in ‘melting pots’ – that is, in big cities where a large number of people from different backgrounds live closely together. Both London and Birmingham are examples of such melting pots; few other cities in the UK are so diverse. This report also looks outside the UK and analyses approaches in New York and Madrid to draw lessons from them for the UK. In Chapter 3 we take a closer look at migration in these four cities, where interviews with community groups were conducted.

The theoretical toolkit needed to analyse the issues described in the preceding chapters is introduced and discussed in Chapter 4 by reviewing the literature on different concepts of social capital. We identify Robert Putnam’s concept of bonding and bridging social capital as the most helpful tool for this analysis.

Chapter 5 adds to the existing literature by discussing Putnam's concept of bonding and bridging social capital in more detail. It analyses the relationship between bridging and bonding social capital, discusses 'vehicles' of bonding and bridging social capital and looks at what determines whether bonding is positive or negative from a social perspective.

Chapter 6 discusses the rationale for government involvement in building bridging social capital. Government should intervene to limit negative consequences arising from a society composed of atomised groups. It should support bridging social capital to cushion fluctuations caused by a flexible labour market, as well as ensuring adequate provision of bridging social capital, which might be underprovided due to its public good character.

Chapter 7 addresses what is done by community groups in four large cities – London, Birmingham, Madrid and New York – to stimulate growth in bridging social capital. It concludes with recommendations for community groups and their leaders.

Finally, Chapter 8 outlines the social and economic reasons for state intervention to foster social capital and achieve community cohesion. It concludes with recommendations for policymakers on a regional as well as on a national level.

## 2. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATION

Chapter 1 showed that there is a variety of concerns regarding migration. Some of these concerns relate to the economic effects, others to social implications. This chapter describes both the economic and the social impact of migration. The evidence so far is that most of the economic effects are positive – for example, increased creativity and higher economic growth. Other economic indicators suggest that immigration is neither beneficial nor harmful. Unemployment in the UK, for example, does not appear to increase as more migrants enter the country. But there are negative social consequences, such as disruptions in community life, ambiguous or outright negative feelings towards newcomers or even fear of ‘the other’. Since migration is set to continue, these problems will remain with us and probably even increase.

### ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF MIGRATION

Migration can have positive economic effects for both sending and receiving countries. Those who cannot find employment in their country of origin might choose to migrate to a country with an ageing population, where a supply of labour is needed. In addition, creativity is found to be enhanced by migration and diversity.<sup>21</sup> These two trends mean that migration is often associated with more rapid economic growth. It can also be a driver of higher per capita growth if the increase in national economic growth is higher than the increase in population size.<sup>22</sup> As the Speaker of the House, John Bercow, MP, summarised in a SMF publication in 2005:

*Immigrant communities have added immeasurably to our society. From religious diversity to entrepreneurial spirit; from*

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21 Angela Ka-yee Leung et al., "Multicultural Experience Enhances Creativity: The When and How", *American Psychologist* 63: 3 (2008).

22 Robert D. Putnam, "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century. The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30: 2 (2007).

*the work ethic to family solidarity; from art and music to cuisine and couture, Britain is a stronger, a more successful and a more interesting country as a result.*<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the effects for the receiving country, some research shows that migration can also be beneficial for sending countries. Positive effects on the developing South include remittances and the flow of information and technology exchange via migrant networks.<sup>24</sup> In the best-case scenario, migration will benefit all parties involved.

However, rising unemployment figures can cause resentment among the mainstream population towards foreigners, and especially towards labour market migrants. Since unemployment typically lags behind economic growth, and is likely to remain high for some time after the end of the recent recession, tensions between British citizens and new migrants in the UK might persist or even grow. More worryingly, some far right parties are tapping into this concern, with the British National Party winning votes on the back of an anti-immigration platform. David Hannam, former deputy treasurer of the BNP, summarized his party's position: "Each immigrant who entered Britain decreased job prospects for native British workers."<sup>25</sup>

Whether migration has negative effects in terms of employment opportunities and wages for those already in the country is, however, not an ideological but an empirical question. Analysis of the labour market during the influx of migration from Central and

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23 John Bercow, *Incoming Assets: Why Tories Should Change Policy on Immigration and Asylum* (London: Social Market Foundation, 2005).

24 Dilip Ratha, "Workers' Remittances: an Important and Stable Source of External Development Finance", in *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects*, eds. Samuel Munzele Maimbo and Dilip Ratha (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2005).

25 Searchlight, "Is a Recession Good News for the BNP?", <http://www.searchlightmagazine.com/index.php?link=template&story=242>.

Eastern Europe following their EU accession in 2004<sup>26</sup> shows no sign of a negative impact on those already in Britain.<sup>27</sup> Consistent with other work,<sup>28</sup> the study conducted for the Department for Work and Pensions concluded that migration to Britain has had no negative impact on the employment chances of those already in the country, either overall or in any specific subgroup. In particular, the study looked at those with low skills and low earnings, because they are most likely to be affected – but again, no evidence of any adverse effects was found.

Dustmann et al. focus on the wage effect of migration and conclude that immigration does not depress the wages of existing workers.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the authors find that for most people, higher levels of immigration might be associated with higher wage growth for the resident population.<sup>30</sup> Borjas et al., however, argue that regional effects might be deluded on a national level because internal migrants might choose to move to other places in the country than those preferred by migrants from abroad.<sup>31</sup> For those at the very lowest wage levels, however, they do find a small negative effect on wage growth.

Aside from whether migrants usually have an impact on employment chances, some argue that migration acts as a safety valve, such that, if the labour market slackens, fewer migrants enter the country and more of those already there decide to move back

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26 In 2004, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia joined the European Union.

27 Department for Work and Pensions, *The Impact of Migration From the New European Union Member States on Native Workers*, by Sara Lemos and Jonathan Portes (London: Department for Work and Pensions, 2008).

28 See, for example, Bank of England, *The Impact of the Recent Migration From Eastern Europe on the UK Economy*, by David Blanchflower, Jumana Saleheen and Chris Shadforth (London: Bank of England, 2007).

29 Home Office, *The Local Labour Market Effects of Immigration in the UK*, by Christian Dustmann et al. (London: Home Office, 2003).

30 Ibid.

31 George J. Borjas, Richard B. Freeman and Lawrence F. Katz, "Searching for the Effect of Immigration on the Labor Market", *The American Economic Review* 86: 2 (1996).

to their country of origin.<sup>32</sup> This 'buffer theory', it is argued, has the effect of cushioning the native labour force from volatility in labour demand.

But although migration could, in theory, act as a buffer for labour demand, the reality in the UK looks different. While the decision to migrate is often driven by economic factors, re-migration is also likely to be influenced by personal factors.<sup>33</sup> A labour migrant who has made friends and possibly started a family in the receiving country will accept a spell of unemployment. Rather than packing his suitcases and returning to his country of origin, he is more likely to look for new work.

Recent studies for the UK examining the validity of the buffer theory found little evidence of any cushioning effects through migration. The authors did indeed find that immigration falls when unemployment grows – but only for a limited period. Outflows show a similar picture: they rise with unemployment, but only to a certain extent.<sup>34</sup> Immigration then picks up again, often before an improvement in the country's employment situation becomes evident. The number of work permit applications bottomed out at the beginning of 2009, but rose again in the three months to September 2009.<sup>35</sup> At the same time – after an initial rise – outflows of migrants also tend to fall. Overall, it seems questionable whether the current recession bears out the patterns that are suggested by the buffer theory.

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32 OECD, *The Effects of the Employment of Foreign Workers*, by Wolf Rudiger Bohning and Dennis Maillat (Paris: OECD, 1974).

33 Tim Finch et al., *Shall We Stay or Shall We Go? Re-Migration Trends Among Britain's Immigrants* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 2009).

34 Janet Dobson, Alan Latham and John Salt, *On the Move? Labour Migration in Times of Recession* (London: Policy Network, 2009); Elena Jurado, *Immigration and Job-Creation: a Virtuous Cycle?* (London: Policy Network, 2009).

35 Home Office, *Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary*, United Kingdom, July–September 2009, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs09/immig309.pdf>; James Boxell, "Signs of Growth Turn Jobseekers' Tide", *Financial Times*, 27 November 2009.

However, even if the buffer theory was a good description of migration over the economic cycle – and it might be in some areas within Britain – there is still a concern that migration will inevitably cause disruptions and challenge community life. And even if immigration does not in fact reduce employment chances of resident workers, some may still fear that it might. These fears – even if they are not based on evidence – need to be addressed if social cohesion is to be strengthened.

## SOCIAL EFFECTS OF MIGRATION

Migration raises concerns for individuals beyond their prospects in the labour market. Community life might be disrupted and depleted if people constantly move in and out of a neighbourhood. The permanent population may feel that benefit payments to migrants are unfair and that their access to public services should first be earned. Other social effects of migration include worries that social and cultural institutions are threatened and that communities might suffer from rising crime rates.

A diverse community and high volumes of people moving in and out tend to make it more difficult for people to establish ties between each other. Analysing community heterogeneity, Coffe and Geys find “a significant negative relation between social capital and the number of nationalities within a municipality.”<sup>36</sup> High volumes of fluctuation in the population lead to weaker ties with their neighbours and the community in general, especially if people know from the beginning that they are staying for a limited period only. This is evident in the cities chosen for the interviews conducted: neighbourhood cohesion and community life are challenged because of a large number of people moving in and out every year.

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36 Hilde Coffe and Benny Geys, “Community Heterogeneity: A Burden for the Creation of Social Capital?”, *Social Science Quarterly* 87: 5 (2006).

Group conflict theory emphasises the contest for resources between migrants and the native population.<sup>37</sup> It suggests that perceptions of ‘group threat’ will develop when groups find themselves in zero-sum competition with one another for resources; if one group successfully consumes the resources, this prevents the other group from having them. Tensions develop between groups rather than between individuals, a situation which seems to reflect anxiety about migrants’ recourse to public funds.<sup>38</sup>

Migrants contribute to public funds through direct and indirect taxation, yet perceptions can develop that, in using publicly provided services, such as education, health and certain benefits, they are enjoying resources that they have not contributed sufficiently to building up. The native population can begin to perceive this as part of a zero-sum game. A perception of migrants burdening the welfare state paves the way for stereotyping, ethnocentricity and discriminatory behaviour amongst the native population.<sup>39</sup>

A different source of tension is the perception of migration as a threat to social and cultural institutions. Individuals in the native population are acutely aware of changes to their way of life, comprising the balance of races, ethnicities, political standpoints, languages and customs in their community. At the extreme, they may feel that any change to this balance as a result of migration constitutes “a degradation of the nation-state.”<sup>40</sup> Rather than being

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37 Donald T. Campbell, “Ethnocentric and Other Altruistic Motives”, in David Levine, *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (1965).

38 Herbert Blumer, “Race Prejudice As a Sense of Group Position”, *Pacific Sociological Review* 1: 1 (1958), argues that “race prejudice exists basically in a sense of group position rather than a set of feelings which members of one racial group have toward the members of another racial group”. Jeffrey S. Passel and Micheal Fix, “Myths About Immigration”, *Foreign Policy* 95 (1994), argue that immigration places an increasingly heavy burden on the national and local governments in the US – where the debate has included litigation against the federal government for providing services to refugees.

39 Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, *Social Dominance: an Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 17.

40 Lauren M. McLaren, “Anti-Immigrant Prejudice in Europe: Contact, Threat Perception, and Preferences for the Exclusion of Migrants”, *Social Forces* 81: 3 (2002).

based on individual experiences, prejudice is held collectively, and is profoundly affected by the interactions between groups.<sup>41</sup> Members of the native population can perceive migration to increase the threat of crime and civil unrest. This may be based on exposure to crime, protests, riots and violent attacks linked to the poor economic circumstances migrants often live in. Yet, it may also be based on intolerance or racism based on 'symbolic threat' posed by migration to the permanent population.

It is clear that the context in which an individual lives is likely to influence how threatened they feel by migration. The perception of threat, for example, depends on the size of the subordinate group relative to the dominant group and economic circumstances.<sup>42</sup> Some variance of the perceived effects of migration can be explained by the origin and personal characteristics of specific migrant groups, as well as the characteristics of the person who holds these perceptions. For example, a Europe-wide survey found that those with higher education and higher income levels are more likely to favour immigration.<sup>43</sup>

There are also social consequences for home countries left behind by emigrants. The emigration of highly skilled workers deprives core sectors of key skills and the potential for development and innovation. The demographic structure of the country as a whole is also changed. The positive side of highly skilled workers' emigration is that they are able to work in the sectors they are trained for. Moreover, the skills and knowledge, as well as their payment in receiving countries, may be repatriated in a process of "brain-and-prosperity equalization"<sup>44</sup> as migrants return home having built on their skills.

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41 Lincoln Quillian, "Prejudice As a Response to Perceived Group Threat: Population Composition and Anti-Immigrant and Racial Prejudice in Europe", *American Sociological Review* 60: 4 (1995).

42 Hubert M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority-Group Relations* (New York: Wiley New York, 1967).

43 Bureau of European Policy Advisers, European Commission, *Migration and Public Perception*, by Marcel Canoy et al. (Brussels: European Commission, 2006).

44 OECD, "Migration and the Brain Drain Phenomenon", [http://www.oecd.org/document/40/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33935\\_39269032\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/40/0,3343,en_2649_33935_39269032_1_1_1_1,00.html).

These real and perceived challenges, both economics and social, will stay with us in the future because, in the long run, migration is set to rise significantly across the world. Lower communication and travel costs, changing demographics and an internationalisation of the production of goods and services all contribute to this trend. A report by the World Bank estimated that, without migration, Europe, North America and other developed countries will, by 2050, face a combined labour shortage of 215 million workers, while other countries such as those in the Middle East and North Africa might experience a combined excess of 500 million workers.<sup>45</sup> While such long-term projections should be regarded with caution, and employment is not the only rationale for migration, this research does indicate the likelihood of continued economic migration. As Kofi Anan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, put it:

*International migration is likely to be with us as long as human societies continue to develop. It has increased significantly in recent decades, as it did in previous periods of economic integration, such as the one preceding the First World War. In all probability it will continue to rise in the decades ahead.<sup>46</sup>*

Vibrant and dynamic labour markets attract migrants as places where they are able to deploy their skills. Large cities in advanced liberal democracies tend to be magnets for migrants to create so-called 'melting pots', where large numbers of people from many different backgrounds and religions and of all ages and professions come together. It is here that the effects of the international trends are most clearly felt. The following chapter takes a closer look at migration in Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York.

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45 World Bank, *Shaping the Future: A Long-Term Perspective of People and Job Mobility in the Middle East and North Africa* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009).

46 Kofi Anan, Address to the General Assembly, New York, June 2006, <http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=2074>.



### 3. MIGRATION TRENDS IN BIRMINGHAM, LONDON, MADRID AND NEW YORK

This chapter looks at migration trends in Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York and shows how migration contributed to the character of these cities and the everyday life of their citizens. Migration is central to the character of each of the four cities. While New York was created and grew because of its migrants, Madrid only recently experienced an increasing flow of migrants. London's and Birmingham's migration experience are somewhere between these extremes, and policymakers can learn from bridging activities in all four cities. The aim of this chapter is to get a feel for the multifaceted impact of migration on local communities.

#### BIRMINGHAM

At the start of the twentieth century, people from all over the British Empire settled in Birmingham. These early relationships laid the foundations for a legacy which continued beyond the world wars and which has shaped the city. The first migrants to settle there were from modern-day Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as China. They were brought over to the country as labourers on British steamships and, because of the post-war labour shortage, were able to find work in Birmingham.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, migration into the city has been closely connected to industry and the economy.<sup>48</sup> The city's significance as a manufacturing base in the 1950s and 1960s helped to perpetuate the trend, with huge numbers of Commonwealth citizens from, amongst others, India, East Africa and the Caribbean making Birmingham their home. In the 1980s and 1990s, migrants from Eastern and Western Europe, including

47 Nick Henry, Cheryl McEwan and Jane S. Pollard, "Globalization From Below: Birmingham – Postcolonial Workshop of the World", *Area* 34: 2 (2002), 120.

48 *Ibid.*, 117–27.

refugees, further diversified the multiethnic make-up of the city.<sup>49</sup>

As new migrants arrived in Birmingham and the UK in the post-war years, Labour's 1968 and 1976 Race Relations Acts became law and the Commission for Racial Equality was formed to uphold them. These Acts, and the body that oversaw them, prohibited discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity. In the wake of this, in 1968, the Conservative MP for the nearby city of Wolverhampton, Enoch Powell, made a highly controversial speech in which he protested against the rise in Commonwealth immigration, rejected the notion of integration, and called for limits to the numbers and rights of new migrants. He branded the Act "dangerous and divisive."<sup>50</sup> This famous *Rivers of Blood Speech* aimed to speak to those Birmingham residents, who feared that, in the poor economic climate of the 1970s West Midlands, the influx of new migrants would put unnecessary strain on the city's industries and welfare.<sup>51</sup>

From the 1970s onwards, the West Midlands lost its industrial heart. Between 1970 and 1987, Birmingham lost 150,000 manufacturing jobs. To fill the huge hole left by the decline of the industry, Birmingham City Council invested heavily in developing cultural and service industries, investing an estimated £276 million in the late 1980s in flagship projects such as the National Exhibition Centre and the Birmingham Symphony Hall. New migrants to the area were now likely to be entrepreneurs, keen to utilise the evolving character and strong multicultural community of the city, rather than searching for low-skilled factory work. This helped to enliven and diversify Birmingham's cultural character and atmosphere. This stream of migration into Birmingham has prevailed to the present day. More than 10 years ago, *The Economist* wrote that Birmingham's

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49 Harris Beider, *Neighbourhood Renewal & Housing Markets: Community Engagement in the US & UK* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 131.

50 Enoch Powell, "Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech", *The Telegraph*, 20 April 1968, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html>.

51 Ibid.

“future will depend on the immigrants who have made it their home.”<sup>52</sup> It was true then, and the point still holds for the years to come.

The total population of Birmingham fell during the 1990s,<sup>53</sup> but the ethnic diversity grew significantly in the 10 years between 1991 and 2001. In 1991, 21.5% of the population categorised themselves as from a background other than White, and by 2001 this had risen to almost 30%.<sup>54</sup> This statistic reveals that Birmingham is much more diverse than the UK overall, 90% of whose people are from a White background. The population in Birmingham is set to diversify further in the coming decades: by 2026 it has been projected that over half will be from a non-White background.<sup>55</sup>

Birmingham’s population is very diverse in terms not only of its ethnicity but also of its country of origin and its religious affiliation. As a result of migration, 16.5% of the city’s one million residents were not born in the UK (compared to 9.3% nationwide).<sup>56</sup> In addition, these migrants come from many different countries (see Figure 3.1 below). Religion adds further to this variety. As can be seen in Figure 3.7 below, 60% of Birmingham’s population are Christian, almost 15% are Muslim, and 12% stated that they do not belong to any religion.<sup>57</sup> This compares to nationwide statistics which show that more than 70% of the population are Christian, 3% are Muslim, and just under 15% had no religion.<sup>58</sup>

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52 “From Workshop to Melting Pot: Birmingham”, *The Economist*, 8 August 1998; Birmingham City Council, Equity and Diversity Division, *Lozells Disturbances Summary Report*, by Peter Latchford (Birmingham: Black Radley, 2007).

