

# **The Struggle to Belong**

## ***Dealing with diversity in 21st century urban settings***

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### **New Immigrant Groups, Integration and Forms of Citizenship in the Global City: The Case of Latin American Immigrants in Europe**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper is based on the results of a recent comparative study on the urban intercultural trajectories of Latin American migrants in Amsterdam, London and Madrid in the framework of their specific local integration policies. Given the international socio-political context, Europe is undergoing a moment of resistance to non-western immigration and its policies tend to enforce control measures and the establishment of strict selection criteria. In relation to integration policies, and after the 'abandonment of multiculturalism', governments tend to resort to short-term legislation interventions in an attempt to achieve results. Integration becomes a democratic urgency and rapid solutions are given for processes that need long-term perspectives. The recent tendency in local integration policy is to implement policies with topics highly symbolic of the national identities, transforming citizenship into a prize that immigrants obtain after following civic integration and language courses. As shown in the case of Latin American immigrants, the efficiency of these policies is limited and migrants are more influenced by informal social and civic networks and trajectories that are created by migrants themselves than by the formal policies designed to integrate them. In the context of the global city, these migrant intercultural trajectories have created alternative forms to experience citizenship and a genuine city identity without a direct connection to the national identity promoted by formal integration policies. The resurgence of the concepts of citizenship and national identity as a strategy for integration and social cohesion, and the urgency that characterised integration policies for processes that requires long-term views are leading to the inefficiency if not, the failure of these legislative efforts.*

### **The Urban multicultural Society in Europe: A comparative Perspective on Integration policies in Amsterdam, London and Madrid**

The main objective of this paper is the evaluation of content and tendencies of local integration policies developed in the last decade in Europe, and their connection to immigrants' access to citizenship rights seen through the experience and integration practices of Latin American migrants in Amsterdam, London and Madrid. In the last two decades, with the so-called failure of the policy of multiculturalism, an important debate has emerged on the formulation and implementation of local integration policy for immigrants in Western Europe. These policies should aim to strengthen the participation of immigrant groups in all spheres of society and encourage intercultural processes, particularly in large cities. Over the years, local level politics has assumed the implementation of these integration policies while the national

level has managed entry and control of immigration (Bommes y Morawska, 2005; Kymlicka, 1995). This has become so due to the fact that large cities actually deal with the conflicts that arise from cultural diversity. Meanwhile, growing national tendencies against immigration, principally illegal and non-western, is influencing local policies. In Europe in recent years, under the category of 'integration', other ways of guaranteeing equality are being developed; a model which implies, in general, a series of duties that immigrants have to fulfil in order to 'accomplish' integration and receive access to citizenship. This is the case of *Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration* (CAI) in France, or language and introduction to citizenship courses established in Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark and the Netherlands, which place a large part of the responsibility of successful integration on the immigrants themselves (Favell, 2001).

Recent literature on immigration in Europe has emphasized that new flows of immigration have a different character to those during the post-war. These have generically been termed 'new migration', a conceptual approach to contemporary immigration, which has just begun to be explored. This 'new migration' has been framed in the dynamic relations between the geo-political and geo-economical transformations and the migratory processes at the origin of new socio-cultural and geo-political realities that have had impact, particularly in Europe in the context of urban multicultural societies, (Castles and Miller, 2003; Kennedy and Roumedtof, 2002; Koser and Lutz, 1998). Additionally, there is a growing diversification of the countries of origin, as stated by Collinson: "What set the new migration apart from earlier flows was that it involved not only European populations, but also large numbers of migrants from more distant countries and more distant cultures. Europe was soon host to significant immigrant populations of kind which, in terms of the social and political challenges they posed, seemed to have no precedent" (1993: 18). In recent decades, cities immersed in the avatars of globalization became the destination for immigrants. This changes their position within the state and in relation to supranational entities, and has acquired new roles, particularly concerning integration policies for immigrants, who, as affirmed by Penninx et al, "(...) have become the visible face of globalization and have rapidly changed the population composition of the cities. In Amsterdam, immigrants and their offspring now constitute more than 47 per cent of the total population, and more than half the pupils in the primary schools are of non-Dutch origin. These changes took place within a relatively short time span. Similar observations can be made about Brussels and other large European cities" (2004: 4).

