



# Comparative Integration Context Theory: Participation and Belonging in New Diverse European Cities

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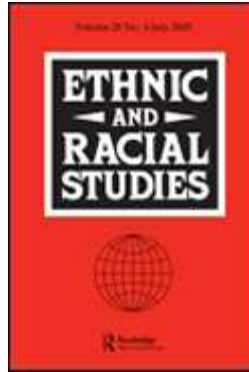
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**Comparative Integration Context Theory:  
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# Comparative Integration Context Theory: Participation and Belonging in New Diverse European Cities<sup>1</sup>

Maurice Crul and Jens Schneider

## Abstract

Drawing upon results from the TIES survey on the second generation in eight European countries the authors propose a new perspective on integration or assimilation. The proposed *comparative integration context theory* argues that participation in social organizations and belonging to local communities across European cities is strongly dependent on the integration context. Differences in integration contexts include institutional arrangements in education, the labour market, housing, religion and in legislation. Differences in the social and political context are especially important for social and cultural participation and belonging. The TIES data show high degrees of local involvement in the second generation and the dwindling centrality of single ethnic belongings – a reflection of the dramatically changing ethnic and (sub) cultural landscapes in cities in Europe. The article challenges established notions of ‘newcomers’ and ‘natives’, explores the ‘remaking of the mainstream’ and argues to investigate mobility pathways for a better understanding of integration or assimilation as on-going processes.

**Keywords:** theory, integration, diversity, second generation, TIES, immigration

## Introduction

Post-war migration flows to Europe have changed the ethnic landscape of large cities to a similar extent as in the United States. Those who, in the US, are referred to as post-1965 immigrants have a parallel in the labour migrants in Europe, who arrived at the end of the fifties until the beginning of the seventies. As a result, European migration scholars have closely followed the US debate, and the ideas put forward by the authors of segmented assimilation and new assimilation theory have been particularly influential. The central idea of segmented assimilation theory is that there is more than one way to assimilate into American society (Portes and Rumbaut 1996; 2001), while the authors of new assimilation theory convincingly show that the dominant stream remains ‘straight line assimilation’ -- although perhaps not in all regards in the second, but at least in the third generation (Alba

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3 and Nee 2003, pp. 271-292). The New York study of the second generation confirms this,  
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5 and even speaks of a 'second generation advantage' (Kasinitz et al. 2008). As early as  
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7 1997 there has been much debate about the stagnation among some second generation  
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9 Mexicans, which is obvious and substantial, affecting one of the largest and fastest grow-  
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11 ing groups (Rumbaut 2005). From our perspective advancing and stagnation do not need to  
12  
13 be mutually exclusive. Among the second generation in Europe the dominant trend is a  
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15 remarkable upward mobility (Crul and Schneider 2009), but there are also portions of each  
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17 group that lag behind. In some countries this group is quite sizeable, so both trends are  
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19 visible and need to be addressed.  
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25 Both American theories also point to the importance of *context*. This refers as much  
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27 to the reception context (see, for instance, the different treatment of illegal migrants com-  
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29 pared to invited political refugees), the societal context (e.g. the level of racism in the US  
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31 towards certain ethnic groups), as to the different aspects of local context (e.g. neighbour-  
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33 hood and economy; cf. Waldinger 2001). Furthermore, we have learned, especially from  
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35 the work of Zhou (2005) and Gibson (1989), of the importance of networks in (heteroge-  
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37 neous) communities like the Chinese and the Sikhs.  
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42 The most interesting difference with the US is that Europe consists of different  
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44 countries. This gives us the opportunity to compare outcomes in the second generation  
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46 across different national contexts. In this regard Europe can be considered a 'natural labo-  
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48 ratory' for integration processes. This was the starting point for an international research  
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50 project on the second generation in fifteen European cities, the TIES Survey.<sup>2</sup> European  
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52 comparative research can offer the American debate insights that are difficult to get at in  
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54 one-country research settings. The first results of the TIES project show that differences in  
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56 institutional arrangements have a huge effect. This alerts us to the importance of the specif-  
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58 ics of the national integration context, which is a somewhat understudied topic in the US.  
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## **The second generation in European large cities**