53 Ludi Simpson, *Population Forecasts for Birmingham, CCSR Working Paper* (University of Manchester, Centre for Census and Survey Research 2007), 7.

54 Henry et al., “Globalization From Below”, 121.

55 Simpson, *Population Forecasts for Birmingham*, 8.

56 Birmingham City Council Development & Culture Directorate, *Birmingham Profile – September 2009* (2009), 2.

57 Office for National Statistics, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>.

58 Birmingham Profile – September 2009, <http://www.birminghameconomy.org.uk/dl-show.asp?displayfile=../download/profiles/birmingham.pdf>.

When considering Birmingham's long-established diversity, there is a temptation to assume that various violent incidents in the city which have involved ethnic minorities are linked solely to clashes between different ethnic groups. But almost all these incidents in fact highlight more deep-seated social deprivation problems or reflect national tensions amongst small sub-populations. The densely populated and socially deprived East Handsworth and Lozells area in north-west Birmingham has, over the years, frequently been at the centre of disturbances attributed to collisions between different ethnic groups living alongside each other. In this area, 82% of the population is from an ethnicity which is nationally in the minority.<sup>59</sup> More importantly, however, more than half the borough is described as economically inactive, more than half of homes are rented rather than owner-occupied (where the average homeowner occupation across Birmingham is 60%), a third of children live in single-parent households, two-fifths live in households where no adult is in employment (compared to 30% for each across the city), and 28% of residents are unemployed or in the lowest-skilled jobs (as compared to 20% across the whole city).<sup>60</sup>

## LONDON

At the start of the twentieth century, 3.6% of London's population had been born in a foreign country. Most of these people came to the UK from Europe, with Russians, Germans and Polish-Russians being the biggest minority groups.<sup>61</sup> Many of these migrants were Jewish and had fled persecution in the late nineteenth century. The Russian Revolution and the two world wars resulted in further European immigration.

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59 Birmingham City Council, Equity and Diversity Division, *Lozells Disturbances Summary Report*, 5.

60 Ward Profile: Lozells and East Handsworth, [http://www.hobtpct.nhs.uk/your\\_health/health\\_profiles/documents/LozellsandEastHandsworth.pdf](http://www.hobtpct.nhs.uk/your_health/health_profiles/documents/LozellsandEastHandsworth.pdf), 5-9.

61 Migration and Citizenship, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/Collections/OnlineResources/X20L/Themes/1386/>.

In the 1950s and 1960s, a large influx of migrants came to London from the Caribbean. This was followed by a significant wave of migration resulting from Ugandans fleeing Idi Amin's regime of the 1970s.<sup>62</sup> Set against this background, Enoch Powell's *Rivers of Blood Speech*, and his subsequent dismissal, attracted great attention in London. Three days after his speech, 1,000 dockers went on strike in protest at his dismissal and marched towards Parliament. But in some quarters there was outrage at his speech. Members of the shadow cabinet threatened resignation if Powell was not sacked, and on 28 April 1968, 1,500 people marched to Downing Street chanting for Enoch Powell's arrest.

In recent decades, the rate of migration to London has increased significantly, giving the city the most socially, ethnically and culturally diverse demographic in the UK. In 2001, when the last census was conducted, nearly a third of London's population came from an ethnic group other than White, with the term 'White' encompassing an already diverse range of populations consisting of native British, Irish and mainland European. This compares to the overall UK population of which 90% were from White backgrounds. Most recently, Eastern Europeans have added to the demographic, with the pace of this move accelerating significantly in recent years due to the 2004 and 2007 EU accession of several Eastern European countries.<sup>63</sup>

The high rate of migration to London has resulted in the fact that 27.1% of London's approximately 7 million residents were not born in the UK (compared to 9.3% of foreign-born people nationwide and 16.5% in Birmingham).<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, not only is almost a third of London's population foreign-born, they also come from many different countries (see Figure 3.2 below).

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62 Select Committee on Communities and Local Government Committee, Tenth Report, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcomloc/369/36904.htm#a1>.

63 Migration Information Source, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=736>.

64 Birmingham City Council Development & Culture Directorate, *Birmingham Profile – September 2009*, 2.

As can be seen in Figure 3.8, London has a similar religious composition to Birmingham, with just under 60% of the population claiming to be Christian. The next biggest group consists of those who state they do not belong to any religion (slightly more than 15%), followed by the Muslim population of 8% (compared to a 3.1% Muslim population in England as a whole).<sup>65</sup>

However, the picture is more complex than the above categories suggest. First, the composition of ethnicities varies between boroughs – for example, there is a concentration of people of Bangladeshi origin in Tower Hamlets,<sup>66</sup> and the Green Lanes area of Haringey is home to an estimated 30,000 Turkish-speaking residents. Despite these strong ethnic communities, not all migrant groups establish similar structures. An example is the lack of any particular community centre for people from Afghanistan, something which has been attributed to the “strong and separate regional identities” found in Afghanistan, i.e. groupings have occurred on a different scale than along national, or even ethnic lines.<sup>67</sup>

## MADRID

Spain has traditionally been a country of people leaving for new shores rather than one where people come to settle.<sup>68</sup> But this has changed over the past three decades, especially during the 1980s when Spain began to experience more migrants arriving than emigrants leaving.<sup>69</sup> During that decade, Spain was very much a “waiting room”, with large numbers of people moving on to Northern Europe. Yet by the end of

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65 Office for National Statistics. Census 2001, <http://www.birminghameconomy.org.uk/dl-show.asp?displayfile=../download/profiles/birmingham.pdf>.

66 Commission for Racial Equality, Diversity and Integration, Tower Hamlets, <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/cre/diversity/map/london/towerhamlets.html>.

67 Le Benedictus, “Turks in Green Lanes”, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2005/jan/21/britishidentity5>.

68 Jordi Pascual i Ruiz, “Culture, Connectedness and Social Cohesion in Spain”, *Canadian Journal of Communication* 27 (2002), 170.

69 Vicente Rodríguez Rodríguez, *Inmigración, Formación y Empleo En La Comunidad De Madrid* (Madrid: Instituto de Economía y Geografía, 2005).

the decade, this had changed.<sup>70</sup> This was partly the result of changes in legislation in countries such as Germany, Switzerland and France, and partly because of cultural similarities within the countries around the Mediterranean. In the mid-1990s, immigration had become the most important national issue for Spaniards after terrorism.<sup>71</sup>

Madrid today is described as a “vibrant suburban metropolitan core with strong immigrant concentrations in the southern and eastern sections whose population has literally transformed over the last decade.”<sup>72</sup> The number of foreign-born residents in Madrid has increased rapidly since the end of the 1990s, rising from under 2% of the population to 17% in 2008.<sup>73</sup> The greatest influx in the past 10 years came from the Americas, with the number of migrants in 2008 representing an increase of 1056% on the number in 1998. EU migration also heavily increased, with a rise of 840% over the same time period. Migration from the non-EU states in Europe and Asia increased by 544% and 484% respectively, with the lowest increase from Africa still representing an increase of 317% on the population from African origin in 1998.<sup>74</sup> Madrid’s foreign-born population is dominated by individuals born in the Americas. As Figure 3.3 below shows, almost 60% of the foreign-born population were born in the Americas, making this the second largest ethnic group in Madrid. The smallest is those of African origin at 7.5%. Ecuadorians are the largest group from the Americas, while Moroccans and Chinese are the largest groups from Africa and Asia respectively.<sup>75</sup> Following the accession of Romania to the EU in 2006, Romanians have been the dominant group of European migrants arriving in Madrid.<sup>76</sup>

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70 Migration Information Source, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=97>.

71 Ibid.

72 Hamutal Bernstein, “Madrid’s Immigration Transformation: Local Reception in Context”, *APSA* (2009).

73 In 1998, 2.4% of the 2.9 million residents of Madrid were foreign-born. A decade later, over half a million (or 16.8%) of the 3.2 million residents of the city of Madrid were foreign-born.

74 Instituto Nacional de Estadística, <http://www.ine.es/>.

75 Ibid.

76 Unfortunately, the Spanish Census (*Censos de Población y Viviendas 2001*) does not include questions about race or ethnicity. Similarly, the data about religious beliefs is limited, as Figure 3.9 shows.

## NEW YORK

From its beginnings, New York was shaped by its immigrants: it was founded as a trading post by the Dutch in the seventeenth century and was soon taken over by the English. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Irish migrants fleeing the potato famine formed the first large wave of refugees to the US. During the famine years, 75% of Irish migrants arrived in New York, and many of them stayed.<sup>77</sup> Around the turn of the century, the Irish were joined by Italian labour migrants, who came to America to seek better employment than was available in Italy.<sup>78</sup> New York (back then called New Amsterdam) saw the first Jewish refugees, who were fleeing persecution in Brazil in 1654. These Sephardic Jews were joined at the beginning of the early twentieth century by Jews from Eastern Europe. By 1914, there were 1.5 million Jews living in New York. With the rise of Adolf Hitler, a relatively small but culturally significant group of West European Jews sought refuge in the United States and, in particular, in New York.<sup>79</sup>

Over the past 60 years, migration to New York City has undergone several distinct phases. In 1940, approximately one-fifth of migrants to the US settled in New York City, and in 1970 this proportion was approximately one-quarter.<sup>80</sup> The end of the quota system, which favoured some nations over others, came in 1965. Amongst other factors, this meant that the percentage of foreign-born New Yorkers rose significantly: while in 1970 18.2% were foreign-born, by 2005 this had risen to 36.6%, notwithstanding changes in immigration and welfare laws in 1996. Similar to other megacities, New York is also the final destination of domestic migrants, who are not captured by the above numbers, but who also add to New York's diversity and the challenge of dealing with demographic fluctuations.

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77 The History Place, <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/america.htm>.

78 American Immigration Law Federation, <http://www.aifl.org/awards/benefit2004/ahp04essay.asp>.

79 New York State Archives, [http://www.archives.nysed.gov/a/research/res\\_topics\\_pgc\\_jewish\\_essay.shtml](http://www.archives.nysed.gov/a/research/res_topics_pgc_jewish_essay.shtml).

80 George J. Borjas, "Immigration Trends in the New York Metropolitan Area", *Economic Policy Review* (2005).

The US Census Bureau estimates that the population of New York stood at 8,363,710 in 2008.<sup>81</sup> The largest ethnic group was Whites at 44.7%, followed by people of Latino or Hispanic origin (27%), Black Americans (26.6%), Asians (9.8%), and American Indian or Alaskan Natives (0.5%). In addition, there is a small population (0.1%) of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. Finally, 4.9% of people reported belonging to two or more races.<sup>82</sup>

It has not been mandatory to ask directly about religious affiliation in the US Census for almost two decades, but there are a number of different surveys that provide some information about the different religions that are practiced in New York. As can be seen in Figure 3.10 below, New York has large Christian and Jewish populations, as well as a significant number of Muslims. Because of the way the data in the *Church and Church Membership Data* are collected, the 'other' category encompasses Buddhism and Sikhism, as well as those responding with 'no religion'.

## COMPARING THE FOUR CITIES: ORIGIN OF FOREIGN-BORN POPULATIONS<sup>83</sup>

In each of the four cities, certain nationalities dominate the foreign-born population.<sup>84</sup>

In Birmingham, Pakistanis form the largest single-nation group, with other large groups consisting of Indians, Bangladeshis, Jamaicans and West-Indians. Nationals of Germany and France, as well as the Former Yugoslavia, Iraq and China, are also present in the foreign-born population (see Figure 3.1).

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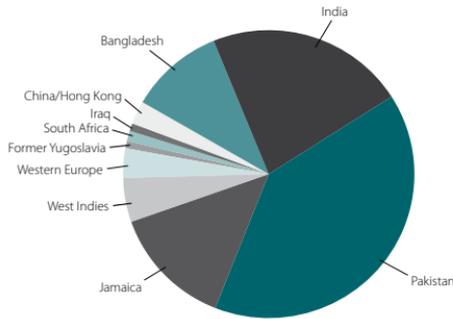
81 Department of City Planning, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/census/popcur.shtml>.

82 "New York City Quick Facts" US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/3651000.html>.

83 In the following sections it was unfortunately not possible to find data in all four cities for the same year.

84 The figures refer to the major countries represented in the foreign-born population rather than all countries of origin represented, i.e. the fractions shown are of the total from these major countries, rather than the total foreign-born population.

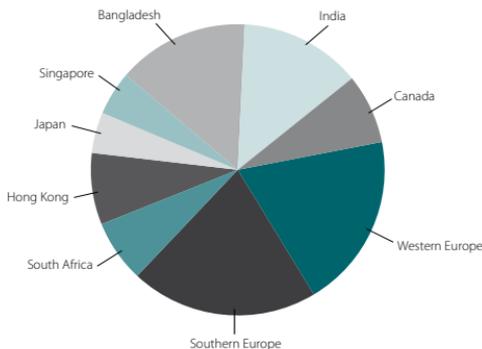
**Figure 3.1: Foreign-born population in Birmingham by region of origin**



Source: Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Data (2004).

In London, nationals of Bangladesh and India are the largest single-nation groups. Nationals of Western Europe form approximately a third of the foreign-born population. There are also significant numbers of foreign-born residents originating from Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong.

**Figure 3.2: Foreign-born population in London by region of origin**

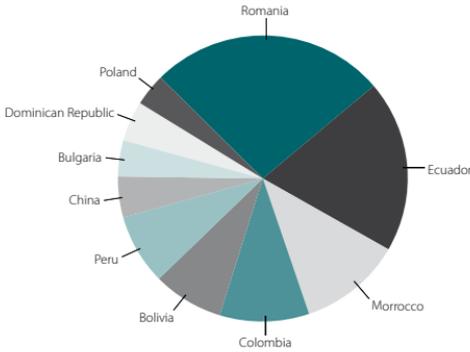


Source: Office for National Statistics Neighbourhood Data (2004).

Whereas the foreign-born populations of both London and Birmingham are dominated by people from India and Bangladesh,

in Madrid, the equivalent groups are Central Europeans and South Americans from Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. Romanians are the single-largest national group in the foreign-born population. The other countries from the most recent enlargements of the EU, Poland and Bulgaria, are also represented.

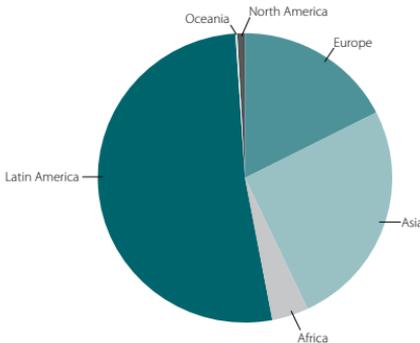
**Figure 3.3: Foreign-born population in Madrid by region of origin**



Source: Padron Municipal de Habitantes (2008).

In New York, people from Latin America form the largest group, comprising more than half of the foreign-born population; the second largest group (around a quarter) are born in Asia.

**Figure 3.4: Foreign-born population in New York by continent of origin**

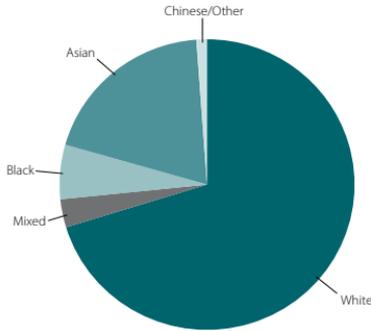


Source: US Census Bureau, Selected Social Characteristics (2006–8).

## ETHNICITY

In all four cities, the white population is the largest ethnicity by size. In Birmingham and London they make up around 70% of the population, and in New York this figure is 44%. As Figure 3.5 shows, Asians are the biggest minority group in Birmingham.

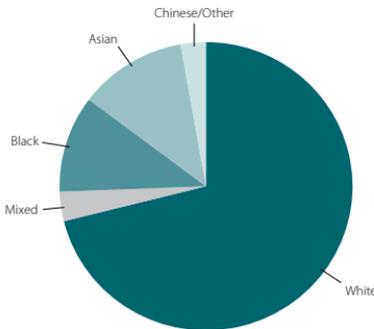
**Figure 3.5: Composition of population in Birmingham by ethnicity**



Source: Birmingham Profile – September 2009, <http://www.birminghameconomy.org.uk> (based on the Census 2001).

London has a similar share of White people as Birmingham, and Asians make up the second largest group, as Figure 3.6 shows. But the Black population is bigger in London than it is in Birmingham.

**Figure 3.6: Composition of population in London by ethnicity**



Source: Office for National Statistics, <http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/cre/diversity/map/london/index.html> <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/H-A.asp>.

As Table 3.1 shows, slightly fewer than half of New Yorkers are White, and slightly more than a quarter describe themselves as Black American or Hispanic/Latino. Since Hispanics can be of any race, some of them might be included in the other categories as well.<sup>85</sup>

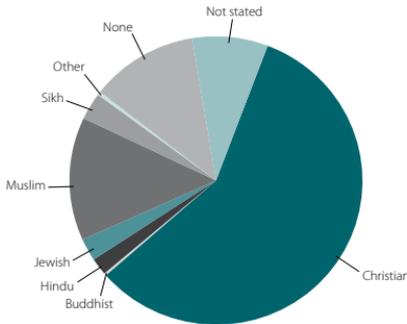
**Table 3.1: Composition of population in New York by ethnicity**

Race	Percentage
White	44.7%
Hispanic or Latino	27%
Black American	26.6%
Asian	9.8%

Source: "New York City Quick Facts" U.S. Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/3651000.html>.

## RELIGION

**Figure 3.7: Main religions in Birmingham**



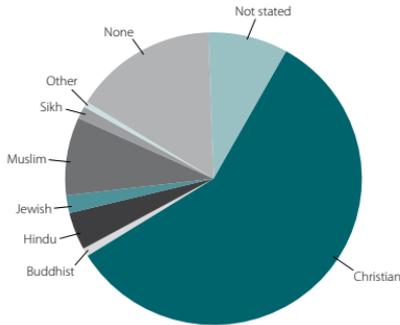
Source: ONS (Census 2001).

The major religion in each of the four cities is Christianity, representing the beliefs of over half of the population in the two British cities.

<sup>85</sup> This is also the reason the percentage numbers do not add up to 100.