As new emigration countries have surged, new destination countries also emerged in Europe, which includes countries in the South, but also countries in Central or Eastern Europe. The south European countries have transformed into immigration countries in a short period of time, as annual flows coming from Latin America, Africa and Asia became constant and substantial, replacing Europeans (King et al, 2000). Parallel to this change in the geography of immigrants in Europe, new immigration has been associated with a diversification of profiles, including economic migrants, refugees, illegal immigrants as well as highly skilled professionals and workers. Another characteristics of the new immigration is the so-called ‘feminization of immigration’, important in the Latin American case, which in Europe is associated with an increasing presence of female immigrants in growing economic sectors, especially in the service sector (Sørensen, 2008; Oso Casas, 2007). The phenomenon of transnationalism and the urban multicultural context in which immigration and integration takes place are part of the context of new immigration, which is submerged in the persistent difficulty of Western European countries to consider themselves as countries of immigration (Lucassen et al, 2006; Bash et al, 1994). As is affirmed by Penninx et al, “A common characteristic of Europe is its difficulty to accept immigration. While the rhetoric on being ‘a nation of immigrants’ is strong in the United States, Canada and Australia, this is singularly absent in Europe. The opinion of the European nations that were constituted before the beginning of the massive immigration is still dominant” (2004:2).

Amsterdam, London and Madrid became multicultural societies in different historical moments and in the framework of national-states with different political and legislative structures. Also, the transition in these three cases is marked by the economic developments and the support needed from a foreign workforce. In Amsterdam and London, immigration obeyed, in principle, to postcolonial processes initiated in the post-war period, and posteriorly, during the first years of the seventies to a system of guest workers under which populations from the Southern Europe, Turkey and North Africa, principally Morocco arrived to Northern Europe (Alexander, 2007; Panayi, 1999). For Spain, at the end of the seventies, there is a transition to democracy, changing from Franco’s authoritarianism to the construction of a decentralized and democratic state. This process implied a period of constitutional and institutional reforms that also included a response to the demands of a larger regional autonomy for the different cultural components of the state, Cataluña, País Vasco and Galicia. In this way, Spain become as a multicultural state Madrid was nourished by the regional differences of Spain, transforming itself into the chosen destination for many

migrants from rural areas and towns to the city. With the massive international immigration at the end of the nineties, Spain rapidly transformed into an immigration country. The arrival of international immigration to Madrid radically impacted its socio-cultural and economic development. The city emerged in the urban European context at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a multicultural city, which resulted in a distinct construction of integration policies, different from those developed in Northern Europe such as in Amsterdam and London, which since the eighties had officially recognized themselves as multicultural societies (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010; Arango, 2006).

However, the institutionalization and characterization of the ‘international immigrant’ in Western Europe is a relatively new phenomenon. Even though some countries began receiving immigrants and migrant workers from countries outside Europe long before, it is only at the end of the seventies that the permanent character of the phenomenon of immigration began to be recognized and the first integration policies were elaborated. From this moment on, developments in institutional design have been made, administrative and programmatic measures have been implemented, and a budget for the incorporation of international immigrants in receiving societies has been allocated (Penninx et al, 2004; Joppke, 1999). The first experiments tried to incorporate the immigrants as different collectivities or communities through the policy of multiculturalism in which the state is committed to recognize and protect the immigrants as differentiated ethnic, cultural and religious groups. This policy has been adopted in Canada, Australia, Sweden and the Netherlands. At the beginning of the eighties, with the adoption of the policy of multiculturalism in Amsterdam, following the Dutch model based on the historical antecedent of the ‘pillarization system’, support was given to the different immigrant groups to preserve their cultural and religious practises as well as to establish their own organizations (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010; Alexander, 2007; Vermeulen, 1997). In countries like Canada and Australia, multiculturalism is applied to the entire, not only the immigrant population; in Europe, in contrast, multiculturalism is directed to immigrants, understood as ethnic minorities. In a way, multiculturalism appears in the eighties and part of the nineties as a model capable of fighting discrimination and immigrants become the carriers of a new multicultural and post-national world where unique and fixed national identities fade, renewing the concept of citizenship (Joppke, 2010; Modood et al, 2006, Soysal, 1994).