In this first part we want to look at the second generation in European cities. We will discuss how the second generation is claiming its place in the cities, is taking up professional positions and to what extent they are 'remaking the mainstream' in the European cities. We discuss all these issues from the perspective of the second generation as active agents of change in the cities. In the second part of the article we will discuss how different integration contexts help or obstruct the second generation in claiming a place in the cities.

### *The second generation: the established group in the city*

American assimilation theories are mostly based on research on the broad category of children of immigrants. In fact, in the United States it usually includes the native born children of immigrants as well as those who arrive together with their parents (i.e. the so-called 'in-between-' or 1.5 generation).<sup>3</sup> The term 'second generation' in the strict demographic sense only refers to those born in the country of immigration, and we believe that it is important to clearly distinguish these two groups. Second and in-between generations differ radically in at least one central aspect: the second generation is born into the society of immigration, and unlike their parents and the children of the in-between generation they do not have a migration experience. They do not need to adapt in a society new to them. In Europe, they are also overwhelmingly citizens of that country. As Schinkel (2007) argues, for the second generation there is no such place as 'outside' of society.

This is an important point for the theoretical debate: if the second generation does not need to integrate or assimilate into society, the common opposition between 'the society' (or the 'natives', or the 'autochthonous', or the 'residents') on the one side, and immigrants as 'newcomers' on the other, does not apply to the second generation. We are not

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3 dealing with a clearly defined group of in- and outsiders (cf. Glick-Schiller and Wimmer  
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5 2002).<sup>4</sup>  
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8 Second generation youngsters are members of the society from the day they are  
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10 born. As such, we can look at the second generation as being part of (or participating in) a  
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12 plurality of social organizations (Luhmann 1989) -- for example, their families, neighbour-  
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14 hoods, schools, peer groups, work units or more or less organised free time and leisure ac-  
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16 tivities (sports clubs, etc.).  
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20 In fact, changing the perspective, we have to look differently at major cities. Young  
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22 people from the second generation are frequently the 'established group' in these cities to-  
23  
24 day. The TIES data show their biographical continuity -- they were born, grew up and are  
25  
26 still living in the same city. In contrast, in the TIES study we found that many respondents  
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28 of native-born parents moved from other parts of the country to the major cities because of  
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30 study or work. When we look at attachment and involvement at the neighbourhood level,  
31  
32 as a result we find stronger involvement among the second generation than among age  
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34 peers with native-born parents. The following figure illustrates this with regard to the  
35  
36 German and Austrian cities in the TIES Survey.<sup>5</sup> It compares the neighbourhood involve-  
37  
38 ment of native-born children of immigrants from Turkey and former Yugoslavia, and a  
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40 comparison group with native-born parents.<sup>6</sup>  
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48 [Figure 1]  
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53 This raises new questions about participation and belonging from a societal perspective: A  
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55 newly arrived college student of native born parents who moves into a cheap and ethnically  
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57 diverse working class neighbourhood in the city will still need some adaptation to this new  
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3 environment -- especially when coming from a small town or the countryside -- places  
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5 which are usually much less diverse in many ways.  
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8 This brings us to our second point: all young people, be they children of immi-  
9 grants or of native-born parents, need to find their place in social organizations which are  
10 crucial for 'survival' in society (cf. Bommes 2005; Schinkel 2007, pp. 130ff.). In larger  
11 European and American cities this includes the need to cope with an environment that is  
12 increasingly multi-ethnic and 'super-diverse'. And in some areas (like certain neighbour-  
13 hoods or schools or working environments) this is sometimes more difficult for children of  
14 native-born parents than for the second generation.  
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27 *The second generation: professional roles and other sub-cultural identities*