There is a lack of data on the different religions represented in Madrid, historically a Catholic city. In New York just under half of the population is Christian.

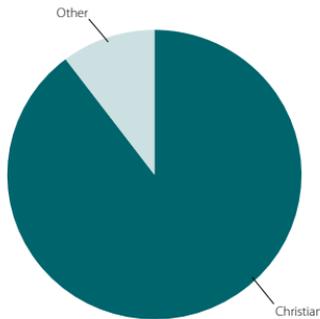
**Figure 3.8: Main religions in London**



Source: ONS (Census 2001).

Similar to Birmingham, almost two-thirds of Londoners describe themselves as Christians. In Birmingham this is followed by around 15% Muslims, while in London this group makes up only 8%.

**Figure 3.9: Main religions in Madrid**



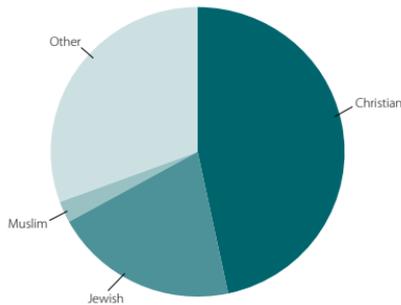
Source: Archdiocese of Madrid, <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dmadr.html>.

Figure 3.9 shows that the proportions of those who describe themselves as Christians is much higher in Madrid than it is in the

other cities. This might be partly because of the fact that migration to Madrid only started recently and partly because a lot of the migrants are of Latin American origin and therefore are often Christian.

In New York just under half of the population would describe themselves as Christian, as shown in Figure 3.10. Around a fifth of the population is Jewish.

**Figure 3.10: Main religions in New York**



Source: Association of Religion Data Archive,  
[http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/reports/counties/36061\\_2000.asp](http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/reports/counties/36061_2000.asp).

As this chapter has shown, Birmingham, London, New York and Madrid are very different cities in some regards: their histories of migration are very different; they differ in size, in the composition of their population by nationality and in many other respects. But they are similar in that they attract migrants in large numbers, they benefit from migration, and they deal with the challenges of super-diversity that are shaped by these flows. The next chapter will set out the theoretical toolkit which we will use to analyse these challenges.

## 4. THREE CONCEPTS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Numerous reports published by the government acknowledge that immigration calls for state intervention.<sup>86</sup> These reports use the term ‘social cohesion’ to describe the goal of an inclusive society. While most people have a rough understanding of what it means, social cohesion is a very broad and slippery concept and few agree on a definition. In a broad sense, it describes the development of a stable and integrated society and the bonds that hold a society together. In this report, we use the government definition:

*A cohesive community is based on three foundations:*

- *People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities*
- *People knowing their rights and responsibilities*
- *People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly*

*and three key ways of living together:*

- *A shared future vision and sense of belonging*
- *A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity*
- *Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.*<sup>87</sup>

This SMF report suggests that social capital, understood as the networks and relationships between people, is a prerequisite for a cohesive society. Of course, once a cohesive society is established,

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<sup>86</sup> See, for example, Department for Communities and Local Government, *PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build More Cohesive, Empowered and Active Communities* (Norwich: HMSO, 2007).

<sup>87</sup> Communities and Local Government, *Cohesion Delivery Framework: Overview* (London: Communities and Local Government, 2009), 9.

it will also produce feedback effects and strengthen the existing social capital. However, the existence of social capital – and in particular bridging social capital, referring to relationships between people from different backgrounds – is necessary for social cohesion in any society. This is why it is so important to understand how bridging social capital is currently created in our communities because it is a major building stone of social cohesion. This chapter discusses different concepts of social capital and concludes that Robert Putnam's concept is the one that is best suited to analyse relationships between people.

In recent decades, the concept of social capital has become highly popular. But as the usage of the term has become more widespread, it has also become more diffuse. Its vagueness and the positive connotations that it creates have meant that academics, journalists and politicians have all used it extensively. Indeed, the term has been accused of being “something of a cure-all for the maladies affecting society at home and abroad.”<sup>88</sup> What follows sets out three key concepts – those developed by James Coleman, Pierre Bourdieu and Robert Putnam – and discusses their value as a toolkit for the analysis of the community organisations in the four cities, Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York.

James Coleman, an American sociologist, was one of the first to use the concept of social capital. For him, social capital is found in the relations between individuals or entities (such as firms). Put differently, social capital refers to structures that facilitate action.<sup>89</sup> Coleman saw his concept of social capital as a theory marrying the disciplines of economics and sociology, considering both the rational intentions of actors and the social networks in which they are embedded. Furstenberg and Hughes note the concept's

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88 Alejandro Portes, “Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology”, *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 1 (1998), 2.

89 James S. Coleman, “Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital”, *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), 98.

provision of “a conceptual link between the attributes of individual actors and their immediate social contexts.”<sup>90</sup>

For Coleman, social capital can take three forms: trustworthiness, exchange of information and social norms. All three functions facilitate interactions amongst different actors: trade, for example, is quicker and more efficient if the involved parties trust each other. Exchanging information can help individuals either because certain information would not have been available to them, or because it saves time to learn about something from a trusted person rather than looking for the information on one’s own. Social norms allow individuals to undertake actions which would be riskier if there was not a social norm to fall back on. Coleman uses the example of a norm which inhibits crime, which will make people feel safe when they leave their house.

Without any doubt, this interdisciplinary approach has its merits for an analysis of social cohesion. Trustworthiness and certain social norms are crucial to building cohesion where labour market fluctuations cause disruptions. Coleman’s approach analyses the benefits of increased social capital to the individual and to society. He does not focus so much on the characteristics of those who hold social capital, but rather on the relations between them, which can be useful in developing an understanding of the mutual benefits of social capital in community settings. He also analyses the importance of social networks for the prosperity of each individual.

But there are two major criticisms of Coleman’s interpretation: first, the intangibility of the concept and, second, its indifference to the backgrounds of those developing social capital. This has led to

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90 Frank F. Furstenberg and Mary E. Hughes, “Social Capital and Successful Development Among At-Risk Youth”, *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57: 3 (1995), 582.

over-simplification of social capital indicators on individual levels.<sup>91</sup> Portes suggests that the ambiguity of Coleman's definition leads to different and frequently contradictory processes being defined as social capital.<sup>92</sup> Morrow describes it as a "nebulous" concept.<sup>93</sup>

Three identifiable stages are grouped together under Coleman's conception: *mechanisms* of social capital (for example, "norms" within a group which either prevent group members from acting, or encourage them); *consequences* of possession of social capital (i.e. access to information); and "'appropriable' social organisation that provide[s] the context for both sources and effects to materialize." Portes argues that, ultimately, only one of these can accurately be defined as social capital: the "consequences" stage.<sup>94</sup> He suggests that there is little distinction between the recipient of social capital, who obtains useful resources "by virtue of membership in different social structures" and thus views the resources obtained as a gift, and the resource itself.

Coleman alludes only briefly to consideration of the backgrounds of the individuals who build social capital. Also, he differentiates between social capital found within and outside the family, and notes the significance of the ratio of children to adults in building effective social capital (the most prosperous children with the most likelihood of finishing school being those from two-parent families, with only one sibling).<sup>95</sup> His concept, however, does not allow for an analysis of groups and their relationships with wider society.

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91 Robert J. Sampson, Jeffrey D. Morenoff and Felton Earls, "Beyond Social Capital: Spatial Dynamics of Collective Efficacy for Children", *American Sociological Review* 64: 5 (1999), 634.

92 Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology", 5.

93 Virginia Morrow, "Chapter 8: Conceptualising Social Capital in Relation to the Well-Being of Children and Young People", in *Child Welfare and Social Policy: an Essential Reader*, Child Welfare and Social Policy: An Essential Reader (Bristol: Policy, 2005), 146.

94 Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology", 5.

95 Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital", 511–112.

Pierre Bourdieu, in contrast, considers who it is that holds social capital, and uses these insights to explain the persistence of class structures in modern society. The French sociologist distinguishes between economic, social and cultural capital. In his understanding, economic capital “is immediately and directly convertible into money”, while cultural capital is convertible only under certain conditions and is often institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications.<sup>96</sup> Social capital, in turn, is “made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which are convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility.”<sup>97</sup> Similar to Coleman’s concept, Bourdieu’s concept assesses the utility of social capital for the individual.

One of the main differences between existing interpretations of the term is whether it is the individual or society that is the reference point. Bourdieu, in particular, took the individual as the unit that feels the consequences of changing social capital levels. In contrast, James Coleman and Robert Putnam developed a concept of social capital where both the individual and society feel its impact. In Putnam’s definition, social capital refers to “social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.”<sup>98</sup>

According to this analysis, the focus is on how to create a society in which people from different backgrounds relate to each other – or, in the terms of the Department for Communities and Local Government – how often “meaningful interaction” between

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96 Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital”, in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 47.

97 *Ibid.*, 47.

98 Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 19.

different ethnic groups occurs.<sup>99</sup> Putnam's work takes a closer look at the possible range of networks amongst individuals and what kind of impact they have both on the individual and on society. His distinction between bonding and bridging social capital lends itself to the analysis of social cohesion, examining which types of social capital cross social cleavages and which reinforce them. Each type is explained in more detail below.

## BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Bonding social capital can be described as "a kind of sociological superglue" that holds people together.<sup>100</sup> It refers to relations amongst people from the same or a similar background and is exclusive in the sense that these networks are only open to people who share at least one important characteristic. Gender, ethnicity, religion, age or professional background are examples of these characteristics; old boys' networks and clubs for women based in religious institutions are examples of networks based on them. Networks can be informal and organised on a local basis, they can explicitly be organised for a certain group, or they can be open to everyone, but only attended by a specific age, religious or ethnic group. These networks are important for their members in determining their own identity and they can provide critical support in times of need.

Bonding social capital has both positive and negative consequences for the individual. It is closely related to economic capital, as it is often a way to ensure access to resources, both for newly arrived migrants<sup>101</sup> and for long-term residents who are

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99 Communities and Local Government, *Citizenship Survey: April–September 2008* (London: HMSO, 2009); Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion* (London: Communities and Local Government, 2009).

100 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 23.

101 Roger Zetter et al., *Immigration, Social Cohesion and Social Capital: What Are the Links?* (York: Oxford Brookes University, 2006), 22.

established in their community. Trusted members of a group can pass on information about a huge range of things. Information about public services and about how to apply for a job are just two examples. On the other hand, this means that bonding social capital can, intentionally or unintentionally, exclude those outside the bonding group from resources, for example by withholding information. Advantages in the labour market which are not based on merit, for example, can arise if bonding social capital grows too strong.

As mentioned above, bonding capital needs a set of common characteristics at its foundation. These shared norms can be restrictive, curtailing individuals' privacy and autonomy.<sup>102</sup> While this restriction of individual freedom is not a direct consequence of bonding social capital, it is closely related because social norms and bonding social capital reinforce each other. A related problem is the incentives for those taking up the support from other group members. While in most circumstances support needs to be 'earned' in some way or other, group members often help each other unconditionally, mainly on the basis that they belong to the same group, and in the expectation of reciprocity and future aid by third parties on the same basis. This provides an important safety net for those involved. However, there is a possibility that group members accept support without reciprocating. This form of free-riding and restricted freedom are two consequences of strong bonding social capital negatively affecting the individual.

In addition to these negative effects on the individual, there are potential downsides for the whole of society from strong bonding capital. It can mean that actors become too entrenched in relationships, resulting in inertia and parochialism.<sup>103</sup> If people from different backgrounds rarely mix, then creativity and

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102 Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology", 16.

103 Paul S. Adler and Seok-Woo Kwon, "Social Capital: Prospects for a New Concept", *Academy of Management Review* 27: 1 (2002), 30.

innovation are reduced. Seen from an economic point of view, strong bonding social capital can therefore hamper innovation and economic growth.<sup>104</sup> Much more important, however, are the social problems related to strong bonding social capital: it can be divisive, emphasising differences between groups rather than similarities.<sup>105</sup> The result might be a society where social mobility is weak and different groups hold prejudices about each other. High in-group social capital can have negative consequences in terms of overall social cohesion. As Adler and Kwon put it, “strong identification with the focal group may contribute to the fragmentation of the broader whole.”<sup>106</sup> The negative consequences of the resulting segregation were laid out in Chapter 1.

Bonding social capital can therefore be either a positive or a negative contribution to society, depending on the circumstances. It often provides vital support to individuals, but it can also be exclusive and atomising. It can be empowering for those who hold it, which can sometimes be to the detriment of those who do not have it. Chapter 5 explores this theme further and seeks to determine when bonding social capital turns negative.

## BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Although relations between people from the same background – bonding social capital – are important to the individual, especially in their function as a safety net, they will lead to a dysfunctional society if they are the only ties which exist amongst people. *Bridging* social capital refers to relations amongst people *who do not share the same background* – whether it be in terms of ethnicity,

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104 For a discussion, see Sjoerd Beugelsdijk and Sjak Smulders, *Bridging and Bonding Social Capital: Which Type Is Good for Economic Growth* (2003), [http://spitswww.uvt.nl/web/fsw/lustrum/papers/sjak\\_sjoerd\\_revised.pdf](http://spitswww.uvt.nl/web/fsw/lustrum/papers/sjak_sjoerd_revised.pdf).

105 Pauline H. Cheong et al., “Immigration, Social Cohesion and Social Capital: A Critical Review”, *Critical Social Policy* 27: 1 (2007).

106 Adler and Kwon, “Social Capital: Prospects for a New Concept”, 31.

religion, class or any other important characteristic. Networks of this kind are inclusive, “outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages.”<sup>107</sup> They are important for the transmission of information because people from different backgrounds will have access to a wider variety of sources.

Bridging social capital plays an important role from two perspectives: first, if bridges exist, information can flow between people from different backgrounds, thereby creating chances for minority groups, for example, to find work. In contrast to a society where resources are held by a small group (bound by strong bonding social capital), bridging allows the emergence of a more cohesive society. Second, if bridges exist, people are less likely to develop hatred towards those from a group different from one’s own, or, as sociologists put it, out-group hatred. Once personal ties are involved, it is much harder to dismiss a group of people because of their language, looks or ethnicity. As Nannestad and his colleagues put it, “building bridges between groups becomes essential to keep them from becoming increasingly superglued.”<sup>108</sup>

In this report bridging social capital is understood as the level of trust and actual interactions between people who, in at least one important respect, come from significantly different backgrounds, in terms, for example, of ethnicity, nationality, religion, class or culture.

## LINKING SOCIAL CAPITAL

In addition to bonding and bridging, linking is another form that social capital can take.<sup>109</sup> In contrast to the two concepts outlined above, linking social capital refers to the ties that citizens have with

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107 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 22.

108 Peter Nannestad, Gunnar Lind Haase Svendsen and Gert Tinggaard Svendsen, “Bridge Over Troubled Water? Migration and Social Capital”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34: 4 (2008), 628.

109 See, for example, Stephen Aldridge, David Halpern and Sarah Fitzpatrick, *Social Capital. A Discussion Paper* (London: Performance and Innovation Unit, 2002).

those in power, in particular political representatives, and is therefore also termed 'vertical engagement'. This form of social capital is crucial for democracy, because it relates to the way that citizens make themselves heard and how they try to influence local, regional or national politics.

As Dalston puts it: "Democracy expects an active citizenry because it is through discussion, popular interest and involvement in politics that societal goals should be defined and carried out in a democracy. Without public involvement in the process, democracy lacks both its legitimacy and its guiding force."<sup>110</sup> For these reasons, a lack of linking social capital is often bemoaned in the press and by politicians. In her retirement speech, Betty Boothroyd, the former Speaker of the House of Commons, warned that "the level of cynicism about Parliament, and the accompanying alienation of the young from the democratic process, is troubling."<sup>111</sup>

However, this form of social capital is not the focus of this report. While it is crucial for a well-functioning democracy, it is not directly linked to an inclusive society and will therefore not be further discussed here.

Although Putnam has his critics,<sup>112</sup> his distinction between bonding and bridging social capital seem adequate for analysing the genesis of social capital and for drawing policy conclusion for three reasons:

1. His concept makes it clear that more social capital will not necessarily be a positive outcome if it means stronger bonding and more exclusive networks. The benefits of

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110 Russel J. Dalton, "Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior", *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 6/7 (2000), 927.

111 Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 315; House of Commons Official Report, 26 July 2000, cols 1113–14, cited in Paul Whiteley, "The State of Participation in Britain", *Parliamentary Affairs* 56 (2003).

112 See, for example, Aldridge, Halpern and Fitzpatrick, *Social Capital. A Discussion Paper*; James DeFilippis, "The Myth of Social Capital in Community Development", *Housing Policy Debate* 12: 4 (2001).

increased social capital depend on the relationship between bridging and bonding social capital: bonding social capital on its own is likely to have negative repercussions because it can exclude others, whereas, when paired with bridging social capital, it can be very positive and is integral to a cohesive society. This is an issue we will discuss in detail in Chapter 5.

2. Putnam's concept is a good lens through which to analyse the consequences of social capital on an individual and at societal level. While social mobility and the advancement of the individual are crucial for a fair society, so too are the impacts of personal advancement on society as a whole. Therefore it seems apt to use Putnam's concept to analyse how networks between people from different backgrounds evolve, under which circumstances they prosper and what policy can do to enhance this progress. Since the main focus of this report is on bridging social capital, it takes a narrower definition of social capital than the academic and government literature mentioned above.
3. Bridging social capital is about relationships between people from different backgrounds. For that reason it is apt for analysis of relations between immigrants and non-immigrants.

Putnam's concept offers the tools to analyse the characteristics and the quality of different bonds between people. It recognises both personal and societal benefits of social capital and offers guidelines on how to mitigate the disruptions that a flexible labour market can cause to community life.

To draw policy conclusions, however, the relationship between bonding and bridging social capital is crucial. Does strong bonding prohibit bridging? Or does more bonding mean that an individual also has more bridging social capital? The next chapter seeks to answer these questions.

## 5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BONDING AND BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

The last chapter laid out three theories of social capital and discussed their value as an analytical framework. This chapter takes a closer look at the relationship between bonding and bridging social capital and analyses the influence of attitudes on social capital 'vehicles'. The chapter concludes with an analysis of what determines whether bonding social capital is positive or negative for society.

It is generally beneficial to wider society if there are more and stronger bridges between people from different backgrounds, since this encourages a more cohesive and inclusive society. It cannot be in the public interest to strengthen the bonds within specific groups alone, because of the possible negative consequences outlined previously. Because bonding social capital has a tendency to develop 'organically' – i.e. individuals are more inclined to join groups of like-minded people from a socially similar background<sup>113</sup> – policy should focus on fostering bridging social capital. Policy support for the creation of bridging social capital is important not only because it is harder to build than bonding social capital, but also because there is the possibility that it decays faster.<sup>114</sup> This suggests that bridging activities need to be supported until the bridges are self-sustaining. But this starting point leads to complex questions for policymakers. Does strong bonding capital help or hinder the development of bridging social capital? Or, as one of our expert seminar participants suggested, is social capital always positive, regardless of its type? If bonding hinders bridging, this relationship poses difficult problems for policy, potentially pitting it against bonding activities. The issue is when does bonding not lead to bridging?