In Great Britain and particularly in London, multiculturalism was not adopted as an official policy, but was used in practise, on an individualistic base where immigrants are

considered as individuals and not as members of differentiated groups. Thus, in the absence of a national policy on the integration of immigrant groups, the development of multicultural programs such as language training, housing, employment and youth programs were created within the local policy. In English policies, since the sixties, the concept of ‘racial equality’ occupies the centre of all developments in this area. Since the first immigrants had English citizenship due to the colonial relationship, the creation of special integration measures was not considered necessary, also based on the approach that general social policies should likewise serve immigrants. While immigration diversified over time, the policies remained substantially the same and were based on the principals of fighting discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and the construction of good race relations (Eade, 2000; Panayi, 1999). Also, the individualistic approach did not impede the use of the concept of ‘ethnic and racial minorities’ in the various *Acts of Racial Relations* that were produced, but the programs were individually applied in matters like housing and employment. Thus, while the policy of multiculturalism implemented in Amsterdam comes from state directives, in London it constitutes a local policy initiative not derived from a national policy (Düvell, 2005; Joppke, 1999).

In Spain, the debate about the introduction of a model of integration was replaced by the adoption of the ‘principle of interculturality’, which presides over policies on the national, regional and local level and is an answer to other models used in Europe. This principal is vaguely defined and used in a pragmatic, and not in a doctrinarian fashion, to make respect and a positive appreciation of cultural diversity compatible with the objective of cohesion and integration and avoiding the emergence of parallel societies. Additionally, the European Union’s general principles on integration have influenced the formulation of Spanish policies (II Plan Madrid de Convivencia Social e Intercultural 2009-2012; Bernstein, 2009). One of the essential elements on the formulation of integration policies has been the refusal of the creation of specific policies for immigrant groups, who, should access their rights through general policies. Theoretically, immigrants are equivalent to local citizens in terms of being a subject of rights; an inclusive definition of the concept of citizenship as it is described in the *Plan Estratégico de Ciudadanía e Integración* (2007-1010), where it is established that all persons residing in Spain are citizens. In this political framework, undocumented immigrants, registered in the municipal ‘Padrón’, termed ‘empadronamiento’ have access to rights like health and education by residing in a municipality and after three years of continued residency, have the possibility of apply for regularization (Arango and Jachimowicz, 2005).

In general terms, concepts like interculturality and citizenship are the foundations of policies, plans and programs implemented in Madrid to promote the integration of immigrants. Due to a decentralized administrative organization of the state, plans have been developed on all levels but the institutionalization and implementation has occurred on a regional and local level, financed by the state. Thus, local institutions offer a series of support mechanisms for integration, but the immigrants themselves must individually use these mechanisms and construct their own trajectory towards integration. That means that while the plans of integration mentions the various immigrant groups, in practise, the programs are based on an individualistic approach.

In the last decade, a transition in the immigration societies in Europe has been observed, from the multicultural and post-national perspective towards an individualistic approach focused on the assimilation to nation-state values, adopting the concept of citizenship in national terms to frame immigrant integration policies (Gülalp, 2006; Joppke y Morawska, 2003). During the nineties, Dutch policies abandoned multiculturalism and moves through a policy of diversity towards the implementation of an obligatory policy on integration, assuming from this moment that multiculturalism is a social fact and not an objective to be pursued by the state; a society that can only function on the base of some minimum shared values (Joppke and Morawska, 2003). These changes were produced in a country that has searched for several years to limit the difference between foreigners and citizens, as is exemplified with the extension of the right to vote in local elections since 1985. (Minderhedennota, 1983). In this way, at the beginning of the 2000s, Amsterdam changed its integration policies, introducing a new law that established a citizenship trajectory for new immigrants (Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers); an obligatory integration program based on language and culture courses to be accomplished in a limited time. Thus, Amsterdam inaugurated a path to convert immigrants into citizens (Fermin, 2006; Entzinger, 2004).