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29 Another important issue is the use of the 'ethnic group' as an analytical category. Although  
30 the critique of the concept of the 'ethnos' as a static homogeneous unit has left anthropol-  
31 ogy (Barth 1969; Cohen 1994) and is now widely spread within the social sciences, much  
32 migration research implicitly assumes that actions and views of migrants and their children  
33 are all motivated by the migration experience and/or their 'ethnic heritage'.<sup>7</sup> Again, look-  
34 ing particularly at the second generation, we think that this is debatable. To illustrate our  
35 point, here is the 'case study' of Naima:  
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45 Naima is a young unmarried woman of Moroccan descent who studies Spanish and French  
46 linguistics in Amsterdam. The young woman speaks Dutch with a slight accent typical for  
47 Amsterdam, where she was born and raised. On the other hand, Moroccan Arabic is her  
48 mother (and father) tongue; with both parents originally from the North of Morocco the  
49 language spoken at home was always Moroccan. Especially on the mobile phone with Mo-  
50 roccan friends and family she frequently switches to her mother tongue -- also because it  
51 gives more privacy in public situations. She still lives with her parents in the same  
52 neighbourhood where she grew up -- partly because it allows her to save money on rent,  
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3 but also because she feels comfortable in the area. At the last Football World Champion-  
4 ship 2006 her favourite team was Holland (Morocco was not qualified), but if Morocco had  
5 played her sympathies clearly would have been with the Moroccan team. Naima is 'well  
6 integrated' into a variety of different *social organizations* like, for example, her family, the  
7 neighbourhood, the university, and a mentor project that aims to help out disadvantaged  
8 children in school. Other domains could most probably be added, for example her work-  
9 place: a secondary school where she is currently doing an internship. She wears a headscarf  
10 and is engaged to a first generation Moroccan man who obtained his university diploma  
11 from Morocco.  
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23 Naima opposes to the idea that she first and foremost is seen as Moroccan simply for the  
24 reason that she is a child of immigrant parents. Many, if not most of her attitudes and ac-  
25 tions are not based on the fact of being a child of immigrants. In many aspects she resem-  
26 bles the 'typical' Dutch university student, and the most important driving forces behind  
27 most of her actions are her age (and being young at a specific moment in time), her gender,  
28 and high degree of education. Among many other aspects she certainly is 'Moroccan' too,  
29 but it becomes problematic, if it is used *per se*.  
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40 Naima belongs to the growing group of highly educated within the Moroccan com-  
41 munity in the Netherlands. The second generation, partly because of their entrance into  
42 professional careers, is embracing new professional roles and identities. For Naima her  
43 professional role as a teacher in secondary school is such a strong identifier.  
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50 From the perspective of *culture and identification*, the portrait of our case study of-  
51 fers a much more ambiguous picture: in both main languages she is a native speaker, and  
52 both are important and ever present means of communication in her daily life. She strongly  
53 identifies as Moroccan, yet without apparent contradictions to feel Dutch as well. Now,  
54 again the question is: what does that mean for her identification as a young woman living  
55 in the Netherlands? Dominant mainstream perceptions and public discourses in most  
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3 Western countries implicitly or explicitly operate with normative settings here: it is clearly  
4 preferred to be well-educated and not unemployed, to wear no headscarf, to have 'native'  
5 friends and to not marry someone from Morocco. But to conclude that her attitudes and  
6 actions are primarily motivated by her ethnic background is premature. Naima also  
7 strongly identifies as an emancipated woman who wears a headscarf upon her own deci-  
8 sion. The following table compares, for instance, higher educated (tertiary education)  
9 women from the Moroccan second generation and from the comparison group in the Neth-  
10 erlands and their opinions on gender roles. It specifically asks who should be the main per-  
11 son responsible for taking care of the children:  
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27 [Table 1]  
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32 Both groups have almost identical responses on this question. To look at higher educated  
33 women is of course just one possibility. Other meaningful social and (sub)cultural catego-  
34 ries, such as e.g. youth-, political or bohème-cultures, can also be important for the second  
35 generation. While for the first generation their origin is an almost all-encompassing iden-  
36 tity (both ascribed and prescribed), this is no longer true for most of the second generation.  
37 The idea of 'super-diversity' presented by Vertovec (2006) describes the growing diversi-  
38 fication among city dwellers. We would add that super-diversity is also becoming visible  
39 *across* ethnic lines, sometimes challenging the existing ethnic hierarchies -- like for in-  
40 stance second-generation Turkish doctors in hospitals in Amsterdam serving many elderly  
41 patients who come from lower or middle class non-migrant families.  
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54 Obviously, in migration research we choose survey respondents because they *de-*  
55 *mographically* belong to a certain 'group', in order to compare them to 'groups' with other  
56 demographic characteristics. That is also one of the ways we looked at the data in the TIES  
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3 survey. However, we have to be aware that this 'group'-definition is merely an operational  
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5 departure point for analysis, to *explain* differences with this *a priori* definition is, in the  
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7 worst case, tautological (cf. Latour 1999, p. 71). Moreover, taking the 'group'-hypothesis  
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9 simultaneously as *explanans* and *explanandum* tends to obscure the fact that the degree of  
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11 variation *within* a 'group', as much as other lines of differentiation may be more relevant.  
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18 *The second generation: 'remaking the mainstream'*