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113 See Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and John R. Hibbing, "Citizenship and Civic Engagement", *Annual Review of Political Science* (2005), 227–49.

114 Ronald S. Burt, "Bridge Decay", *Social Networks* 24: 4 (2002); David Halpern, "Capital Gains", *RSA Journal* (2009).

Whether bridging and bonding social capital are negatively or positively correlated is the subject of much debate in the literature.<sup>115</sup> A number of academics argue that bonding and bridging social capital are negatively correlated. In other words, the stronger (weaker) the bonding social capital becomes, the weaker (stronger) the bridging social capital becomes. They claim that there is an 'in-group bias', referring to the notion that people prefer to mix with those who have the same characteristics as they do, as well as 'out-group prejudice', referring to negative attitudes towards strangers who are different from oneself.<sup>116</sup> These attitudes towards the in-group and the out-group might be reinforced in situations where scarce resources need to be allocated. Brewer argues that by giving aid only "to mutually acknowledged in-group members, total costs and risks of non-reciprocation can be contained."<sup>117</sup> Members of the in-group help each other because they know from experience that this help will be returned, whereas help offered to out-groups might not. The latter might have been confirmed by experience, or it could be a result of prejudice and lack of trust. In this scenario, the more resources that are given to the in-group, the fewer resources are left to be given to the out-group. This effect is observed with regard to both social and economic capital. In short, on this view bonding networks and social cohesion are a zero-sum game.

If bridging and bonding social capital are negatively correlated and if the negative effects of strong bonding social capital increase, bridging social capital needs to be supported by government. For example, if a society is very segregated and displays strong bonds within communities but little interaction between them, prejudice can spread easily. And, if paired with scarce housing or a gloomy

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115 Negative correlation means that high values of bonding social capital are likely to be associated with low bridging social capital. Positive correlation means that high values of bonding social capital are likely to be associated with high values of bridging social capital. In theory, there is also the option that the two types of social capital are not correlated at all, but there is no reliable evidence on this.

116 See Brewer, "The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Love and Outgroup Hate?".

117 *Ibid.*, 433.

labour market outlook, this might lead to riots – as happened in Oldham in 2001 or Paris in 2005, where cars and public buildings were set on fire.

This reading of the relationship between each type of social capital has profound implications for the policy response. Special measures to overcome these negative effects of strong bonding and weak bridging could include activities targeted specifically at those groups that lack bridging social capital, but also, perhaps more controversially, weakening the strong bonds.

In contrast, a positive correlation between the two types of social capital is supported by Putnam and others.<sup>118</sup> A study that examined bridging and bonding capital amongst the five major non-Western immigrant groups in Denmark found that trusting one's own group and trusting the native Danes were, indeed, positively correlated.<sup>119</sup> The authors found the same correlation in friendship ties: those who had more ties with immigrants also had more Danish friends, although overall levels of ties within the immigrant group were higher than between immigrants and native Danes.<sup>120</sup> They conclude that trust in similar people (in essence, bonding social capital) has positive spill-over effects on society in that it is related to higher trust in other groups as well (in essence, bridging social capital). The Darra Singh report also stated that those with high levels of bonding social capital are also likely to bridge.<sup>121</sup>

If bridging and bonding social capital are positively correlated, we would observe that when bonding social capital strengthens so does bridging social capital. For example, if immigrants are

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118 Putnam, "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century. The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture". See also David Halpern, *Social Capital* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005).

119 Nannestad, Svendsen and Svendsen, "Bridge Over Troubled Water? Migration and Social Capital", 618.

120 Ibid.

121 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, 162.

encouraged to get to know each other and develop confidence, they are more likely to engage with people from different backgrounds – especially if they are provided with appropriate opportunities in which to do so. The required policy response here is very different from that where the correlation is negative. In this scenario measures could be targeted at groups to enable them to develop their bonds, which will also help to promote bridges between those groups.

Interviews conducted in the course of this research showed a mixed picture of the relationship between bonding and bridging social capital, with some programme coordinators stating that relations with people from similar backgrounds (for example, other refugees or migrants from the same country) can be associated either with a positive or with a negative relationship with wider society. As one interviewee in London said about bonds: “They might be a hindrance to integration if they are very strong; in London this can, for example, be observed for Chinese refugees, who, for support, rely heavily on other Chinese people in London rather than on local charities.” For this community the bonds are very strong and any bridging social capital is very weak. The lack of English language skills is certainly a contributing factor. However, the interviewee said that for other groups of people, information about how to engage with a particular community organisation as well as the wider community is very trustworthy and reliable if it travels through word of mouth within refugee groups, indicating strong bonding. As a consequence, opportunities to join groups and meet others are often taken up if information travels through these channels, creating bridging social capital.

As discussed, evidence shows that a positive and a negative correlation between bonding and bridging social capital are both possible. The type of correlation seems to depend on the activities involved. Are they exclusive or inclusive of others? Are they based on emphasising difference and superiority of the in-group? Or are

they primarily benign in motive and about providing support for the in-group, while remaining open to rest of society? Ultimately it depends on the specific circumstances in which both forms of social capital are created and sustained.

The difference between the two forms of correlation between bonding and bridging social capital might lie in the 'access to bridging points'. In both of the cited examples the initial situation includes strong bonding social capital. In the first example (that of a segregated society leading to tensions) this strong bonding capital is accompanied by weak bridging capital. In the second example (the study of ties between immigrants and native Danes) it is accompanied by strong bridging capital. In the former case, there were no 'bridging points' between groups, and prejudices and tensions were able to develop and spread. These bridging points need to exist. They form a minimum requirement for the creation of social capital. Bridging points can be anything from local sports clubs targeting people from diverse backgrounds to government initiatives aimed at bringing people together and breaking down barriers and prejudices. The workplace and schools can also serve as bridging points as long as they avoid polarisation and segregation.

If bonding and bridging social capital decrease or increase simultaneously, driven by underlying causes, one can argue that the drivers of bonding social capital are also the drivers of bridging social capital. An explanation for a positive relationship between bonding and bridging is that people need to establish their own identity and position in society, which helps them to go out and mix with others: "[B]onding social capital can give people the confidence they need in order to bridge."<sup>122</sup> An example of how both bonding and bridging social capital can be developed is given in Box 5.1.

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122 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, 111.

### **5.1: Fostering bonding and bridging at *Otra Mano, Otro Corazón***

Otra Mano, Otro Corazón (Another Hand, Another Heart) is a charity in Madrid which offers psychological services as well as general support and activities for migrants who are at the risk of social exclusion. Their aim is to foster integration on two levels: amongst migrants and between migrants and wider society. Ties are encouraged amongst the migrants, most of whom come from Latin America, to build a space where people who share common experiences can get together.

In addition, most of the staff at Otra Mano, Otro Corazón are migrants themselves, which allows a relationship between them and the new migrant to be founded on empathy and confidence as the psychologists will understand the transcultural difficulties the migrant is going through, which might not have been the case with a Spanish psychologist. This strong emphasis on bonding is matched with a concern for integration in wider society. Otra Mano, Otro Corazón encourages migrants to go out, do things they never did before and get to know new people. In addition, they emphasise the importance of keeping bonding networks open to others and not binding individuals so much that they cannot build bridges.

## **ATTITUDES AND VEHICLES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Above, we explained the need for bridging points as a minimum requirement for the creation of bridging social capital. But people need more than the opportunity to cross bridges – positive attitudes towards other people from different backgrounds are key. Attitudes are a determining factor that influence the relationship between bonding and bridging social capital. The existence of strong bonding social capital in combination with the existence of positive attitudes towards the outside world and favourable surrounding conditions will make the creation of bridging social capital much more likely; in such cases, the correlation between the two types is a positive one. On the other hand, the existence



of strong bonding social capital in combination with the existence of negative attitudes towards others will hinder the creation of bridging social capital; in such cases the correlation between the two types is a negative one.

What determines attitudes and, following this, the relationship between the two types of social capital? One member of our expert seminar suggested: "The focus should really be on institutions and the values of these institutions; for example, if an institution promotes values to migrants and these values are shared by the host country bridges are being built. If values do not overlap with those of the host country, there is a problem." If institutions promote the values of just a single community, it will tend to be exclusive, and will result in less bridging. It is the institutions and groups that create and carry social capital which determine these attitudes. Therefore we now take a closer look at these carriers or vehicles of social capital in order to understand better the nature of 'good' and 'bad' vehicles.

By carriers or vehicles we mean the institutions and groups that create and sustain social capital, for example:

- family
- friends
- schools and universities
- religious institutions
- workplace
- tenants' associations
- sports clubs
- old boys' networks
- book clubs
- migrant groups
- political organisations

These vehicles of social capital influence the attitudes of those who are part of these institutions. Some of them are likely to be more influential than others, with the particular influence depending on individual circumstances. Some of them might be more penetrable to outside groups, and others more exclusive.

The next question is under which circumstances a bonding vehicle becomes a bridging vehicle. The analysis of the vehicles of social capital needs to consider the following determinants:

- the *characteristic* which is used to determine whether the relationship tends towards bridging or bonding social capital – for example, gender, ethnicity, class or religion;
- the *perspective* (global, national, regional, local) or *context* in which the vehicle is placed;
- the *changes over time* – for example, what once was a bonding vehicle can become a bridging vehicle over time (and vice versa).

These three determinants dictate which form of social capital the vehicle takes – that is, whether it is bonding or bridging. For example, a university can act as a vehicle for bonding social capital (if it only admits students from the same privileged background) or for bridging social capital (it admits students from both privileged and disadvantaged backgrounds and supports their interaction). In this example, ‘background’ is the defining characteristic, and this vehicle of bridging social capital can become, over time, a vehicle of bonding social capital if alumni come together. Although students have formerly come from different background, one can argue that they now share an important characteristic – being an alumnus of that university.

An example for the importance of perspective or context as a determinant is the Catholic Church. On a global level, the Catholic Church acts as a vehicle of bridging social capital, bringing people

from numerous different backgrounds together. However, on a national level (for example, in Catholic countries like Italy and Spain) it acts as a vehicle of bonding social capital. On a third, more local, level, a Catholic parish can be both bridging (as is the case if it is placed in London) or bonding (if placed in Belfast or Munich within a predominantly Catholic society).

## WHAT DETERMINES WHETHER BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL IS POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE FOR SOCIETY?

Bonding social capital is regularly highlighted as “the dark side” of social capital.<sup>123</sup> The most common argument is that whereas bridging social capital creates cross-cutting ties and opportunities, bonding social capital inherently restricts these opportunities by causing people to limit their interactions to those in the same ethnic groups. However, this basic assumption has been challenged. David Blunkett, as Home Secretary, said about the interaction between bonding and bridging capital:

*Some think there is a tension between, on the one hand, trying to make communities secure and stable, and on the other, trying to help them be more open to change. But this is a mistake . . . it is security and stability which allow people to take an active role in collective life, to welcome change from outside or inside the community.*<sup>124</sup>

Several studies confirm this view. A pilot study in East London found that bridging and bonding social capital are positively related, and emphasized that bonding is a precursor for bridging as well as occurring alongside it, with faith groups being particularly influential.<sup>125</sup> However, the study states that there is a need for

123 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 350–63.

124 Home Office, *Active Citizens, Strong Communities*, by David Blunkett (London: Home Office, 2003), 5.

125 Halima Begum, “Social Capital in Action: Adding Up Local Connections and Networks”, *London: Centre for Civil Society* (LSE, 2003).

more links across distinct communities, in ethnically diverse communities, which are strongly bonded internally, in particular.<sup>126</sup> A study of the behaviour of asylum-seekers in Scotland found that groups of asylum-seekers and, later, refugees, are very effective in offering a feeling of security and community. The authors see this as a good basis to build bridges across society.<sup>127</sup>

In her research on housing, Phillips states: “We need to move away from the view that ethnic residential segregation is a bad thing, and to recognise the benefits it can bring in terms of support, a sense of security and social capital.”<sup>128</sup> Phillips therefore takes a position somewhat against the political mainstream by advocating that ethnic minorities should be micro-clustered within communities to create a more secure environment for migrants. This idea has recently been supported by the European Foundation, whose report on housing situations of migrants recommends in general neighbourhoods “that are ethnically and socio-economically mixed.” But it also states that “some concentration of ethnic groups cannot and need not be avoided. Ethnic networks can serve as an important function, in particular for new arrivals who are unfamiliar with local conditions.”<sup>129</sup> Rudiger, examining community relations and new migrants, discusses the use of Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) to aid bonding and bridging social capital amongst refugees. She suggests: “By enabling individuals to come together as groups – albeit homogenous groups based on nationality or language clusters – RCOs help refugees to develop the skills and confidence for engaging in the wider community.”<sup>130</sup>

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126 Ibid., 29.

127 Aileen Barclay et al., *Asylum Seekers in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2003), 112.

128 Deborah Phillips, “Integration of New Migrants: Housing”, in *Refugees and Other New Migrants: A Review of the Evidence on Successful Approaches to Integration*, ed. Sarah Spencer (Oxford: COMPAS, 2006), 27.

129 European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, *Housing and Integration of Migrants in Europe: Good Practice Guide* (Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007).

130 Anja Rudiger, “Integration of New Migrants: Community Relations”, in *Refugees and Other New Migrants: A Review of the Evidence on Successful Approaches to Integration*, ed. Sarah Spencer (Oxford: COMPAS, 2006), 9.



The starting point for our analysis on what determines whether bonding is positive or negative for society is that bridging social capital is unambiguously positive for society but that bonding social capital is a more ambiguous concept. Where the latter is excessively strong or exclusive to outsiders or directed at intrinsically negative activities such as crime, it is in tension with the building of bridges. One member of our expert seminar said that the question whether there were obstacles to bridging was a key concern.

Bonding is positive when it is combined with positive attitudes towards the outside world. As pointed out above, this promotes bridging social capital and all the positive aspects for wider society that go along with it. Bonding is negative when it is combined with negative attitudes towards the outside world. In such situations it can be exclusive and reinforce patterns of bonding, while simultaneously suppressing efforts to create bridging social capital.

To determine whether bonding is positive or negative for society, it is possible to undertake cost-benefit analyses of the different vehicles of social capital listed above. For example, a women-only sports club excludes men by definition, and would not allow bridging social capital if 'gender' is the defining characteristic. However, if one can show that the cost of exclusion to men is small (assuming there are other sports clubs in the area that men can join) and therefore lower than the benefits to women who attend this sports club, the exclusion can be justified as being positive for society overall. A full cost-benefit analysis would include the costs and benefits for wider society (including any externalities), for the particular group and for the individual who is included in, or excluded from, joining the group's activities. The question of restricted choice imposed by these exclusions would also have to be addressed.

## 6. SOCIAL CAPITAL, THE MARKET AND THE STATE

Chapters 4 and 5 discussed social capital theory. But what does this mean for government? This chapter looks at the rationale for government intervention in the creation of social capital.

In a social market economy, the state's role is to create and maintain an appropriate legal framework for market exchange. The state should limit and supplement the market when necessary and ensure that the market is politically acceptable.<sup>131</sup> The market for bridging social capital needs to be supplemented for the following three interlinked reasons:

- to limit possible negative consequences of bonding social capital grown too strong;
- to ensure an adequate level of bridging social capital, because of its positive externalities;
- to cushion disruptions in the community that migration might cause otherwise.

First, bridging social capital should be fostered because of its capacity to complement bonding. As explained above, if bonding social capital is not complemented by bridging, it will reinforce societal cleavages, which will mean that society becomes more segregated. In addition, it will mean that some groups will dominate, leading to the exclusion of other groups.<sup>132</sup> So although bonding social capital can be an important foundation for our communities, it also has the potential to be exclusive and fragmentary, and can cause societal tensions. If, however, it is supplemented by bridging social capital, these effects are cushioned.

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131 Robert Skidelsky, *The Social Market Economy* (London: Social Market Foundation, 1989).

132 Michael Woolcock and Deepa Narayan, "Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy", *The World Bank Research Observer* 15: 2 (2000), 13.

Second, there is an imperative for state intervention because social capital has positive externalities. Individuals have an incentive to invest in social capital, as they will personally receive a return on their investment. In this sense, the exchange between them can be seen as a market, where time and effort to generate social capital are exchanged, for example, for information or returned favours. Putnam states: "If individual clout and companionship were all there were to social capital, we'd expect foresighted, self-interested individuals to invest the right amount of time and energy in creating or acquiring it."<sup>133</sup> He, however, suggests that the picture of individuals investing in social capital in anticipation of their return is not a full description of the accumulation of social capital. As well as returns to individuals, there are returns on social capital that accrue to wider society. These are positive externalities, not captured by a single individual to any greater extent than by all other members of the community.

Social cohesion, towards which social capital is a stepping-stone, can be characterised as a public good. A public good "differs from a private consumption good in that each man's consumption of it ... is related to the total ... by a condition of equality rather than of summation."<sup>134</sup> The implication is that the size of an individual's investment in social cohesion has little or no effect on the size of the return they will receive: they will always have access to the total amount in their community.<sup>135</sup> Even those who do not invest at all in social cohesion cannot be prevented from free-riding on others' investments; the benefits "cannot feasibly be withheld from the others in [the area]."<sup>136</sup> Putnam gives an example of a free-rider in a safe neighbourhood: "If the crime-rate in my neighbourhood is

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133 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 20.

134 Paul A. Samuelson, "The Pure Theory of Public Expenditure", *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 36: 4 (1954), 387–9.

135 Richard Musgrave, "Provision for Social Goods", in *Public Economics*, eds. Julius Margolis and Henri Guitton (London: McMillan, 2009), describes externalities as "the other face" of non-rivalry.

136 Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

lowered by neighbours keeping an eye on one another's homes, I benefit even if I personally spend most of my time on the road and never nod to another resident on the street."<sup>137</sup>

As an individual's benefit from social cohesion does not correspond to the size of his or her private investment in it, a socially optimal provision of social cohesion is not guaranteed. Especially in neighbourhoods with high turnover levels amongst the population, social cohesion might be lacking, because the knowledge that one might soon move on is a further incentive to free-ride and not do one's share in building social cohesion.