In London, after the terrorist attacks of July 2005, the state approach to immigration and the 'laissez faire' attitude on integration and intercultural relations changed. In consequence, like what happened in Amsterdam 15 years before, the limitations of multiculturalism and its resulting fragmented society – principally in relation to the Muslim community -, was criticized arguing that it contributed to the fragility of national values and culture. Despite this crisis and the changes in approach, the necessity to preserve the principals of multiculturalism was maintained at a local level, but at the same time, the imperative to promote values and the British citizenship in immigrant communities emerged (Joppke, 2010). In effect, among the

decisions made by the British government after the 2005 terrorist attacks to combat extremism and reduce the marginalization of ethnic minorities, principally Muslims, was that new conditions were made to access citizenship, such as a knowledge of the English language and British history and culture. Also an improved dialogue and the promotion of a moderate Islam were pursued. From this moment on, with the consequence of these measures on the integration of new immigrants and the expression of social resistance to massive immigration, London maintains its multicultural and pluralistic approach to immigration promoting the autonomy of migrant minorities and their organizations (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010).

In the Spanish case, where there is no unique model on integration policies, the political decentralization and the duties given at the regional level through the 'comunidades autónomas' and at the local level, represented by the 'ayuntamientos' has given place to a situation of dispersion, fragmentation and conflict among different administrative levels. In this political context, the attention given by the national government to the issues related to the integration of immigrants during the nineties was due, in part, to the pressures of civil society and local and regional governments who were experiencing the consequences of immigration and the conflicts and new social dynamics that were emerging. Thus, before counting on the legal competence at the local level on this matter, initiatives to promote integration and interculturality were already being developed. In this way while the decentralization has produced different political spaces with coordination problems, it has also contributed to dynamics in the development of integration policies. As was emphasized by Arango, an expert on the team of immigration in Spain during an interview: "In Spain, concerning the integration of immigrants, several vigorous initiatives were produced in this terrain since a long while, taking in account the recentness of the immigration phenomenon. This means, shortly after the beginning, the concern for integration in a very decentralized way started being visible. Since the beginning of the nineties, the *ayuntamientos* and the regions, those who began to take initiatives, have continued to impulse them until today" (Madrid, 2010).

In effect, despite the mass immigration in the first years of the 2000s, at the national level until 2004, priority was not given to the development of concrete political measures for integration, or to the study of changes that were confronting Spanish society in its process to become a multicultural society. In the last decade in Madrid, the immigrant population increased from 2% to 17% in less than a decade. Given this massive increase, the process of the formulation of integration policies at the national and local level took several years and it

was only in 2005 that Madrid established the first policies in this field with the strategic plan for integration: *Plan Madrid de Convivencia Social e Intercultural (2004-2008)*, giving the responsibilities of the integration to immigrants as well as the receiving society. This plan promotes the city's institutional commitments; making civil rights and services more accessible, supporting the intercultural coexistence between migrant minorities and the local society (Observatorio de las Migraciones y de la Convivencia Intercultural, 2005). In this way, the development of policies in Madrid was taking its first steps within the multilevel institutional structure, and is experiencing the challenge of creating policies for a population in the process of establishment, mobile and unstable, in the context of economic crisis that is affecting the integration process undertaken by immigrants and the general society.

### **Beyond Formal Policy on Integration: Transnationalism, Intercultural and Integration Practices in the Light of the Latin-American Case**

As is the case of Latin American immigrants in the cities of Amsterdam, London and Madrid, the concept of integration has reached great notoriety, not only in political discourse and in the media, but also in the discourse of immigrant minorities themselves who have adopted the concept to express their desire for integral participation in the receiving society. In this context, in multicultural cities, immigrants are developing their own practises of integration, independent from formal policy. In the words of Bommers and Morawska, "The somewhat anarchical multiculturalism of some European cities now pointed towards a new type of multi-ethnic culture in Europe, rather different to the multicultural citizenship shaped by integrating nation-states. It is not egalitarian, it is not anchored in rights and it is certainly not conflict free, but it is, for better or for worse, much less disciplined by the nation-building pressures hidden in top-down policies of 'integration'" (2005: 61). Transnationalism is inscribed in these dynamics as new forms of empowerment of immigrant groups within receiving societies, and the emergence of new organizations and activities that are developed outside the state's internal structures. Thus it could be said that new forms of participation and new spaces of transnational exchange are transforming and reducing the central role of state in integration processes (Penninx y Martiniello, 2004; Portes, 1997). In the multicultural urban context, a series of networks and communication services are generated to support the structuration of transnational activities and relationships with the countries of origin that are an important part of the experiences of new immigrants. This new transnational reality