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20 Cities are today subject to a gigantic turnover of the population; statistically, in many of  
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22 them almost the entire population is exchanged within less than one generation.<sup>8</sup> While  
23  
24 most of the European cities have been multi-ethnic for a long time -- or even since their  
25  
26 foundations as *modern* cities -- it is a relatively new phenomenon that the formerly clearly  
27  
28 defined ethnic majority group is becoming a minority group like the other ethnic groups. In  
29  
30 many European cities the majority of the population under age twelve is already of immi-  
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32 grant origin. The authors of the New York study also point out that the group of non-  
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34 Hispanic whites is still sizable (although only when taking all European groups together),  
35  
36 but it has in reality become just one of the many ethnic minority groups in the city. This  
37  
38 challenges standard notions of 'mainstream' and 'ethnic majority group'.  
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44 The fact that they are losing their numeric majority position in the younger cohorts  
45  
46 of larger cities does not mean that the 'majority group' would necessarily also lose its  
47  
48 status as the most dominant group in social and economic terms. But Alba (2009) shows  
49  
50 that the demographic development of the cities does also challenge the 'ethnic hierarchy'  
51  
52 in the long run. Alba suggests that in the future the 'mainstream', simply for demographic  
53  
54 reasons, will incorporate non-white groups as well. From our point of view, we seem to  
55  
56 need a new vocabulary to describe this new diverse urban reality.  
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3 We turn again to the TIES data to see how the new urban diversity affects the lives  
4 of both second generation groups and the comparison group. We do this by looking at the  
5 three best friends of our respondents. The following table compares second generation  
6 Turks and members of the comparison group in Germany and France (juxtaposing the  
7 higher educated group with the entire research population).  
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17 [Figure 2]  
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22 The individual reality of the second generation Turks reflects their multi-ethnic environ-  
23 ment in the cities. The TIES survey shows that they have friendships with children of na-  
24 tive-born parents, but also from other ethnic minority groups. Looking at the university  
25 students here reveals an interesting finding: those of Turkish background have the most  
26 mixed friendship groups, while the students in the comparison group the least. Their level  
27 of interaction with people from other ethnic groups is remarkably low, especially for the  
28 age cohorts to which they belong and the neighbourhoods they live in.  
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38 The highly educated second generation, through their studies and their work, most  
39 often engages with people outside of their own group -- especially with middle class  
40 friends of native parentage. Their friends, as the TIES survey shows, are also mostly highly  
41 educated. They are often found in jobs in the city administration, and in the educational or  
42 social work sector. These jobs give them, to some extent, the possibility to influence city  
43 policies and politics (Crul et. al 2008). They therefore definitely play an (important) role in  
44 'remaking the mainstream'. However, the size of this group differs strongly across cities  
45 and countries. But also the lower educated second generation has, in majority, one or more  
46 best friends outside their own ethnic group -- through work, school or their neighbourhood.  
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There are three groups that mostly interact with their own ethnic group members. These are the higher educated of native parentage and parts of the lower educated in both the second generation and the comparison group. For the highly educated this is the continuation of the status quo before and a reflection of (still) lower ethnic diversity in the higher streams of society. For the lower educated, both of native parentage and of the second generation, this is more problematic, because their more limited networks (also across ethnic lines) potentially harm their access to better education, work and housing.