Both bridging and bonding social capital can generate positive externalities. Positive externalities from bridging social capital include peaceful neighbourhoods, multicultural activities and more culturally aware citizens. If bonding networks are open to others, they are an important element in a functioning society, which is often underestimated. As Phillips remarks about minority ethnic groups: "It is evident that clustering still performs an important function in the lives of minority ethnic groups in Britain today."<sup>138</sup> Positive externalities from bonding social capital can also take the form of peaceful neighbourhoods where people care about each other and where public spaces are looked after. Building on a range of primary research, Woolcock and Narayan write about communities rich in social capital (both bonding and bridging), that they "will be in a stronger position to confront poverty and vulnerability, resolve disputes, and/or take advantage of new opportunities."<sup>139</sup>

Both bonding and bridging social capital can take similar forms and can generate positive externalities. However, bonding social

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137 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 19.

138 Deborah Phillips, "Black Minority Ethnic Concentration, Segregation and Dispersal in Britain", *Urban Studies* 35: 10 (1998).

139 Woolcock and Narayan, "Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research, and Policy".

capital is more of a private good than bridging social capital. One of the core functions of bonding social capital is to provide a safety net onto which individuals can fall back in difficult times – which is essentially a private good. In addition, bonding social capital grows more easily, so the under-provision of bridging social capital will be more severe because a higher effort will lead to more people trying to free-ride. Overall, this means that there is a stronger case for fostering bridging social capital than bonding social capital.

Third, governments should intervene because labour market efficiency does not guarantee social cohesion, and in recent times has seemed to be at the expense of it. Both domestic and international migration – which are desirable in terms of labour market efficiency – can create disruptions to community life, rendering the creation of social capital even more difficult. As a recent government report put it: “Greater mobility in society can negate against building relationships.”<sup>140</sup> Box 6.1 shows the importance of social capital in everyday relations – and the negative impact that population fluctuation can have on it.

### **Box 6.1: The prisoner’s dilemma, repeated games and social capital**

The majority of transactions involve an element of trust.<sup>141</sup> Achieving optimal an social outcome often requires trust. This is clearly the case for transactions which happen over a period of time, such as goods and services being provided on credit, employers relying on their employees to work without being monitored, and individuals deciding whether to invest or save. Social capital changes the way that individuals behave in their dealings with one another, with the potential to improve the outcome for both parties to the transaction.

140 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*, 34.

141 Kenneth Arrow, ‘Gifts and Exchanges’, *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1 (1972).

In the classic formulation of the prisoner's dilemma, two individuals cannot trust one another to cooperate because they both know one another's incentive to defect is stronger than their incentive to cooperate. Even if the same individuals play the game many times, both individuals will defect on each occasion. They behave like this because they can anticipate the other player's betrayal in the final game, when there is nothing to be gained by cooperation, and will try to beat them to it in an infinite regress to the present game. The presence of social capital can change this outcome, as networks are effective at eliciting good behaviour through punishments and rewards.<sup>142</sup> These may be internal, such as the guilt felt by an individual betraying someone with whom he has an emotional bond, or external, such as shame or ostracism.

In the prisoner's dilemma, the use of network sanctions works along the lines of 'tit-for-tat', in that individuals are immediately punished for defection. This punishment is not necessarily permanent, but acts as a deterrent to defecting again when cooperative behaviour has been resumed. The particular sanctions that apply are determined by norms that have developed over time, and individuals will weigh them up as they consider their incentives to cooperate or defect.

If there are strong sanctions against defecting, social capital can enable cooperation when it would not otherwise take place. However, the free market may undermine socially optimal outcomes by disrupting repeated games. Labour or supplier turnover in response to prices may mean that the incentive is lost to maintain social capital when transactions between individuals will no longer be taking place. Any norms that have developed to promote cooperation and sanction against defection will be wiped out, and others relating to the new transacting parties will have to grow in their place.<sup>143</sup>

In addition to fluctuations in the population, diversity also has an impact on the creation of social capital. Examining the level of

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142 James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1990), 300.

143 Arrow, "Gifts and Exchanges".

social capital in Belgium, Coffe and Geys find that an increasing number of nationalities in the same area lead to lower levels of social capital.<sup>144</sup> They measure social capital as the number of associations that individuals form, electoral turnout and the crime rate (as inversely related to social trust). Alesina and Ferrara find a similar relationship between social capital and diversity in the USA; however, they focus mainly on associational life and not on social trust.<sup>145</sup> A different study in Canada finds that trust is indeed negatively correlated to diversity, but causation is complex and partly off-setting.<sup>146</sup>

A market failure does not always justify state intervention. In particular, if the price of intervention is higher than the price of accepting the market failure, there might be reasons for the state to stay out of a particular area. In terms of social capital, however, the costs of under-provision are very high: inequality, injustice, prejudices, tensions and possibly even social unrest.

But some argue that these disruptions and market failure do not necessarily call for state intervention. Those who advocate a laissez-faire approach believe that “where markets fail – in the provision of local public goods and many types of insurance for example – neighbourhoods, parent–teacher associations, bowling leagues, indeed anything but the government, could step in to do the job.”<sup>147</sup> A healthy civil society and a strong government are often portrayed as a trade-off, because government is seen to crowd out private initiatives. As David Cameron put it in his speech at the Conservative Party Conference in 2009:

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144 Coffe and Geys, “Community Heterogeneity: A Burden for the Creation of Social Capital?”.

145 Albert Alesina and Eliana La Ferrara, “Participation in Heterogeneous Communities”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 115: 3 (2000).

146 Stuart N. Soroka, Richard Johnston and Keith Banting, “Ethnicity, Ethnic Diversity, Networks, and Trust” (Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association* conference, London, Ontario: Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, 2005), 14.

147 Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, “Social Capital and Community Governance”, *The Economic Journal* 112: 483 (2002).

*Why is our society broken? Because government got too big, did too much and undermined our responsibility. ... Poverty, crime, addiction. Failing schools. Sink estates. Broken homes. The truth is, it's not just that big government has failed to solve these problems. Big government has all too often helped cause them by undermining the personal and social responsibility that should be the lifeblood of a strong society.<sup>148</sup>*

But there are studies which show that a strong civil society and government intervention are not a trade-off, but rather that government can support civil society to reach its full potential. A study of the organisational capacity of migrants provides evidence of state–society synergies. Bloemraad examines the organising behaviour of Portuguese and Vietnamese migrants in Boston and Toronto.<sup>149</sup> She finds that migrant organisations benefit from government intervention. Those migrant groups who receive government support, be it in terms of funding, technical support or normative encouragement, develop more organisations. Her findings hold both when comparing migrant groups in Toronto (more government support and more organisations) and Boston (less of both), as well as when comparing the Portuguese (from whom support was largely withdrawn) with the Vietnamese, for whom support in Boston was stronger. She concludes: “For immigrant communities – and perhaps also for the general population – a helping hand might be necessary for full participation in a polity’s civic and political life.”<sup>150</sup>

## MEASURING PROGRESS

An ongoing role for both local and central government is to monitor the success of current cohesion measures. Different institutions and

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148 David Cameron, *Speech Putting Britain Back on Her Feet* (Manchester: Conservative Party Conference, 2009).

149 Bloemraad, “The Limits of De Tocqueville: How Government Facilitates Organisational Capacity in Newcomer Communities”.

150 *Ibid.*, 883.

organisations aim to measure social capital, community cohesion or integration. Some of the indicators, such as the European Commission's Laeken Indicators for Social Exclusion, focus very much on hard measurements such as income inequality, employment, education, and life expectancy.<sup>151</sup> The advantage of these measures is that the direction of change which is desired is very clear (long-term unemployment should be lower, fewer people should live below the poverty line, etc.) and they are comparable across different countries. However, they are, despite their name, very much focused on economic exclusion. While this is rightly a crucial concern to governments and the EU, it only captures one side of exclusion.

People who own some economic capital, and therefore are not excluded in economic terms, might still not be fully included in wider society; they might, for example, suffer from negative prejudices and racism. This can take different forms, ranging from isolation to only having ties within a certain subgroup of society – that is, only having bonding social capital. Other measurements therefore focus on the *social* dimension of cohesion, integration and capital, and include a wider range of measures, which resonates with Putnam's concept of the term. Box 6.2 shows how the Office for National Statistics measures the concept.

### **Box 6.2: Measuring social capital**

Based on Putnam's work, the Office for National Statistics developed a measurement framework for social capital with the following cornerstones:

#### Social participation

- number of cultural, leisure and social groups that individuals belong to as well as frequency and intensity of involvement;
- volunteering, frequency and intensity of involvement; religious activity.

151 European Commission, *Portfolio of Overarching Indicators and Streamlined Social Inclusion Pensions and Health Portfolios* (Brussels: Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG, 2006).

## Civic participation

- perceptions of ability to influence events;
- knowledge of local/national affairs;
- contact with public officials or political representatives;
- involvement with local action groups;
- propensity to vote.

## Social networks and social support

- frequency of seeing/speaking to relatives/friends/neighbours;
- extent of virtual networks and frequency of contact;
- number of close friends/relatives who live nearby;
- exchange of help;
- perceived control and satisfaction with life.

## Reciprocity and trust

- trust in other people who are like you;
- trust in other people who are not like you;
- confidence in institutions at different levels;
- doing favours and vice versa;
- perception of shared values.

## Views of the local area

- views on physical environment;
- facilities in the area;
- enjoyment of living in the area;
- fear of crime.

This approach to measuring social capital is very broad and, following the concepts of bonding, bridging and linking social capital, takes links between people and their participation in civil and civic organisations into account. Most attempts to measure social capital take a similar approach. A study of social capital between immigrants and native Danes, for example, used trust, friendship ties and participation in voluntary associations

to measure social capital.<sup>152</sup> Similar to the list in Box 6.2, some scholars view social cohesion as being made up of two conceptual axes: civic integration and network density.<sup>153</sup> Civic integration is composed of institutional confidence and political engagement. Network density is composed by interpersonal trust, participation in voluntary associations and interpersonal contacts.<sup>154</sup> Overall, there seems to be a broad consensus of which measures should be included in a definition of social capital.

Government targets are based on this consensus. The cross-departmental Public Service Agreement 21 (PSA 21) from October 2007 sets out its vision:

*There are three associated and reinforcing agendas, building cohesive, empowered and active communities: that maximise the benefits of diversity rather than fear it; where individuals are empowered to make a difference both to their own lives and to the communities and wider environment in which they live; and where individuals are enabled to live active and fulfilled lives.<sup>155</sup>*

To assess whether current policies meet these challenges, the cohesion goals of the PSA 21 are supported by a total of six indicators. This report is related to the first two. First, surveys measure the “percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together” and, second, the “percentage of people who have meaningful interaction with people from different backgrounds.”<sup>156</sup>

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152 Nannestad, Svendsen and Svendsen, “Bridge Over Troubled Water? Migration and Social Capital”.

153 Loris Vergolini, “Social Cohesion in Europe: How the Different Dimensions of Inequality Affect Social Cohesion?” (Paper presented at the *ISA Research Committee 28 on Social Mobility and Stratification* conference, Stanford, 2007).

154 Vergolini, “Social Cohesion in Europe: How the Different Dimensions of Inequality Affect Social Cohesion?”.

155 Department for Communities and Local Government, *PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build More Cohesive Empowered and Active Communities*, 3.

156 *Ibid.*, 5. The other four indicators are “The percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood”, “The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality”, “A thriving third sector”, “The percentage of people who participate in culture of sport”.

At any time, the government's targets are ambitious, but the recession and the black hole in public finances pose additional challenges. Government realises that these goals cannot be achieved without cooperation across different departments and government tiers. As Sadiq Khan, former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government, said: "This is a challenge that calls for local ingenuity, flexibility, working across public bodies, sharing resources and expertise, forging links with charities, community and voluntary groups."<sup>157</sup>

The following two chapters will suggest how community groups as well as central and local government could encourage bridging social capital and how they could work together to achieve the targets of maximising the benefits of diversity and empowering and enabling people to live fulfilled lives.

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157 Sadiq Khan, "Community Cohesion and Migration in an Economic Downturn", Speech, 15 April 2009.

## 7. WHAT CAN BE DONE BY SOCIETY TO FOSTER SOCIAL CAPITAL?

This chapter uses social capital theory to analyse what is done in Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York to develop the growth of bridging social capital. It builds on the existing literature as well as incorporating evidence derived from interviews conducted with community organisations in the four cities. The chapter concludes with a number of insights for community leaders. The key questions for community leaders are how to build up bridging social capital and what can be done to support this process. The literature suggests three prerequisites for building bridging social capital: the existence of opportunities for individuals to engage in; the right attitudes in terms of trust and motivation to engage; and the relevant skills and abilities required to engage. Insights from our interviews with practitioners are organised into these themes. Opportunity, attitude and ability are not stages of a linear process of bridging social capital; rather, in a best-case scenario, they are all present simultaneously. Once it is clear which of these elements are present and which are missing, it also becomes clear what community leaders can do to foster the creation of bridging social capital.

Schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces, leisure or religious activities all provide *opportunities* to engage with people from other backgrounds. Opportunities can directly or indirectly foster social capital. Direct opportunities are explicitly designed to build bridges between people. Indirect opportunities can have anything as an objective: bridges between people from different backgrounds are only built as a by-product. The distinction between direct and indirect opportunities matches the distinction government makes between “face-to-face dialogue” and “side-by-side collaborative social action”.<sup>158</sup>

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158 Communities and Local Government, *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in Our Multi Faith Society* (London: Communities and Local Government, 2008).

Motivation and trust are the key *attitudes* necessary for the creation of social capital. Even if individuals had opportunities to bridge potentially divisive lines, without being motivated they would not do so. Portes distinguishes between consummatory and instrumental motivation.<sup>159</sup> This form of motivation expects little or nothing in return. Helping a stranger or giving to charity are examples of this form of motivation. Another form of consummatory motivation can be observed in bonding relationships where valuable gifts or support are given without the expectation of equal returns.

Instrumental motivation, in contrast, builds on reciprocity; it refers to situations where people expect something in return. Instrumental motivation is more rational than consummatory motivation, even if the return for action is not directly related or immediately apparent. Supporting a neighbour, for example, can be seen as stemming from instrumental motivation: in being supportive, people know that their neighbour will do something for them at a later date.

In addition to motivation, trust is an important attitude. Putnam sees it as a source of social capital and distinguishes between thin and thick trust.<sup>160</sup> Thick trust refers to the feelings an individual has towards those closest to him – family and friends, people known for a long time. Thin trust, in contrast, refers to trust amongst strangers or almost strangers. It is the basis for the extension of an individual's networks, for the creation of social capital. Adler and Kwon argue that whether thin or thick trust is desirable varies with the situation: simple information flows are facilitated by weak ties, while stronger ties are better placed to pass on complex information.<sup>161</sup> Putnam, however, sees thin trust as more important than thick trust for the

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159 Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology", 7.

160 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.

161 Adler and Kwon, "Social Capital: Prospects for a New Concept", 32.

development of new social capital.<sup>162</sup> This openness to strangers can also be described as a prejudice-free environment.

Following opportunity and attitude, *ability* is the third necessary ingredient for social capital to develop. For new migrants, an important part of it is language: without being able to communicate, bridges are difficult to build. Other communication skills also play an important role, such as the ability to understand people, connect with them and maintain a relationship, or, in other words, “a competence to sustain engagement.”<sup>163</sup> Other important skills are conflict management and the ability to challenge prejudices and stereotypes constructively.<sup>164</sup>

Since cohesion is built locally, the next section discusses current practice in Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York to promote the growth of bridging social capital. What is being done to ensure that opportunities exist, attitudes are appropriate and that people have the ability to build bridges between groups? This chapter concludes with recommendations for how community leaders can help to deliver this good.

## BIRMINGHAM

We interviewed people at the following organisations in Birmingham:

- The Discovery of the Talents is a project where refugees from a range of countries work together in an allotment; the project also offers advice and guidance on language classes and public services in general.
- The Community Resource Information Service (CRIS) is

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162 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*.

163 Judith Y. Weisinger and Paul F. Salipante, “A Grounded Theory for Building Ethnically Bridging Social Capital in Voluntary Organizations”, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 34: 1 (2005), 44.

164 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*.

a charity which organises social events for immigrants but is open to all. It also supports evolving organisations by providing an infrastructure and offering training.

- *Ashiana* consists of four different projects: a women's project (which offers coffee mornings, personal development courses and ESOL classes among other things), a nursery, employment services and a drugs programme.
- *Windows for Sudan* offers courses around confidence-building, after-school clubs for children and ESOL beginner classes for people from different nationalities and religions.
- *Sporting Equals* is an independent organisation promoting ethnic diversity in sport and raising awareness of special needs of ethnic minorities in the sport sector.

More than 80% of the population in the UK meet an individual from a different ethnic background from their own at least once a month.<sup>165</sup> As a result, one might think that those living in cities with diverse populations have plenty of opportunities to build bridges with others, but these kinds of encounters might be insufficient for people actually to do so. The Community Research and Information Service (CRIS) in Birmingham realised that what was missing in their community was a space for people to come together and establish more substantial networks. CRIS operates in a community which, despite of the size of its Muslim community, does not have a mosque, and therefore no natural centre for people to meet. CRIS decided to offer such a space, and, crucially, complemented it with other events such as after-school clubs, language classes and groups discussing housing and schooling issues. This enabled them to provide opportunities for both bonding and bridging social capital in the community.

Many activities that involve a shared passion for something, such as sports or music, are very powerful in bringing people

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165 Communities and Local Government, *Citizenship Survey: April–September 2008*, 438.

together. Cross-European research has indicated that those countries with higher levels of participation in sport also displayed higher levels of trust.<sup>166</sup> But there are also potential dangers with sport: football, for example, can be divisive and trigger conflict if teams are not selected carefully and if there is no wider cohesion agenda surrounding it.<sup>167</sup> Sporting Equals, a charity aimed at the promotion of ethnic diversity in sport, relies on careful planning and detailed assessments of need before individuals become active in a community. But the success of their projects is very dependent on the specific trainer involved. While planning is necessary for a project to be successful, only a skilled trainer can ensure that it will be a success on the ground. It is therefore crucial that trainers and those working with diverse groups of people more generally recognise the importance of bridging social capital and seek to foster it.

Various projects in Birmingham have recognised the importance of fighting against stereotypes, prejudices and fears within the community. Ashiana is an organisation that offers activities for women, a nursery, support in employment search and a drugs programme. Staff tries to reduce community tensions by pointing out that rising levels of unemployment are linked to economic recession rather than migration. At another community centre, staff realised that religious prejudices were quite strong, even within a single religion. They organised events and classes to teach people about their own and different religions to demystify the 'other'. Box 7.1 provides an example of the community organisation Rewind, focusing on education and information about race.

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166 Liam Delaney and Emily Keaney, *Sport and Social Capital in the United Kingdom: Statistical Evidence From National and International Survey Data* (London: Commissioned by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2005).

167 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*, 32.