constitutes an essential part of the immigrant experience and has given origin to a new intercultural dynamic in the cities (Vertovec, 2009).

In effect, cities are becoming more concrete spaces than those of the nation-state where people with different political interests and different nationalities meet each other, exchanging and creating political environments. This is Sassen's vision about the global city. A city that not only represents a global capital but also contains new forms of politics where the global dynamic is inscribed in the localized space of the city. Global cities form a type of network that defines a new space for the formation of transnational identities and communities. This is a space that is localized and at the same time trans-territorial, because areas, which are not geographically adjacent, are connected. Thus, it is not only the transmigration of capital but also of people that takes place in this network of global cities: People with money form the new professional transnational workforce and people without money, the economic migrants. Additionally, this network makes the transmigration of culture and the renovation of local cultures possible. Cities are becoming international spaces for a diversity of actors and forms of exercising citizenship. As Sassen explains: "Large cities around the world are the terrain where a multiplicity of globalization processes assume concrete, localized forms. These localized forms are, in good part, what globalization is about. If we consider, further, that large cities also concentrate a growing share of disadvantage – immigrants in Europe and United States, African American and Latinos in United States, masses of shanty dwellers in the megacities of the developing world – then we can see that cities have become a strategic terrain for a whole series of conflicts and contradictions" (Sassen, 1996: 87).

After the restrictions imposed in the United States as a consequence of the terrorist attacks of September 11 in 2001, Europe emerged as an alternative migratory destination for Latin Americans (Pellegrino, 2004). They were already present in Europe since the seventies with the political refugees from the Cono Sur countries and small, established groups already existed. It was only at the end of the nineties and the beginning of the 2000s that a significant increase in the flows of Latin American immigration to Spain, but also to other European countries, such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy, was produced. In the Netherlands, at the beginning of the nineties, the presence of Latin Americans decreased because the generation of political refugee from the seventies had either integrated into Dutch life or had returned to their countries of origin. Since the mid-nineties, within the new migration, Latin Americans arrived principally for economic reasons, coming from countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia. Therefore, the Latin American immigrant's

general opinion of Dutch policies is characterized by the conditions and historical context of immigration. People who have resided longer in the Netherlands generally have had a better experience with the process of establishment and integration. For their part, new immigrants are confronted with the obligatory process of ‘Inburgering’, the citizenship trajectory, since their arrival. This policy has been looked upon by the Latin American community with much suspicion as is reflected in the opinion of the director of *Noticias*, a Latin American media organization, during an interview: “On the one hand, I am against ‘Inburgering’ because it doesn’t accomplish the objective of integration and it is an imposition with a low level of organization and content and does not take the personal situation of the immigrants into account. On the other hand, it offers an opportunity to learn Dutch, which is very important to participate in the society. Actually, the idea is to integrate people into the Dutch culture, not to develop a relationship between the groups. Now, policies only speak about integration, before they considered multiculturalism. However, the multicultural society appears to be exhausted: We are all Dutch” (Amsterdam, 2009).