'Reconsidering the mainstream' thus may radically shift the focus on which group is more or less 'assimilated' or 'integrated'. Children of native-born parents with no connections outside their own group may find themselves outside the multicultural 'mainstream'.

### **Comparative Integration Context Theory: Theoretical and methodological implications**

We have first discussed the position of the second generation from the perspective of them being active agents of change in the cities. But we could already see in the tables that the second generation is not in all the cities in the same way in a position to claim their participation and belonging. Therefore we now want to look at the role of the integration *contexts* that either help or hinder taking up certain positions. We will argue in the following that participation and belonging of the second generation in European cities is strongly dependent on the integration context.

Differences in integration contexts include institutional arrangements in education, the labour market, housing, religion and in legislation. Differences in the social and political context are especially important for social and cultural participation and belonging. Part and parcel of the integration context is the diversity of today's European cities as we dis-

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2  
3 cussed it in the previous section. Young people of all ethnic groups (including the group  
4 that was formerly known as the ethnic majority group) need to integrate into the reality of a  
5  
6 (super) diverse city youth population with different biographies and with longer or shorter  
7  
8 histories living in the city.  
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12 In the following we describe our *comparative integration context theory*, as we  
13 named it, in more detail and introduce our main concepts *participation* and *belonging*  
14  
15 briefly.  
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### 22 *The context of institutional arrangements*

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24 We want to address the importance of local and national contexts in which young persons,  
25 second generation or with native-born parents, have to find a position and place. This is not  
26  
27 a new topic: the US-American theories deal extensively with context, for example, with  
28  
29 different modes of incorporation (e.g. Portes et al. 2009) or the neighbourhood context  
30  
31 (e.g. Kasinitz et al. 2008, pp 150-158). National school systems and access conditions to  
32  
33 the labour market are also generally studied in their differentiating effects on children from  
34  
35 different ethnic groups and social classes, but not as part of *the system's idiosyncrasy* --  
36  
37 which generally comes to the fore only in comparison across national school or labour  
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39 market systems.  
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45  
46 Taking the institutional arrangements of a country for granted or as given can seri-  
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48 ously affect the way we perceive problems of participation and belonging among the sec-  
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50 ond generation. Comparing different ethnic groups in the same local or national contexts  
51  
52 automatically sets the focus on the immigrant groups themselves: why do some under per-  
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54 form compared to the 'native' group, but others do not? The seemingly most logical expla-  
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56 nation at hand then is culture and class. We are not saying that these explanations are un-  
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58 important -- far from it -- but they do not tell us the whole story.  
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3 Jeffrey Reitz, in his book *Warmth of welcome* (1998), points out the effect of dif-  
4  
5 ferent institutional settings for immigrants in Canada, Australia and the US. We want to  
6  
7 take Reitz' argument a step further into the European context, where institutional arrange-  
8  
9 ments are much more diverse than in the three countries he compared. We will concentrate  
10  
11 in this article mainly on one key institution: education. But national institutional arrange-  
12  
13 ments in the labour market and housing play similar roles.  
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17 If we take, for example, second generation Turks in Germany, we can explain their  
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19 predominantly disadvantaged situation in education to a significant degree through their  
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21 low socio-economic background. The remaining part is then usually attributed to cultural  
22  
23 differences. But if we compare second generation Turks *across* several European coun-  
24  
25 tries, we can see that they are doing much better in other countries: only 3 per cent enter  
26  
27 higher education in Germany, as compared to almost 40 per cent in Sweden and France.  
28  
29 These large differences in outcomes across countries also remain when the analysis con-  
30  
31 trols for the education of the fathers -- as in the following table:<sup>9</sup>  
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38 [Table 2]  
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43 The impressive differences displayed here can largely be explained by the different  
44  
45 educational institutional arrangements in each country. Among these the most influential  
46  
47 factors are starting age in school, age of first track selection, the upward permeability  
48  
49 within secondary education, and the existence of a long or indirect route to higher educa-  
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51 tion through the vocational column. In Germany compulsory school starts at age six -- later  
52  
53 than in most other European countries -- and in most areas children are selected into the  
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55 academic or vocational column at the age of ten, after only four years of joint learning. In  
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57 countries like the Netherlands this selection occurs after eight years, and even when se-  
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3 lected into the lower qualifying tracks, many still manage to reach higher education  
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5 through the vocational column (although at the cost of three years extra education). In  
6  
7 Germany the vocational route to higher education is not seen and used to the same extent  
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9 as an alternative. These two aspects of the institutional arrangements in German education  
10  
11 already determine to a large degree the low educational position of the second generation  
12  
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15 Turks.