### Box 7.1: Rewind in Sandwell

Based in Sandwell on the fringes of Birmingham, Rewind is an independent NGO that looks to deconstruct the idea of race and challenge the origins of racism through practical and factual information. DNA from the human genome project, academic articles, media articles and everyday situations are utilised to fight racist stereotypes and prejudices.

The project has grown from a grass-roots organisation to an internationally recognised and acclaimed project supported by the Home Office, the National Youth Agency, the Runnymede Trust and the Institute of Race Relations.<sup>168</sup> Rewind was once part of the Sandwell Community Cohesion Pathfinder programme (2003–4),<sup>169</sup> which provided funding for a number of projects. Since then, the project has also been allocated funding by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund<sup>170</sup> and was a “Commended Public/Private Project” in the Institute of Community Cohesion Awards for Bridging Cultures 2008.

The project itself contains a number of educational strands. First, Rewind offer professional training for local organisations. Second, the organisation offers educational training to groups of young people and can accommodate both formal settings (i.e. schools and formal classes) and also less formal situations where the need arises. Third, Rewind promotes a peer-education structure, whereby potential volunteers are sought from amongst these same groups of young people and then offered training which enables them to teach groups of their peers. This train the trainer approach contributes to the sustainability of the programme and has received considerable praise from both participants and external observers.

A strong focus on the individual can help to prepare immigrants for interactions with others, positively changing their attitudes. CRIS follows this approach when building relations between the people

168 Rewind, <http://www.rewind.org.uk/rewind.htm>.

169 Home Office, *Community Pathfinder Programme* (London: Home Office, 2004).

170 Report to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Neighbourhood Management, <http://cmis.sandwell.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=5756>.

they work with. They always start working with the individual, identifying talents and abilities and writing a personal development plan. As a next step, they work with families, discussing issues such as housing, schooling and access to language classes, as well as after-school clubs run by families themselves. In a third step, they bring together different families, who are encouraged to push for things that need to be tackled on a higher level, for example lobbying for policy change, or addressing anti-social behaviour in a specific area.

In the case of CRIS, it was a space or opportunity to meet that was missing. In other organisations, community leaders identified issues around stereotypes and prejudices. What individuals need to enable them to build bridges varies, even within one city, depending on the circumstances of the neighbourhood and the group of people involved.

## LONDON

In London we interviewed people at the following organisations:

- *Time Together* is an organisation operating through the Refugee Council, which aims at matching refugees to Londoners so that they can learn about each other, and so that the refugees can achieve their full potential and take part in British life and society.
- *London Citizens* is an alliance of civil society institutions, made up of schools, churches, mosques, synagogues, trade union branches and community organisations. It brings people together and trains them to take action collectively on issues concerned with the common good.
- The *Hyderi Islamic Centre* is, on the one hand, a meeting place for Muslims in South London and, on the other, a member of London Citizens, engaging with the wider community.
- *Kick it Out* – “football’s equality and inclusion campaign”

- is a charity combating racism within and outside football and acts as a diversity adviser to the football industry.
- *The Challenge* is a three-week summer project for year 11 students, who come together to organise an event which will benefit their local community.

Organisations that provide both direct and indirect opportunities to build bridges between people from different backgrounds were interviewed in London. Time Together, a charity fostering bridging social capital between refugees and their new environment, was founded in 2001 following the government's White Paper, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven*. This third-sector organisation matches voluntary mentors to refugees, who can then engage in a wide variety of activities together, ranging from job search help to visiting museums or just having coffee together. The aim is both for new arrivals to better understand and relate to the UK, and also for British mentors to learn about other cultures and traditions.

Time Together currently supports 45 mentor/mentee pairs in the city. Its aims are to facilitate the integration of refugees, and to enable them to reach their full potential in terms of educational attainment. As a Senior Programme Manager put it: "Our aim is to build bridges in society." From 2005 until September 2008, the organisation was funded by the Home Office and the Treasury, and now receives government funds indirectly through the Refugee Council.

Mentor–mentee relationships often fall into one of two categories: they can be very goal-driven (for example, supporting someone in the search for employment) or they can evolve around social integration. Relationships are almost always an exchange – both sides give and take. Motivations for mentors include gaining a greater understanding of refugee issues and getting to know someone from a different culture. Other mentors participate

because they are passionate about refugee issues or because they have career ambitions in the area.

Project workers at Time Together need to work hard to keep the relationships between mentors and mentees alive. When matching mentors and mentees, Time Together draws on a large database and tries to accommodate personal characteristics, wishes and interests of both groups. Despite such efforts, these relationships often need a lot of support in the form of discussions and encouragement of the mentors, especially at the beginning, to overcome differences and make the most of the situation. This is partly a reflection of how difficult it can be to build bridging social capital. But these efforts usually pay off in the end, as an evaluation of Time Together's work has found. Benefits to mentees include concrete things such as improving language skills, entering employment or further education, and learning about the local area and about how to access services. "The most significant impact of mentoring must be the mentees' boost in confidence given that confidence is an invaluable asset in all areas of integration."<sup>171</sup>

Whether individuals are prepared to engage in conversations with those who are thought to be different also depends on the history of the particular place they live in. Staff from Time Together emphasised that some kind of population fluctuation is important to open people's eyes and minds to those who are different. Over the decades, London has seen high numbers of people moving into the city, and its citizens are therefore likely to be more accepting of newcomers, making it easier for them to build bridges with those already resident. But, as discussed above, a high turnover in the population may also have an atomising effect, making people less inclined to build bridges with their neighbours, because they know that they are often not there to stay.

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171 Lea Esterhuizen and Tanya Murphy, *Changing Lives: A Longitudinal Study into the Impact of Time Together Mentoring on Refugee Integration* (London: Time Together, 2007), 24.

In contrast to Time Together, individuals engaged at London Citizens build bridges only as a by-product. Box 7.2 shows how they work together.

**Box 7.2: United by common goals: London Citizens**

London Citizens is a charity dedicated to community organising. Three subgroups (the East London Communities Organisation, South London Citizens and West London Citizens) support London Citizens to organise and bring about change in their communities.

In the Living Wage Campaign, trade unions, Christians, Muslims and a number of community organisations worked together to convince the capital's large employers to pay their staff a living wage of (currently) £7.60 per hour (£1.87 above the national minimum wage). The campaign has been successful, as 200 employers have so far signed up to this deal.<sup>172</sup> This success is bringing people together, or, as one community organiser put it: "They saw what they could achieve together, so they will work together again in the future."

"Bridges are built because people know what they will get out of them: if they support another group now, that group will support them in the future", a community organiser explains. London Citizens are not focused on private relationships – "not everyone has to be friends" – but people need to have good public or working relations with each other if they want to bring change about.

Because of the reluctance to invest in networks that might break down soon after the next move, it is crucial that people have a reason to engage with each other. A representative from Kick it Out, an organisation that campaigns for inclusive football and a society free of racism, said that "football gives people a reason to come together." Besides sport, most other leisure or political activities have this power of getting people motivated to engage with each other. One community leader found that instrumental motivation

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172 London Citizens, <http://www.londoncitizens.org.uk/livingwage/images/queen%20mary.pdf>.

– that is, knowing what you get in return for your efforts – was very important when persuading people to become engaged.

During our research, religious and community leaders expressed the importance of “appealing to peoples’ brains” – that is, explaining what is “in it” for them if they engage and cooperate with others, or, to use Portes’s term, instrumental motivation. Community organising groups like London Citizens rely on this principle, encouraging groups to help other groups, for example to organise and conduct campaigns, whose members will reciprocate at a later point in time. This approach was found to work much better than appealing to people’s altruism. Relying on the principles of social marketing and communicating that things are “fun or cool, easy, a way to be popular, to be happy or satisfied” are also found to work.<sup>173</sup>

But sometimes values do clash between different groups. To meet these challenges, London Citizens concentrates on issues concerned with the common good and offers training which emphasise the importance of compromise and negotiation. When different groups work together, they are encouraged to see what they have in common, rather than what divides them. In summer 2009, Jews, Christians and Muslims organised a march against usury, which was followed up in November by a meeting with stakeholders, and local and central government.<sup>174</sup> The shared concern about excessively high interest rates brought people from very different backgrounds together.

Despite the fact that so many different people live together in London, prejudices still exist. One community leader said that he tried to personalise prejudices to show how absurd they are. He related stereotypes to his local community and even to local individuals.

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173 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*, 35.

174 Paul J. Davies, “Londoners in Call for Clamp on ‘Usury’”, *Financial Times*, 26 November 2009.

Trust cannot be directly created, but both government and community organisations can help to create an atmosphere in which trust can prosper. Community leaders in London emphasised that respect, and subsequently trust, are fostered if the group that comes together can refer to a shared framework of rules. Such a framework is given in a religious setting, where all followers believe in the same scriptures, as well as in sports, where all players are bound by the same set of rules. Emerging conflicts can be named and discussed in terms of the common reference, often leading to its solution.

The Challenge, for example, is a three-week summer development plan aimed specifically at year 11 students who do not have a framework of rules they can rely on. The participants hold an event to benefit their local community and are afterwards encouraged to stay on and hold another event in December. The project is designed to give young people new skills and, in particular, self-confidence. It is currently operating in two London boroughs and is intent on expanding across England. At the start of the project, groups discuss which rules they want to follow and write them down in a contract that all members then sign. This contract might state that participants must respect each other's opinions, listen without interrupting and keep confidentiality. The whole team signs the contract, making it easier to solve conflicts when they arise and to help youngsters from different backgrounds to engage with each other.

Some of the agreements laid down in these contracts are also characteristics of good leadership, such as listening to what other people have to say. As the interviewee summarised,

*As a leader needs to be able to connect with people leaders must be good at encouraging new friendships and bridging community differences. Those skills associated with leadership are also a prerequisite in breaking inter-communal segregation.*

*The Challenge believes that primarily these skills are: being a good listener, respecting others and working with their views, opinions and beliefs; being sensitive to these beliefs and aware not to make offensive comments; and general people skills.*

Beyond these soft skills, language is the key ability with which to build bridges amongst people from different backgrounds. As one social worker said: "Language is the biggest thing." But there is only so much time and effort that community leaders can invest into the long-term process of teaching a language. Chapter 8 looks at what government can do to support this process. The role of community groups in this is twofold: to point those who would benefit from language courses in the direction of information and support and to encourage individuals to speak and interact in English.

Even when the relevant opportunities, attitudes and abilities exist to allow for the development of bridging social capital, there is still work for community leaders to do: since bridging social capital is an ongoing concern, they should pass their skills and knowledge on to others, so that the project can survive over many years. London Citizens, for example, teaches people how to help themselves – once a group knows what to do if they don't like something in their community, they are empowered to organize the people around them to solve the issue – and build bridging social capital.

## MADRID

In Madrid we interviewed individuals from the following organisations:

- *Asociación Karibu* offers services addressing the very basic needs, such as food and clothing, of refugees as well as integration services, including legal services, language classes and employment-focused skills training.
- The *Centro Hispano-Marroquí – Gestionado por "LA RUECA"* *Asociación* is part of a network of 17 centres providing

support for integration, social and legal assistance as well as employment support.

- *Fundación Adsis* seeks to foster cultural diversity by detecting and fighting stereotypes in the Spanish population as well as by helping migrants to make Spain their home.
- The *Liga por la Integración* offers an opportunity to play football and meet people from different nationalities.
- *Otra Mano, Otro Corazón* offers activities, conferences, seminars and psychological help for migrants to prepare them to live in a foreign culture. In addition, they seek to change the attitudes of the Spanish population towards migrants.

The city of Madrid is divided into 21 districts, each with varying numbers of foreign-born residents and varying degrees of social cohesion.<sup>175</sup> As migration flows to Madrid grow, migrants are increasingly relying on networks of family and friends to help them adapt.<sup>176</sup> While these networks facilitate socio-economic integration to a certain extent, there is still concern around the effects of such bonding social capital on integration and cohesion with the wider Madrid community.

Several of the organisations we interviewed in Madrid emphasised the importance of bonding social capital as a route to bridging and worked to increase the opportunities for building it. As mentioned above, the community organisation *Otra Mano, Otro Corazón* seeks to provide integration at two levels: amongst migrants and between Spanish and migrants. This is based on the idea that people generally look for people similar to themselves when building up a network of social support. In Madrid, for example, it is very clear that Latin Americans look for other Latin

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175 Madrid Datos, <http://www.munimadrid.es/UnidadesDescentralizadas/UDCEstadistica/Publicaciones/PoblacionExtranjera/1Julio2009/Bolet%C3%ADn%20Extranjeros%20Julio%202009.pdf>, Area de Gobierno de Hacienda y Administracion Publica, 2009.

176 Vicente Rodriguez et al., *Inmigración formación y empleo en la comunidad de Madrid* (Madrid: Consejo Económico y Social de Madrid, 2008), 5.

Americans, both when they arrive in Madrid and in emergencies. Otra Mano, Otro Corazón's aim is to foster bonding social capital as a support network, while not allowing it to become a barrier to bridging through exclusion.

But how easy it is to take up opportunities not only depends on language or cultural differences, but also on the relations within that particular group. Migrants from Latin America have many advantages over other migrant groups because of the language and the cultural similarities. The Director of the Karibu Association, a community organisation that aims to support African migrants, found that for African migrants, opportunities to meet with other migrants as well as with Spanish people were too few. In particular, compared to migrants from Latin America, ties amongst African migrants tend to be weaker. This might be because of the large variety of languages, ethnicities and cultures that exist on the African continent, which means that they face more adverse circumstances to build bonds amongst themselves as an migrant group, and, if bonding is a precursor for bridging, that will be more difficult for them as well. The Karibu Association therefore sees it as one of their goals to bring these refugees together. This will mean that refugees will be better connected, have stronger support networks and will also be more powerful in speaking up for refugees in Spain.

Opportunities for bridge building also need to be arranged around other commitments individuals might have. The Centro Hispano-Marroquí, for example, changes the schedule for certain activities when they clash with religious practices such as Ramadan.

However, Karibu also recognises that bridges cannot be built from one side only and tries to influence the attitudes Spanish people have towards migrants. They inform the Spanish population about facts around migration and integration. One topic, for example, is the pay gap between migrants and the native

Spanish population, which is a major concern from a social justice perspective and leads to a vicious circle that has to be broken. Information and campaigns of this kind are conducted through meetings and seminars on a range of topics, visits to schools and publishing articles. The aim is to give out information and not to let the public be carried away by extreme views or distortions in the media. As the Director from Peñascales said: “What we need to achieve is that everyone recognises someone equal to themselves in the other, beyond race and nationality.”

As emphasised by various community leaders in Madrid, media reports can maintain and foster negative attitudes. To prevent this, organisations working with migrants or ethnic minority groups in general should take a proactive approach to working with the media and feed them with facts and information.

## NEW YORK

In New York we interviewed individuals from the following organisations:

- *East Brooklyn Congregations* is a confederation of different faith groups to address local issues and “make things more just”.
- The *Citizens Committee for New York City* is a non-profit organisation offering grants and technical advice to new groups which seek change in their community.
- Under the New Americans Programme and Special Services of the *Queens Library*, cultural events as well as more practical information sessions – for example, about health or personal finances – are offered.
- *Manhattan Together* is a faith-based community organisation which is committed to improving social justice by maintaining and building affordable housing, improving schools and helping new migrants.
- The *Interfaith Centre of New York* is a non-profit organisation

which works with around 1,000 grass-root religious leaders. They offer training sessions for religious leaders on issues such as health, domestic violence, hate crime and migration rights, as well as education about the social role of religion for secular civic and government offices which deal with communities that are religious.

- *Children for Children* mobilizes the energy, ingenuity and compassion of young people to discover their power and potential to solve real-world problems through volunteer opportunities and service learning programmes that instil a lifelong commitment to service.

The Interfaith Network, a not-for-profit organisation in New York, uses direct and indirect opportunities to reach out to both clergy and laymen. As one of the organisation's members put it: "Clergyman who would come to an event on peace building probably already know about it and have the resources, while those who are overworked on social issues don't have the time to come for something like that, but still should learn about it." In that spirit, they offer workshops for leaders of different religions about social issues such as domestic violence, migrant rights, etc. In return, these religious leaders then offer workshops about religion for the social workers who held the previous workshop. In a different interview, a community leader remarked on the power of indirect opportunities: "When people are tackling the same problem, divides fall away."

Using indirect opportunities such as discussing common problems to reach people who would have otherwise not attended is one way of fostering bridges. A community organisation in New York found it successful to promote the public profile of their Black and Latino women by putting them on panels or encouraging them to represent the organisation. This encouraged other women to join.

Contrary to what community leaders in Madrid said, a Bishop in New York felt that the recession was not negatively influencing people's attitudes towards each other. To the contrary, in his congregation people were getting closer, "because everyone is going down together." Middle-class members unexpectedly lost their jobs and "saw that that is not about being lazy or a bad person, but something that just happens." As a consequence of the recession, a lot of people joined the *Ten percent is enough* campaign, which sought to cap interest rates on credit cards and personal loans at 10%. Like the usury campaign in London, people from different religions worked together, leaving their differences behind to reach a shared goal. As one Bishop remarked: "Unity is found in pushing hard together."

Religion plays an important role in shaping attitudes – and, according to two community leaders in New York, often shapes them in a positive way. Even when people from very different backgrounds come together in one church, everyone is the same. Or, in other words, "at the altar all people are equal before God." People are tied together even more through religion when they pray together and for each other – at the church in New York people often come together to pray for those of their congregation who are ill or who have recently lost their jobs.

Religion can also work as a uniting factor. A report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *Faith as Social Capital*, states that the main religions are all committed to peace, justice, honesty and service, as well as to personal responsibility and forgiveness.<sup>177</sup> This, in addition to the religions' "possibility of tolerance" and idea of respecting others, could contribute to the creation of bridges between people from different backgrounds (bridging social capital). The report finds from its review of the numerous frameworks for faith within and across religious communities that

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177 Robert Furbey et al., *Faith As Social Capital. Connecting or Dividing?* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2006), 10.

these frameworks contribute to the creation of networks between those from both similar and different backgrounds,<sup>178</sup> with the latter relations supported in particular by those networks that were set up to bridge between different religious communities.

But there is another side to religion: the exclusivity claim most religions make can be a barrier to integration. A Christian interviewee in New York found that it is wrong to respond to these exclusivity claims that “all religions believe in the same God.” People feel it is fundamentally not true. He thought that a religion is perfectly entitled to make an exclusive claim, but that it can only be credible in this exclusivity if it respects the faith of others. For a Muslim interviewee, the best way to address this issue was to go back to religious texts, which are recognised by the believers as a reference framework. He quoted Imam Ali, a cousin and very early follower of the Islamic prophet Muhammad: “Even if you are not brothers in faith, you are brothers in humanity.” If these obstacles can be overcome, religious leaders are uniquely placed to foster the creation of social capital:

*Religious leaders can be successful bridge-builders because they have precisely the right set of resources. For one, they command community respect, and therefore speak with moral authority. Second, by dint of their profession, they counsel, exhort, and persuade audiences totalling tens of millions of people each week. Further, unlike other leaders, religious figures draw inspiration from scriptures that almost universally emphasize peace, fellowship, and altruism; their language is the language of social capital.<sup>179</sup>*

In interfaith meetings, it is particularly important that all participants understand the meeting is not about converting others. East

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178 Ibid., 18.