In general, there was much critique about the program, its obligatory character and the lack of organization and the difficulties related to following the Dutch courses: the intense schedule (four days per week, five hours per day), the lack of selection criteria for the classes, and the low level of content concerning cultural topics. Beenjes, director of *Casa Migrante* affirms the following in relation to the impact of ‘Inburgering’ on the integration of Latin Americans in Amsterdam, “In general, people attend the Dutch lessons only because it is obligatory, and not as a means of integration. The challenge for this country is to create natural process that not only involves the immigrants but also the Dutch people. Places like Casa Migrante create friendships and this is very important in the efforts to create a new society. Legislation will never have the last word” (Amsterdam, 2009). In spite of the limitations of the citizenship trajectory, Amsterdam’s local government projects an inclusive vision and promotes integration and interculturality within the identity of the ‘Amsterdammer’. In effect, immigrants have adopted the identity of the ‘Amsterdammer’ and it is more common to find people that identify with the city than people who identify with the country. Beentjes describes the following based on her work with Latin Americans: “Here, we understand what it is to be immigrant in the city of Amsterdam. With respect to integration, they understand it well. In Amsterdam, everybody can say *I Amsterdam*, because it is the city’s motto. It is understood that all migrants that live in the city are “Amsterdammers”. In

this way, the immigrants identify with Amsterdam but not with the country. This is an interesting phenomenon” (Amsterdam, 2009).

As is the case in Amsterdam, in the British capital the presence of Latin American immigrants initiated during the seventies with the arrival of political refugees from the Cono Sur countries. In those years, the local integration policy was based in the recognition of the existence of ethnic minorities, which defines the society in terms of cultural, ethnic and racial plurality. Despite a long history of political, economic and intellectual relations between London and Latin America, it was only since the seventies that Latin American immigrants start to make their presence in significant numbers. This first Latin American immigrant community also benefitted from the support offered by local integration policies to form representative organization within the immigrant communities. Latin American organizations that were established in the seventies and eighties were later dedicated to offering services to the migrant community and act as the community’s representative in London. In addition to this large political migration, is also the economic migration, for the most part out of Colombia that was favoured by the work permit system existent during the seventies. Since the nineties, other immigrant collective progressively arrived, such Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Brazilians and Argentinians and since 2005, Bolivians; all these collectivities were impulse to emigrate due to the economic crises in their respective countries. In this way, Latin American immigration are part of the new immigrant flows, which break with the traditional tendencies of immigration in Great Britain, principally, colonial immigration or from the new commonwealth, characteristic of the post-war period (McIlwaine, 2007).

In effect, since the nineties, immigrant groups, diverse in their composition, began to arrive in Great Britain from different countries, a ‘new migration’ which exceeds the already established categorization of the society in ethnic minorities and give way to what has been called the ‘superdiversity’ (Vertovec, 2007). The massive immigration of the last two decades and the so-called ‘new immigrants’, are not part of the political and legislative structure based on the concept of ethnic minorities, developed principally for postcolonial immigration. Additionally, the more recent integration policies distance themselves from the multicultural trend and intend to build the society upon common values, based on the concepts of social cohesion and citizenship and do not respond to the new realities and conflicts. Recent immigrants have felt a void, as was expressed by some interviewees, since immigrants must integrate by their own means in a socially and politically hostile environment, where control policies and the persecution of illegal immigration prevails. This was observed in the cases of

Amsterdam, London and Madrid. As was said by Gomez, coordinator of Radio ACULCO: “In London there is no support to integration. Office to assist immigrants has been created in the different sectors of the city but they don’t speak our language. The consequence has been that the financing support to immigrant organization has been reduced. Also, the support given by the municipality to learn the language has been suspended. The policies do not understand the situation of new immigrants and xenophobic attitudes are increasing in the city” (London, 2009).