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17 We should be aware that institutional contexts differ greatly from country to coun-  
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19 try in Europe (or even from city to city in one country), even though the normative debate  
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21 is similar-- as, for example, the debate in Germany and France about beginning to learn  
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23 German/French as a second language at an early age. Yet, the general institutional ar-  
24  
25 rangements for second language learning are very different -- with obvious relevance for  
26  
27 the outcomes in school. At the same time, this is also true the other way round: there is still  
28  
29 a lot of difference between national integration policies on the one side, and government  
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31 rhetorics across countries on the other, ranging from multiculturalism to right wing popu-  
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33 list and assimilative stances. However, on the city level, we frequently observe rhetoric-  
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35 independent, pragmatic ways in which state agencies and societal institutions assess the  
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37 specific necessities of dealing with immigrants and their children, and with the cultural di-  
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39 versity of their clientele (Heckmann et al. 2001; Vermeulen 1997; Vermeulen and Stotijn  
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41 2009). For this reason we advocate the study of actual practice next to the public discourse  
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43 and national integration policies.  
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51 To look at participation in key institutions in different European cities requires two  
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53 different perspectives: From the societal perspective it means to look at the national and  
54  
55 local 'institutional arrangements' facilitating or hampering participation and access, repro-  
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57 ducing or reducing inequality. 'Failed participation' can thus be conceived as an indicator  
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59 of obstacles to access and participation. An example of the latter could be the late start of  
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3 compulsory schooling, which has a disproportional negative affect on children of immi-  
4 grants. Here we actually invert the common academic and policy perspective on ‘integra-  
5 tion’. The question is not why individuals fail to participate but why institutions fail to be  
6 inclusive. The first findings of the TIES project show that institutional arrangements in  
7 education in the European situation are closely correlated to the level of education the sec-  
8 ond generation is able to reach.  
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The second perspective includes the agency of individuals and groups, actively de-  
veloping options and making choices, challenging given opportunities and structural con-  
figurations. In the German half-day primary school system it is for instance expected that  
parents actively help and assist with homework. In the complex Dutch school system in-  
formation about the school system is of crucial importance. In different contexts different  
subjective and objective *options* of individuals to gain access and to claim participation  
depend on different individual and group resources (i.e. the economic, social and cultural  
capital). With the comparative integration context theory we study both perspectives by  
looking at the actual practices of both institutions and individuals or groups.