179 Religion and Social Capital, <http://www.bettertogether.org/pdfs/Religion.pdf>.

Brooklyn Congregations, a confederate of faiths (renamed from East Brooklyn Church when Muslims and Jews joined), can work together because they agree that they are doing so to make things more just. They meet in a mosque, not to be converted, but to discuss how to address a community issue. If someone were trying to influence people to change their beliefs, it would fail in both its intended purpose and as a vehicle for building bridges between people, becoming instead a zero-sum game of competition.

The Queens Library in New York takes an active approach to overcome language barriers, facilitating access to services as well as to events and the library itself. In addition to information about public services in different languages, the library offers events with a cultural theme. These are advertised both in English as well as in the language of the artist who is performing at the event. With this method, people are drawn who are interested in the other country, as well as people from that country who might not have responded to an English advertisement. At the event, library books about the particular question are exhibited— alongside information on how to use the library and how to enrol in English classes.

The library is often criticised for this approach, with people arguing that those coming to the United States should learn English, and the library should approach them in English. The library dismisses this view as narrow-minded and argues that this would mean less diversity in New York and, crucially, would mean that some groups would not get the information they need about services on offer. Offering services and events in languages other than English is a move towards those from other cultures – not least because these cultural meetings are a brilliant opportunity to build bridges.



## CONCLUSION

The key elements for building bridging social capital are:

- creating indirect *opportunities* allow individuals to build bridges more easily;
- fighting prejudices to create positive *attitudes* towards those from different backgrounds;
- improving language skills as they are a crucial *ability*.

Classes and information to combat stereotypes and prejudices are considered important in all four cities under discussion. Once prejudices are out of the way, it is important to get people to talk to each other, because personal relationships are the best way to learn to respect those who are different. People often come together when they share a common goal, as an interviewee from New York said: “People do work together if they know that they can change important things, change lives.” The importance of sharing a common goal or objective – rendering the opportunity indirect – was emphasised throughout the interviews. Once a group of people, no matter how diverse, has a shared aim, other divisions tend to fall away. This common element can be religious; it can be something practical in the community such as new street signs, safer roads, better council housing; it can be the pursuit of arts or sport. Even social services can take this function: in one interview a community worker said that participating in maternity classes brought women together, because they could have one thing in common which enabled them to relate to each other, crossing other divisions such as ethnicity or religion.

A recent report by the Department for Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction*, stressed benefits of indirect opportunities. One of its central recommendations is

to make cohesions a by-product rather than a direct goal.<sup>180</sup> But direct opportunities also have advantages. They can, for example, motivate those who are already engaged to keep on spending their time with others.

Indirect opportunities also have the advantage that they might attract individuals who would not have become involved if the main goal had been integration. Those joining a mentoring scheme or attending meetings at an interfaith group are often amongst the most open-minded and will probably already have relations with individuals from different backgrounds; in technical terms, this means that a selection bias occurs. Attracting those who know less about other cultures and religions, or might hold prejudices, and encouraging them to build bridges is very different from supporting an open-minded and tolerant person to learn more about Islam, for example.

Concluding that both opportunities and the motivations of individuals to take up these opportunities are important, Putnam writes about linking social capital: “We need to address both the supply of opportunities for civic engagement and the demand for those opportunities.”<sup>181</sup> This is true for bridging social capital as well: people need opportunities where they can meet other people, but they also need to be motivated to take up these opportunities and invest in relations with other people.

## KEY LESSONS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

This section looks at the factors that successful community organisations utilise in creating bridging social capital. The following key lessons are grouped around the building stones of bridging social capital – opportunities, attitudes and abilities.

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180 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*.

181 Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 403.



## Opportunities

Successful community organisations foster bridging social capital by:

- using direct opportunities for those already interested in creating bridging social capital;
- using indirect opportunities to engage with those who are not;
- acknowledging that direct opportunities to build bridging social capital require continuous support;
- doing outreach work to engage with underrepresented groups – for example, by giving them a more prominent role in representing the organisation;
- making space for personal relationships to develop and encouraging social activities such as sharing a meal after meetings;
- allowing room for bonding social capital to develop and making sure that people also have an opportunity to build bridges.

## Attitudes

Successful community organisations influence attitudes by:

- making sure that stereotypes and feelings of insecurity are addressed and moved out of the way when people get together;
- giving people time and space to bond, so that they feel comfortable to bridge;
- engaging with the individual to understand their motivations and concerns and responding to them;
- making it clear that community activities and interfaith meetings in particular are not the place for religious proselytising;
- taking a proactive approach with the media to prevent hostile reports which influence attitudes negatively.

- not expecting everyone to be friends – good working relationships are a major achievement;
- personalising prejudices to show that they are wrong;
- supporting people to understand each other – for example, through information and education;
- fostering respect by referring to a shared framework of rules;
- creating a framework of rules which is shared by everyone.

### Abilities

Successful community organisations enhance abilities by:

- acknowledging that language skills matter more than other abilities;
- passing on information about English-language classes and by encouraging individuals to talk English, while respecting their preference to talk amongst themselves in their native language when no one else is involved in the conversation;
- recruiting volunteers from similar backgrounds as the people the organisation works with – the volunteers will be more motivated and empathetic towards others;
- being clear about needs and how they differ from the mainstream when working with a specific group;
- passing on information, knowledge and skills to future group leaders to ensure that the organisation becomes sustainable.

## 8. SOCIETY AND THE STATE: PARTNERS TO BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

The previous chapter laid out what community leaders can do to encourage bridging social capital. This chapter suggests what government, at both national and local level, can do to build bridging social capital.

Perceptions change slowly and are hard to influence from above. Campaigns aimed at changing attitudes are complex and difficult to conduct; a recent evidence review found that “it seems likely that many campaigns to change attitudes and behaviour are ineffective or have a relatively modest degree of impact over the long term.”<sup>182</sup> But, the author of the review also found that there are campaign mechanisms which work better than others. Clear aims and objectives, strong and explicit messages and strategic targeting at specific groups are some mechanisms to make campaigns more successful. There is a clear need to focus more on evaluating conducted campaigns to learn more about what works and what does not.

But there are additional concerns about government seeking to shape our attitudes: does such intervention go too far? Are our attitudes something government should not seek to influence? If, however, attitudes held by one group lead to negative consequences for another, there is a rationale for government intervention. The most powerful lever government has is to legislate – for example against discrimination on racial or religious grounds. But sometimes legislation, while being a crucial building block in the quest for an equal society, is not enough: negative attitudes towards certain groups can persist even with legislation in place. Therefore, while discrimination should be eliminated, positive attitudes need to

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182 Heaven Crawley, *Understanding and Changing Public Attitudes: A Review of Existing Evidence from Public Information and Communication Campaigns* (Swansea: Centre for Migration Policy Research, 2009), 20.

be promoted. In these cases, campaigns to influence underlying attitudes seem reasonable, because they enforce a message already approved by government. For the creation of social capital in particular, it is these attitudes which matter most.

Government often lacks information about what is most needed in a community to build social capital. This is in particular true for central government, but local government might also be unaware of certain needs and requirements of minority groups. The Cattle Report recognised this need for devolution: “We ... believe that it is essential to extend delegation and trust small and community based bodies to develop plans for themselves.”<sup>183</sup>

Lower-tier government needs to cooperate with community organisations to bring people together, challenging stereotypes and demystifying the ‘other’.<sup>184</sup> The need for this and who ‘the other’ is varies across communities: ethnic diversity can have a positive impact on cohesion, while socio-economic disadvantage and high numbers of migrants born outside the UK are likely to have a negative impact on cohesion.<sup>185</sup> An OECD report on social capital recognised the importance of local organisations and saw the main role for government as being to support these organisations, either through funding or through favourable legislation, such as allowing employees time off for volunteering.<sup>186</sup> Some even see potential damage if central government acts too vigorously: “Any action to achieve greater mix in an established neighbourhood can damage community relations if imposed from above: it can only be successfully promoted through engagement with people in the area.”<sup>187</sup>

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183 Home Office, *Community Cohesion: a Report of the Independent Review Team*, by Ted Cattle (London: Home Office, 2001), 5.2.6.

184 Zetter et al., *Immigration Social Cohesion and Social Capital: What Are the Links?*

185 Communities and Local Government, *Cohesion Delivery Framework* (London: CLG, 2008), 26.

186 OECD, *The Well-Being of Nations: the Role of Human and Social Capital* (Paris: OECD, 2001), 69.

187 John Perry and Bob Blackaby, *Community Cohesion and Housing: a Good Practice Guide* (Coventry: Chartered Institute of housing and the housing coporation, 2007), 73.

While there does not seem to be any immediate danger of central government doing harm, it is unquestionable that all government tiers need to cooperate and tap into the potential that community organisations hold. Different government functions, such as creating opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds, training volunteers or allocating grants, are fundamentally different from one another. Certain tiers of government are therefore better placed than others to perform these different tasks. At the same time, it is crucial that different government tiers coordinate their actions in order to maximise their impact.

## HOW CAN GOVERNMENT FOSTER BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL?

Government cannot just provide social capital, because it “resides in social relationships entered into voluntarily, implying that governments will often be facilitating or supporting the development of social capital, rather than actively creating it.”<sup>188</sup> Government can foster an environment where social capital flourishes, especially if it focuses on the three stages of social capital creation – creating opportunities, changing attitudes and increasing abilities – as outlined in Chapter 7.

There are a number of related issues that government needs to address to foster bridging social capital. The Cattle Report acknowledged that community cohesion was unlikely to be evident where high levels of poverty and unemployment were found,<sup>189</sup> David Halpern found that reducing poverty and inequality helps to build social capital.<sup>190</sup> In addition, most people we interviewed in the UK mentioned that government should listen more to their concerns and coordinate strategies across departments.

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188 OECD, *The Well-Being of Nations: the Role of Human and Social Capital*, 65.

189 Home Office, *Community Cohesion: a Report of the Independent Review Team*, 16.

190 Halpern, *Social Capital*.

The kind of support that government can and should offer also depends on the nature of the recipient organisation. The relationship between community organising groups and government is complex: they often are both “ally and enemy”, as one organiser said. Community groups cooperate with government to change things for the better, but equally they also see it as their task to monitor government and draw attention to shortcomings.

As well as being an access point for bridging, public services can have a negative effect on relationships and networks. For example, a negative relationship (whether real or perceived) between police and minority groups can lead to separation from institutional structures. Such a relationship destroys the trustworthiness of institutions and challenges the trust between individuals. Another example is the demolition of low-quality housing and subsequent rehousing of the inhabitants. Although tenants are moved to better housing, they might have to leave behind their social networks and need support to start building networks in their new surroundings.<sup>191</sup> Local policies should aim to take account of the unintended effects they can have on destroying bonds and bridges already in place.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities and national government should ‘community proof’ their policies, that is to ensure that they do not harm any existing social networks.

Government can also take a more active stance to creating opportunities for bridging: a national mentoring scheme could be used to nudge the permanent population into reaching out

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191 See, for example, Anne Power and Helen Willmot, *Social Capital Within the Neighbourhood* (London: Centre for Analysis of Social Inclusion, 2007).

to newcomers. It could be an offer for all migrants, especially asylum-seekers, refugees and possibly for those enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to practice their English and explore the neighbourhood in which they live. Ideally, every British citizen would be involved in this scheme at least once in a lifetime.

After the downsizing of Time Together – in October 2008 it went from running 17 mentoring schemes to running two – the main challenge for a national mentoring scheme is to secure the funding needed. While for Time Together it is no problem either recruiting mentors or mentees, the introductory training for mentors and the ongoing support for the mentor-mentee pairs are time- and therefore cost-intensive. A scheme which offered mentoring to all those enrolled in basic ESOL classes could build on the introductory training Time Together provides, but since it would be offered to the wider group of ESOL learners, not as much training of mentors might be needed. In time of budget austerity, such a scheme could also be introduced gradually, offering it first in places which are identified as areas with low social cohesion.

**Recommendation:** Government should introduce a national mentoring scheme which matches volunteers with migrants.

## OPPORTUNITY

Compared to skills, motivation and trust, the actual opportunities to meet other people are easier for government to influence because it is an 'external' factor rather than an internal characteristic of a person. It refers to creating places and occasions for people from different backgrounds to get together. Government can support

opportunities in two ways: it can support the creation of and access to opportunities; and it can use public services as opportunities.

Public money spent on schemes to build bridging social capital must be wisely spent on behalf of the taxpayer. Conditions need to be attached to funding so that it is not abused, and short-term funding regimes allow government to withdraw funds where spending is not cost-effective or where priorities change. In brief, conditions and bureaucracy around funding ensure accountability. It is difficult to find the balance between the financial realities and what community organisations see as ideal, but what central government as well as local authorities can do, even in times of austerity, is to make swift decisions and communicate these immediately to those who have made contact.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should be required to respond to questions and funding applications within four weeks and allocate a key contact person to the individual or group that made the enquiry.

Lack of funding might also hinder access to opportunities. Leisure activities such as sports or music are powerful in bringing people together, but they often also cost money – for example, money to set up the activities and buy equipment as well as fees which have to be paid by members.<sup>192</sup> It falls to local authorities to ensure that disadvantaged migrants have access to these activities.

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<sup>192</sup> Local authorities in Denmark, for example, funded refugees to take part in these kind of activities; in Norway it is equally encouraged. See European Council on Refugees and Exiles, *Good Practice Guide on the Integration of Refugees in the European Union*.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should liaise with existing partners in leisure and culture as well as establishing new partnerships with providers in the private sector to ensure free access for disadvantaged migrants to sport and cultural activities.

In addition to leisure activities, employment services are another important instrument in ensuring access to opportunities, because the workplace creates a good opportunity to get to know people from other backgrounds. Various institutions of those interviewed in Madrid offered tailored services for foreigners to support them into work. As a member of staff from Fundación Adsis said: "At the Centre we believe that social integration in the host society mainly happens at the workplace and other social spaces."

But public services can also be used to create both bridging and bonding social capital. Schools, for example, can foster cooperation and provide meeting places for people from different backgrounds.<sup>193</sup> The Queens Library in New York (see Chapter 7) is another example of officials trying to engage people with each other via public services. Peter Evans calls these dynamics "complementarities":

*This perspective extends the standard analysis of public goods to include the possibility that provision of such goods, in addition to facilitating private production of conventional goods . . . , may also contribute to "enhancing . . ." capability and willingness to relate to, and work with, one another.*<sup>194</sup>

193 OECD, *The Well-Being of Nations: the Role of Human and Social Capital*, 46.

194 Evans, "Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy"; Evans's research is based on Wai Fung Lam, *Institutions Engineering Infrastructure and Performance in the Governance and Management of Irrigation Systems: The Case of Nepal* (Indiana University: PhD Dissertation, 1994).

In addition, public services can also be used to strengthen ties between the people and government. "Social capital inheres, not just in civil society, but in an enduring set of relationships that spans the public-private divide."<sup>195</sup> Box 8.1 explains how social housing in Madrid was used to foster integration.

### **Box 8.1: How Madrid uses public services to bring people together**

Viviendas de Integración (Housing for Social Integration) is one project run by the provincial government of the Community of Madrid.<sup>196</sup> This project operates across the province and is conducted in collaboration with municipalities, including the city council of Madrid. The aim of the project is to combat social exclusion amongst those on the margins of society. One current project, expected to finish in 2013, is in the Madrid district of El Encinar de los Reyes, where around 1,600 homes, a medical centre, a park and bicycle paths are being reconstructed.

Although the focus is on traveller communities, the project provides housing for ethnic minorities as well. It was set up in 1997 by the Office of Public Works, Urbanism, Transport and the Institute for Re-housing and Social Integration (IRIS) to assist with the Community of Madrid's plans to launch a housing plan. The city council is aware that housing alone cannot guarantee an improvement in an individual's place in society. This is reflected in the project's moving process, described below, which incorporates a normalisation process.

The process to move into one of these homes starts with a family from a rundown area applying for social housing. IRIS carries out an assessment of the needs of the family and rejects or accepts their application. Following an acceptance, the family signs the contract for the house, in which the rent they will have to pay is specified. Once the contract is signed, the family can move in straight away, and their former home is demolished. At this stage, IRIS then formally introduces the family to the rest of the community, both other marginalised families in the social housing and local residents. Each social housing

195 Evans, "Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy".

196 Ciudades para un futuro más sostenible, <http://habitat.aq.upm.es/bpes/onu02/bp232.html>.

family is assigned an IRIS staff member to help them adapt to their new environment and to ensure that they are able to make the most of public services and social security – for instance, in entering the labour market, or schooling for children.

Furthermore, IRIS organises group meetings with all the families to remind them of their rights and obligations as citizens to ensure the upkeep of their community.<sup>197</sup>

This project is an example of how to combine economic and social inclusion, which allows migrants and minority groups not only to live in good-quality housing and contribute to the economy, but also supports them to build bridges with their fellow citizens. Other projects run by the Madrid city council include operating four information offices offering a range of services to migrants (from schooling for children to public transport), as well as providing financial support to organisations which specifically promote social integration of the marginalised into mainstream society.

Education, like housing, can be segregating or bridging. Religious schools can be exclusive in the sense that they admit no or only few children with different religious backgrounds. However, as explained in Chapter 5, a bonding vehicle can also become a bridging vehicle, depending on the defining characteristic, perspective or dynamics involved. For example, a Catholic school will be a bonding vehicle if faith is the defining characteristic. However, in a diverse city like London, such a school can act as a bridging vehicle across many different ethnic and income groups. In that sense, all schools have the potential to be an important place for bridging. To increase bridging social capital in schools, admission policies matter as much as the schools' policies to support relations between pupils and parents from different backgrounds.

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197 El Encinar de los Reyes, <http://elencinardelosreyes.wordpress.com/> and <http://elencinardelosreyes.wordpress.com/>.

If catchment areas are used to determine school admissions, the social mix of the area will be replicated in the school. With the motivation of making school admission fairer, an internal commission at the Social Market Foundation designed a school admissions system based on a lottery.<sup>198</sup> Under such a system, parents choose the school they want their child to go to. If more children are registered than a school can take, a lottery decides which child gets the place. This means that school admissions are fairer, because getting a place in a good school no longer depend on the area the parents live in. In addition, a lottery system would mean that those pupils living in a homogenous neighbourhood still have the opportunity to mix with others.