In Madrid, the city with the largest Latin American population in Europe, after the political migration of the seventies, principally from Argentina and Chile, in the second part of the nineties immigrants from Peru and Dominican Republic arrived. Nevertheless, it was only at the end of the nineties that there was a spectacular increase in migration, principally from Ecuador and Colombia, countries that formally were not significantly present (Aparicio and Giménez, 2003). Also, since 2003 migrants from Bolivia, mostly illegal started to arrive, followed by a second wave of Argentinians who migrated due to the economic crisis. After 2005, migrants from Paraguay and Brazil also arrived. In general, Latin American undocumented immigration has been reduced principally due to different processes of regularization, principally that of 2005. The integration processes of Latin American immigrants in Madrid presents differences by nationalities and have been affected by the economical situation of the city. Latin Americans are considered a category of immigrant along with Moroccans, Sub-Saharians, Chinese and East Europeans. In this classification, Latin Americans have some legal privileges because of the historic colonial connection with Spain and common elements like the language and cultural traditions that give them the possibility to apply for nationality after two years of residency. This is an exception to the general rule of ten years applied to immigrants from countries outside European Union (Bernstein, 2009). Taking in account the advantage of Latin Americans in terms of languages and cultural similarities, efforts have been made by Latin American groups to strengthen the associative movement and to lobby for the improvement of immigrant conditions in Madrid, but sustainable forms of cohesion have not yet been created. The organizations confronted several problems due to scarce resources and fluctuations of local policies, as was expressed by Rodriguez, active participant of this process: “In the beginning there was a boom of associations, principally at the end of the nineties and the beginning, of the 2000s, then the local government established that only the organizations with 10 or more years of experience and a certain number of persons subscribed could receive financial support. Thus, the small

and new organizations had to associated to or to present their projects through larger organizations and saw their opportunities reduced” (Madrid, 2010). In Madrid, the informal ways of organization through family, contacts or networks played an important role in the process that the people undertook to integrate in the multicultural urban dynamics. Also the media, especially radio programmes and weekly journals produced by immigrants are generating information and communication channels and opening spaces for political involvement, the exchange of ideas, solidarity and intercultural dialogues, all of which are became important for immigrants in the city.

Nevertheless, since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008, a progressive change related to immigration is taking place in Spain, that has been translated into legislative changes like the introduction of the *Plan of Voluntary Return* (consisting in the payment in advance of unemployment benefits) addressed to non-UE workers, more control over illegal immigration and limitations to family reunification as well as more requirements to obtain and renew residence permits, among others. These changes manifest the increase in the influence of European directives on Spanish policies on immigration and integration, that was initiated even before the crisis, when there still was a sustained economic growth, but the capacity of national and local infrastructure to continue receiving immigrants were questioned. This policy also implied a budgetary decrease for integration programmes and an increase in investment in return plans. Suarez, active in immigrant organizations, analysed the consequences of these changes in the integration of Latin American immigrants: “Several programmes and reception centres have been closed, strict requirements to renew residence permits and for family reunion have been established and programmes related to women’s needs are closing or are limiting their hours. Many people are losing support and, sadly, more racist comments have been heard” (Madrid, 2010) The political measures being taken to combat the economic crisis related to immigration and integration have not been clearly presented to the public, producing a public opinion that tends to accuse immigrants for the precarious economic situation being experienced by the Spanish people. Taking into account the economic character of Latin American immigration in Madrid, the effects of the economic crisis, the social tensions and the augmentation of unemployment, have caused a reduction of the migration flows (Pajares, 2010).

In the first half of the 2000s, a diversification of Latin American immigration occurred. In addition to economic migrants, refugees and their families a growing population formed by students, professionals and persons in mixed marriages began to arrive. These new

immigrants brought new and different dynamics of integration and opened new ways to understand Latin American presence in European cities. This population is participating in organizations and media in the city, adopting a discourse of rights and political involvement, amplifying the influence of Latin Americans in other immigrant groups and the general society. In summary, in Amsterdam, London and Madrid, Latin Americans have experienced collective processes of integration that are diverse and complex. In Amsterdam, a major dispersion of the community is observed due to their own difficulties in organizing themselves, but also to the policy developments based on an individualistic approach in which immigrants are responsible for their own integration in the so called 'Citizenship Trajectory'. Only when this trajectory is accomplished, a way of participation can be developed. Nevertheless, new immigrants in Amsterdam, documented and undocumented have developed their own integration dynamics and are active in the work of organizations and NGOs expressed in the recently created Platform of Latin-American Organizations in the Netherlands (POLH). In London, Latin Americans have achieved a good level of organization, also in media projects and cultural events like the *Carnaval del Pueblo* that are integrated into the multicultural agenda of London. Additionally, they have developed experience in political lobby and are leading projects on immigrant rights about status of residency and support to second and third generations. In Madrid, despite the economic crisis and the subsequent policies and social tensions, Latin Americans are an important element of cultural revitalization, which is said to occupy a central place in the construction of a multicultural society and in the generation of intercultural dialogues with the receiving society as well as other immigrant communities.