#### *The context of social and political discourse*

Independent of their direct impact on policies and institutional practices, government  
rhetorics have an influence on the *political and social climate*, directly affecting immi-  
grants’ and their children’s quest for a place and position in the immigration society. On  
the one side, integration practices are shaped and pre-structured by specific institutional  
contexts (including legal aspects, such as citizenship regimes and policies, and institutional  
arrangements in, for instance, education and the labour market). On the other side integra-  
tion practices are shaped by rules and ‘habits’ (in the sense of Bourdieu’s *habitus*) in estab-



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3 lishing and taking care of social relations and social interaction in a given societal setting  
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6 (Bourdieu 1977; 1984).  
7

8 We distinguish three basic types of discursive contexts: political discourse, the so-  
9  
10 cial discourse of everyday communication and interaction, and media discourse. The po-  
11  
12 litical climate and implicit or explicit stereotypes and hierarchies of groups have a constant  
13  
14 effect on feelings of belonging. In addition, institutional arrangements can have ‘discursive  
15  
16 qualities’. Citizenship regimes, for example, are frequently reflected in everyday discourse  
17  
18 on the national belonging of groups and individuals (Schneider 2007). The term ‘belong-  
19  
20 ing’ entails the possibility of simultaneousness, of different forms of belonging in different  
21  
22 contexts, and of possible changes over time. ‘Belonging’ has an individual and an institu-  
23  
24 tional level: from an individual perspective the challenge is to find a widely unquestioned  
25  
26 position and place. Belonging in the sense of ‘functional identities’ (cf. Devereux 1978, pp.  
27  
28 137ff.) means the ability to develop social relations along ‘strong’ and ‘weak ties’  
29  
30 (Granovetter 1973) in many different social contexts. From institutional perspective the  
31  
32 second generation is likely to experience *boundaries* ‘brightened or blurred’ (Alba 2005)  
33  
34 by institutional arrangements, public and social discourses, and inclusionary/exclusionary  
35  
36 attitudes of groups or individuals. ‘Group factors’ can be part of the boundary making  
37  
38 process too, especially when there is a cultural and/or group dynamic preventing or pro-  
39  
40 moting belonging and participation. Group factors are however never static or fixed: no  
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42 group in any context is immune to external influences. The effects of these influences are  
43  
44 generally best noted in the second generation (cf. Alba and Nee 2003, p.215).  
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53 The following table shows the ‘warmth’ of feelings among comparison group  
54  
55 members in three different cities in the TIES survey towards people of Moroccan descent  
56  
57 on a scale from 0 to 100 degrees Celsius. The respondents were told that 50 degrees would  
58  
59 be equivalent to neutral feelings. The comparison group was interviewed in the same  
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3 neighbourhoods where the second generation was sampled, so the results should reflect  
4  
5 their opinion toward their fellow neighbourhood residents:  
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10 [Table 3]  
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15 The social and discursive climate towards Moroccans is apparently rather negative in Am-  
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17 sterdam (almost two thirds express lower than neutral feelings) and quite positive in Ma-  
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19 drid.  
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22 The discursive context represents a complex field, in which the feelings of belong-  
23  
24 ing in the second generation are in constant tension with political, media and social repre-  
25  
26 sentations of their position in society. The wider dominant discursive context in most  
27  
28 European countries presents a serious challenge here, because it overemphasises the ethnic  
29  
30 background as the main signifier in all societal contexts. Depending on the degree to which  
31  
32 belonging to the local or national community is discursively called into question, we find  
33  
34 ambiguity and 'hybridity' in the feelings of belonging of the second generation groups --  
35  
36 again probably the most adequate answer to the heterogeneous realities of European cities.  
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41 As a consequence, although 'national identity' is increasingly embraced and  
42  
43 claimed by the second generation, this label especially is often problematic. Going back to  
44  
45 the example, as the following figure shows, for the Moroccan second generation claiming  
46  
47 to be Dutch seems far more problematic than being Spanish or Belgian.  
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52 [Figure 3]  
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57 Interestingly, citizenship seems not to play a major role here, the numbers for dual and  
58  
59 immigration country nationality do not significantly differ for second generation Moroc-  
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3 cans in the three cities. This is an indication that the discursive context is the most impor-  
4 tant determinant here. At the same time we see that local identity can be a sort of 'substi-  
5 tute' for national identity (especially for the second generation Moroccans in Amsterdam).  
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8 The differences between 'national' and 'local' belonging point to the importance of the  
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10 'discursive legitimacy' of specific 'labels'. In all TIES survey cities, for the second genera-  
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12 tion local belonging is more easily self-ascribed than national belonging, while this is not  
13  
14 the case with the comparison group.  
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20 In summary, with the *comparative integration context theory*, we argue that par-  
21 ticipation and belonging in new diverse European cities is strongly dependent on the inte-  
22 gration context. Differences in integration contexts include institutional arrangements in  
23 education, the labour market, housing, religion and in legislation. Differences in the social  
24 and political context are especially important for social and cultural participation and be-  
25 longing.  
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### 36 *Comparative Integration Context Theory: Methodology*