**Recommendation:** Government should use public services to provide an opportunity for individuals to establish bridges between each other. School admission by catchment area should be replaced by a school lottery system.

School twinning and the Citizenship Education curriculum are steps in the right direction. In line with schools' duties to promote cohesion,<sup>199</sup> these high-level initiatives should, however, be supplemented by measures which increase social capital on the ground. The current guidance for Ofsted inspectors sees learners from different backgrounds engaging with each other as just one characteristic of schools that promotes community cohesion.<sup>200</sup> In particular in primary schools, however, this is difficult for learners

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198 Moussa Haddad, *School Admissions: A Report of the Social Market Foundation Commission* (London: Social Market Foundation, 2004).

199 See for example, Department for Communities and Local Government, *PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build More Cohesive Empowered and Active Communities*.

200 Ofsted, 'Inspecting Maintained Schools' duty to promote community cohesion: Guidance for inspectors' (February 2009).

if the parents do not talk to each other. Primary schools should therefore assess how well the parents of their learners build bridges amongst each other. We propose a social capital audit undertaken by the schools themselves which analyses whether pupils and parents from different backgrounds have established networks between them. The results should be presented to the local authority.

**Recommendation:** All schools should establish a social capital audit to review bonding and bridging social capital within the school and amongst the parents.

From a public policy point of view, although opportunities for bridging are relatively easy to influence, attitudes and abilities are more difficult to change and require a long-term approach. Government can try to provide additional points of contact through its public services, and it can also award grants to organisations which create direct opportunities. Fostering indirect opportunities is more difficult, because integration is not a direct goal and funds might be used by an already strongly bonded group. But, as suggested above, government can ensure that disadvantaged migrants have access to leisure activities, which would then turn into indirect opportunities for minority groups.

## ATTITUDES

Some groups are more likely to hold negative attitudes towards those who are different from themselves. Quoting a paper by Stonewell, an independent report for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion found that men (23%) are more likely than women (13%) to feel less positive towards another ethnic group, older people (23% of those aged 55 or above) are more likely than younger people (16%) to express less positive feelings

and so are those without formal qualifications (26%) compared to those educated to A-level or above (12%).<sup>201</sup> Local and national government could use social marketing strategies tailored towards these groups to influence their negative attitudes towards people who are different from themselves.

While there is some scope for influencing attitudes this way, campaigns and social marketing will have a limited impact because attitudes are to a large extent shaped by experiences. Giving individuals the chance to collect positive experiences with those who they deem to be different will have a bigger impact than top-down campaigns.

Government should focus on those individuals who are active in community life and in a position to shape the experiences of a large number of people. These people are often referred to as 'social multipliers': their positive attitudes might influence those people with whom they are in contact, multiplying the positive effect.

Examples of social multipliers include those who deliver front-line public services and those who, in their professional life, engage with a large number of people. Hagamos Inventario (Let's Take Stock) is a programme in Madrid that encourages civil servants to take an open-minded approach to dealing with new migrants. This programme is offered by the charity Otra Mano, Otro Corazón. It starts with a reflection on the stereotypes and prejudices that each individual holds. In a next step, participants discuss how that might interfere with their relations with migrants and the delivery of their services. The aim of this process is to foster empathy amongst those from different cultures, and to increase understanding of what it means to live in a culture which at the beginning is alien, thereby creating a positive environment for building bridging social capital. On average, the programme lasts for 40 hours.

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201 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Challenging Attitudes Perceptions and Myths*, by Miranda Lewis and Naomi Newman (London: HMSO, 2007).

**Recommendation:** Train community leaders and professionals, who routinely engage with a large number of people, to clarify facts and be a positive example of bridge building.

Government is sometimes criticised for supporting direct opportunities because they might lead to a situation where people come together who would have come together anyway. Such measures, in the words of an attendee of the SMF expert seminar, bring together “people who already talk”. While this criticism does not hold for organisations such as Time Together, which matches refugees with Londoners (they would simply not meet without an intermediate organisation), other organisations might use public money to fund meetings that do not create new bridging social capital. Some people therefore argue that government should not fund activities which only attract a small and already open-minded group, because this group would have engaged with those from different backgrounds in any case.<sup>202</sup>

It might, however, be possible, to use direct opportunities to motivate leaders and those who are already engaged with individuals from different backgrounds and who are keen to create a cohesive society. One of the leaders interviewed in London mentioned interfaith meetings as the best moments in his work: “Jewish, Hindi, Islamic and Christian leaders come together, and although they have major theological differences, they manage to communicate and relate to each other. Everyone leaves with a warm feeling, thanking each other.” Such meetings motivate and inspire community leaders. The need to get different groups and community leaders together is recognised in the recent Communities and Local Government report on meaningful interaction.<sup>203</sup> Direct

202 Attendee at the Social Market Foundation Expert Seminar, November 2009.

203 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion*.

opportunities are one way of getting those engaged already together. Other possibilities are training courses, sharing an office space or legal advice surgeries.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should get those who are engaged in community work together so that they can share experiences and keep their motivation up.

Public services can also be the focus of tensions between the permanent population and new arrivals, possibly contributing to negative perceptions about migrants. Perceived competition for public services as well as a lack of services aimed at migrant-specific issues are the main problems, as can be seen from the example of the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, and Hammersmith and Fulham.

Between 1991 and 2008, the borough of Barking and Dagenham has seen an increase in the proportion of people from non-White backgrounds from around 7% to 25% of the population.<sup>204</sup> Most new residents were from a Black African, Black Caribbean or Indian background, and already lived in London, moving eastwards to the borough in pursuit of cheaper housing. These rapid changes were met with wariness and apprehension by the existing residents of Barking and Dagenham. A report by the borough council noted:

*This pace of change in a borough which had previously seen itself as removed from the challenges of urban living, has led to strong, yet unfounded, concerns amongst many white residents that public services disproportionately favour black minority ethnic residents as well as new arrivals to the UK.<sup>205</sup>*

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204 "Memorandum by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham", <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcomloc/369/369we18.htm>.

205 Ibid.

The report stated that it was the council's responsibility to keep up with demand for public services, identifying and meeting the differing needs of all members of the community. This would eradicate any perception of competition for services between various communities. Furthermore, it was deemed important that all community members had English-language skills. However, the council also felt unsupported by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which, it was claimed, underestimated the borough's population between 2001 and 2006, suggesting that it had depleted when there was clear evidence that it had actually increased. These claims were disputed by the ONS.<sup>206</sup>

A major hindrance to addressing community cohesion issues was the underestimation by official government figures of population composition. Alongside local government funding that did not recognize the "demands placed on the council" by migrants, the report stated that, "government grant support has failed to keep pace with the demand for public services. This could result in negative outcomes for community cohesion if migrant communities are seen as a drain on local public resources."<sup>207</sup> There was thus a fear that quality of services could be reduced for the whole population. Reliable data is necessary to clarify facts about competition over public services.

At the end of 2009, the Office for National Statistics started a consultation process to find more accurate ways to calculate population trends,<sup>208</sup> which, together with the Migration Impacts Fund,<sup>209</sup> will allow faster responses to changes in the population.

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206 International Migration Statistics – Some Myths, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statements-stances/migration-myths.asp>.

207 "Memorandum by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham", <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcomloc/369/369we19.htm>.

208 John Denham, "Managing the Welfare Impact of Migration During the Recession", Speech to the Policy Network Conference, December 2009.

209 Department for Communities and Local Government, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/racecohesionfaith/asylumandimmigration/migrationimpactfund/>.

But this might not be enough: the perception that migrants get more than they contribute might persist and should therefore be addressed directly. In addition to measures which allow faster reactions to changes in the population, local authorities should therefore look for ways to quantify the demand migrants put on public services and present it together with the contribution they make to the exchequer.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should quantify the demand of migrants on public services and publish it to prevent exaggeration and anecdote driving the debate.

Attitudes are difficult to influence. In order to make the most of limited resources, government should focus its efforts on those who, through work or volunteering, are in contact with a large number of people. Training these social multipliers to address negative stereotypes and foster good relations will then have an impact on their social networks. This should be supported by reliable data collection about the composition of local areas and the impact migrants have on public services. The national mentoring scheme, suggested above, should ideally bring together those who are not only from different backgrounds but who are currently divided by negative attitudes towards each other.

## ABILITY

The language skills of new migrants and the interpersonal skills of those termed 'social multipliers' were, throughout our interviews, mentioned as the most important abilities that need to be in place to build bridges.

In a special edition of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, the research conducted found language proficiency to

be significant for the creation of social capital in all countries,<sup>210</sup> a statement which was confirmed in our interviews. If basic communication is difficult, people will have difficulties in their daily lives. If people are not able to communicate with teachers and GPs or chat to their neighbours, they are unlikely to feel that they can be a part of mainstream society. Analysis from the Labour Force Survey shows that of those who do not speak English at home, around one in six found it difficult to find or hold down a job because of language barriers.<sup>211</sup> Migrants who speak little English are also more vulnerable to exploitation by their employers.<sup>212</sup> For these people, language classes are essential to develop their full potential and participate in society.

In the UK, ESOL classes are designed to support migrants in learning English. Provided at three levels, the last one qualifying participants to apply for British citizenship, classes are free for those who otherwise cannot afford it. Since August 2007, those who can afford it have to pay 47.5% of the course fees, which amounts to about £350 a year for 15 hours of classes a week.<sup>213</sup> High demand and few resources mean that waiting lists are a problem at a number of colleges.<sup>214</sup>

Against this backdrop, arguments to make English-language classes compulsory seem to be missing the point: most people arriving in the UK want to learn English, but often they do not have the opportunity to do so straight away. Asylum-seekers, for example, have to wait for six months, or until they have gained refugee status, before they are eligible to receive free English

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210 Dirk Jacobs and Jean Tillie, "Introduction: Social Capital and Political Integration of Migrants", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30: 3 (2004), 426.

211 Labour Force Survey (2008).

212 Amelia Gentleman, "Unfair Demands", *Guardian*, 2 December 2009.

213 Jessica Shepherd, "Essential English", *Guardian*, 14 July 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/jul/14/beginners-language-courses-cuts-english>.

214 Andrew Mourant, "Colleges Feel the Funding Squeeze", *Guardian*, 27 October 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/oct/27/colleges-budgets-student-numbers>; Shepherd, "Essential English".

classes. There is an argument for government to provide basic English classes for free, but in this period of budget austerity, such an action would certainly be difficult.

In late 2008, an initiative to train volunteers so that they could teach basic English started in London.<sup>215</sup> While there are doubts from professionals that these classes will be enough to fill the funding gap,<sup>216</sup> they are a start. Local authorities should encourage such initiatives by providing rooms and infrastructure to carry out these basic courses.

**Recommendation:** Local authorities should encourage volunteers to teach English by providing them with training and an infrastructure to hold the classes.

Around £100 million was spent in 2006 on translation and interpretation in public service provision.<sup>217</sup> Some argue that translations act as a disincentive to learn English.<sup>218</sup> Such an argument states that if people are able to build a circle of friends from their country of origin, shops offer products in their mother tongue and public services offer interpretation and translation services, the incentive to learn English is reduced.

But translations are only one influence on the desire to learn English, and they might not be as strong as the above argument suggests. After all, most people are driven by a desire to conduct their lives independently and engage with their surroundings.

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215 Peter Kingston, "Volunteers to Teach Asylum Seekers English", *Guardian*, 10 December 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/dec/10/asylum-seekers-english-lessons>.

216 Kingston, "Volunteers to Teach Asylum Seekers English".

217 BBC, Cost in Translation, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6172805.stm>

218 Ibid.

Nevertheless, translations might not be conducive to integration, especially when compared to language classes. Spending money on translations is intended to include people who would otherwise miss out on information. Translations achieve this for the specific piece of information which is translated, but their impact does not reach beyond that. An inclusive policy therefore can lead to exclusion if it means that less money is spent on language classes, which give new arrivals the tools to understand the country they are living in, rather than just one specific form. It should be clear that “translation can never be a substitute for learning English.”<sup>219</sup> The impact of language classes is much wider than the impact of translations. In the same vein, Baroness Warsi, the Conservative Shadow Minister for Community Cohesion and Social Action, referred to “the madness of translating documents into a multitude of languages instead of actually teaching people English.”<sup>220</sup>

Without doubt, there are some areas where translations and, in particular, interpretations are vital and should not be cut: health and criminal justice services are just two examples. But in other services, such as tax credit applications, it would be more beneficial, both to those whose first language is not English as well as to wider society, to shift the money spent on translation to funding more English language classes, a recommendation also put forward by the Darra Singh report. In spring 2009, the Government launched *A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)*,<sup>221</sup> with a focus on how to reach those currently excluded from ESOL classes. It calls for better and more targeted service delivery within current funding levels. But this need not be – some funds could be shifted from translations to language classes.

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219 Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, 167.

220 Baroness Warsi, Speech to the Conservative Party Conference, October 2009.

221 Department for Innovation, University and Skills, *A New Approach to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)*, (London: HMSO, 2009).

**Recommendation:** Government should use part of the money currently used for translation services to offer additional language classes.

## SKILLS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

Key abilities for community leaders that were emphasised throughout the literature and in our interviews were patience and perseverance. To be able to deal with disappointment without giving up and to sustain others' motivation is crucial when running a community organisation. But there is no direct way of fostering patience in community leaders. Bringing them together might be one way of providing them with a channel to talk about challenges and success, to discuss potential lessons and remain motivated because of the realisation that other people are facing similar struggles.

Such encounters can be both incentivised and enhanced if they take the form of training courses for leaders – teaching them about issues such as the legal framework for community organisations, budgeting and how to apply for funding. The community group Discovery of the Talents took advantage of such a training course. As its founder said: “My main advice to people who would like to start something similar is to get training, for example at the local authority, learn about the legal side of things and then apply for funding.”

Government should offer “a spectrum of activities that might be called ‘capacity building’, from modest responses to requests from community groups (e.g. for a room for regular meetings), to much more ambitious aims of helping established groups deliver local services such as advice centres.”<sup>222</sup>

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222 Perry and Blackaby, *Community Cohesion and Housing: a Good Practice Guide*.

The Citizens Committee for New York City is one organisation offering this form of support to emerging groups. By offering grants between US\$1,000 and US\$3,000, it seeks to facilitate neighbourhood activism and increase civic engagement. Based on a short application form, the jury selects projects and groups who will receive funding. But, as their Director of Advocacy stressed:

*Groups are often not applying for the money only – the grants aren't very big after all – but also to get recognition and validation: they had an idea, they got together, and now an external organisation which has been around for 35 years says, yes, we think you should do this. That is very important for groups.*

**Recommendation:** Local government should provide courses and accreditation around topics like the legal framework for community organisations, budgeting, how to apply for funding as well as training individuals in terms of social challenges such as leadership.

## CONCLUSION

Community cohesion has many angles, as diversity is based on different characteristics such as ethnicity, religion and migration status. We addressed these factors in this report, but other factors such as class – an issue that we have not discussed – can be equally strong and divisive. Diversity enriches people's lives, but it can also lead to disruptions and unease. Central and local government, as well as communities, have a role to play in reducing this unease by fostering relationships between people from different backgrounds. There is no single idea, guideline or policy that community leaders and government can follow to increase community cohesion. Responses to migration, multiculturalism and diversity need to be as varied and as dynamic as the places where people live. The recommendations in this report aim to fill this response with practical policy suggestions, most of them workable in a difficult economic climate.

A national mentoring scheme and a shift of funding from providing translations towards offering language classes are two steps that could have a big impact on bridging differences between people. Schools, identified as 'bridging points', are a perfect ground on which to bring people together from different backgrounds. The suggested school admission lottery will make a school's community more diverse and thus create opportunities for people from different backgrounds to get to know each other. Schools should undertake a social capital audit on how bonding and bridging social capital develops within the school and the surrounding community, to monitor whether they are making the most of this potential.

Some of the measures proposed in this report will have to rely on additional funding, such as the recommendation for a social capital impact assessment of future policies. In times of budget austerity, it might seem too expensive to implement such



measures, but it is short-sighted to think only about their costs and not about the benefits they bring. The impact these policies can have on cohesion and prevention of tensions might in certain areas well offset the costs.

Social capital is 'contagious' – the more is built, the more is spread. It should be possible to harness the 'snowball effect' of community cohesion to improve not just one area, but many. A change in one community can have spill-over effects for other communities in the same way that positive externalities evoked by the actions of few can have an effect on others.

The concepts of bonding and bridging social capital that are applied in this research should not be regarded as two separate forms of social capital and a 'one-size-fits-all' template to understand relationships. A line between them cannot be drawn easily. They can be positively or negatively correlated – with attitudes being a key determinant of this relationship – and even change from bridging to bonding. Policies need to acknowledge this.

As emphasised throughout the report, social capital is built on a local level and what works best is dependent on local conditions. There is, however, one overarching lesson the social market approach holds for central and local government and those engaged to build it: neither the market, nor the state, nor civil society can succeed on its own. Only with government supporting community organisations will society be able to benefit from a flexible labour market as well as a cohesive society.

## APPENDIX

Community organisations that were interviewed throughout the project:

Ashiana Project, Birmingham  
Asociación Karibu, Madrid  
Centro Hispano-Marroquí – Gestionado por “LA RUECA”  
Asociación, Madrid  
Children for Children, New York  
Citizens Committee for New York City, New York  
Community Resource and Information Service (CRIS), Birmingham  
Football Unites, Racism Divides, Sheffield  
Fundación Adsis, Madrid  
Hyderi Islamic Centre, London  
Industrial Areas Foundation, New York  
Interfaith Center of New York  
Kick It Out, London  
La Liga Por La Integración, Madrid  
London Citizens, London  
Otra Mano, Otro Corazón, Madrid  
Queens Library, New York  
Society for the Advancement of Judaism, New York  
Sporting Equals, Birmingham  
The Challenge, London  
The Discovery of the Talents, Birmingham  
Time Together, London  
Windows for Sudan, Birmingham

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Immigration is one of the most controversial political questions of the day. While some argue for the economic and social benefits of immigration, many people are concerned that it poses a threat to their way of life. Policy-makers need to respond to these concerns because no matter whether they are real or perceived, the unease is very real and presents a barrier to social cohesion.

This report reviews what community organisations in Birmingham, London, Madrid and New York are doing to alleviate tensions and build bridges between people from different backgrounds. But community organisations can only do so much - there is also a role for government to supplement these efforts. Government should 'community proof' all areas of its activity by assessing the likely impact of new policies on existing social networks. In addition a national mentoring scheme should be established for those enrolled in English language classes. These and other recommendations will help British citizens and new migrants to build bridges between each other, ensuring that community cohesion remains strong in the face of rapid social and economic change.

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