### **The Return to the Nation-State and an Exclusive Citizenship: The Answer to the Issues on Cultural Diversity in Europe**

As was presented in the last section here above, after the abandonment of multiculturalism, a reevaluation of the concept of citizenship in an exclusive nationalistic perspective is central in the development of legislation and policies of integration. In consequence, discourses based on a positive approach to cultural diversity, to the equality of ethnic and cultural relations and the respect for differences are progressively being discarded. Integration becomes an obligatory process where immigrants are principally responsible in their conquest for citizenship. The institutional and organizational logistic surrounding this process, as has been shown through the Latin Americans' experience, has not had a real impact on integration or

intercultural relations. In this way, to explore the achievements and limitations of local integration policies implies the questioning of the framework of the nation-state and the concept of citizenship in the light of the actual challenge imposed by urban multiculturalism, globalization and transnationalism. This means, to question the validity of the nation-state as an appropriate foundation for the relationships between immigrant minorities and receiving societies, often conflictive and ever changing in global cities.

Under the nationalistic vision that is being imposed in Europe, inspired by the historical means of the construction of the nation and centred in the state faculties, integration is no longer a social ideal, but rather a planned strategy executed by the government to administrate intercultural and integration processes (Favell, 2001; Rex, 1996). Thus, the preference of the majority of western European countries, including new countries of immigration like Spain and Italy, for the use of the term integration instead of assimilation does not mean in itself a search for a political notion with a more inclusive character. On the contrary, as expressed by Bommès y Morawska: “Integration, then, is about imagining the national institutional forms and structures that can unify a diverse population; hence imagining what the state can actively do to ‘nationalize’ newcomers and re-constitute the nation state under conditions of growing cultural diversity” (2005: 45). In this context the concept of integration acquired a complex character in Europe and is becoming the expression of contradictory sentiments: on one side, the desire to achieve social cohesion in a urban context of increasing cultural diversity, and on the other side, the ambition to maintain the specificity of national cultures.

In parallel, new forms of regional and transnational cooperation as well as the emergence of the city as a territory where integration processes effectively occur essentially reduced the importance of nation-state as an exclusive container of the definition of the society. In these terms, new perspectives on integration are being developed beyond the framework of the nation-state. This is the case of new countries of immigration, like Italy, Spain and Portugal, where new approaches on integration are being implemented, not necessarily centred in the nation-state (Gülalp, 2006; Bommès and Morawska, 2005; Penninx et al, 2004). Also, in the sociocultural context of Europe today, characterised by distrust towards immigrants, racist and discriminatory actions and essentialist forms of understanding culture, that consider the ‘other’ as a threat to the existence of national cultures in reception societies have resurged. Despite this unfavourable environment, immigrants are developing their own strategies to resist policies, as is presented by Koser and Lutz: “What has been

called, a response ‘from below’. From the immigrant perspective, integration implies the extension of social networks, beyond family and closed contacts, searching support in the communities already established. The migrant mobilization can be an element of multicultural and antiracist strategies and constitute an alternative to the fragmentation and lack of society cohesion” (1998: 4). In this sense, the migrant integration practices constitute an alternative way of creating citizenship when their views and necessities are not taken into account in the formal understanding of citizenship within the nation state (Sassen, 2003).

In conclusion, in the last decade, political debates around immigration and integration have driven to the establishment of quickly implemented policies with the introduction of topics highly symbolic of the national culture. As has been shown through the example of the Latin American community, the effectiveness of these policies in achieving integration is doubtful. Furthermore, these policies have contributed to the deepening of anti-immigrant sentiment in host societies and to a greater politicisation of themes related to immigration and integration. The problems related to integration of immigrants in urban settlements demands responses with a long-term vision, and cannot be solved with a short-term legislative changes. This hurry to attain objectives in matters that require time and the implication of the society as a whole conduces to the inefficiency, if not the failure of these legislative requests.

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