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38 The methodological starting point for us is to see how people *in practice* deal with the  
39 challenges of finding a place and position in this new diverse urban reality. Here, we bor-  
40 row from Bourdieu's notion of the 'theory of practice' and the importance of studying con-  
41 crete practices in societal fields of individuals, groups and institutions in different contexts  
42 and over time. So, instead of trying to fit the empirical complexities into pre-formulated  
43 models we argue in favour of building our insights departing from the actual *practices and*  
44 *options* of individuals and groups.  
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55 In most research 'integration' is only measured by the present state or the final out-  
56 come in different domains. This could be the highest school diploma or the present job.  
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58 This approach makes it difficult to link outcomes with institutional arrangements. Present  
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3 state and final outcomes are the results of underlying processes over time. The analytical  
4 emphasis on process transforms the generally more sharp line between 'success' and 'fail-  
5 ure' at the end point into a more fuzzy sequence of failures and successes. It uncovers in-  
6 between pathways, bifurcating at specific points during school or labour market careers. To  
7 give an example: the educational results of second generation Turks in the Netherlands as  
8 compared to other countries show a middle position (see table above). The 'classical' con-  
9 clusion would say that the Dutch school system is not very selective. However, looking at  
10 the school *trajectory* reveals that the Dutch school system is, in fact, one of the most selec-  
11 tive systems tracking pupils into vocational versus academic tracks as early as age twelve.  
12 However, the Dutch school system offers some repair for the early selection through the  
13 vocational column. Judging only on the end results actually obscures the severe selection  
14 processes in the transition from primary to secondary education. Only by bringing in the  
15 *process* it is possible to link the outcomes at different stages of the school career to the in-  
16 stitutional arrangements, like early selection and the possibility to move up from lower vo-  
17 cational education to middle vocational education to be able in the end to enter higher edu-  
18 cation. It is the crucial methodological link to operationalize our theoretical assumptions.

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41 The controversy between new assimilation and segmented assimilation is partly  
42 about looking at different life stages (youngsters versus young adults). The attitude of par-  
43 ents resisting Americanisation for their young children, which segmented assimilation the-  
44 ory has shown to be a possible path for upward mobility among Asian groups, may result  
45 in 'classical assimilation', once the youngsters reach adulthood and access the middle-  
46 class. Looking at life courses up and into adult life rather than only a particular part of that  
47 trajectory may help to soften the rigidity of certain concepts (and their critique).  
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### Final remarks on the transatlantic debate

The European debate has greatly and critically profited from the theoretical notions developed in the US. Our theoretical framework is actually built on the earlier descriptions of multi-ethnic city realities in the US, in which non-Hispanic whites have already become an ethnic minority group (Kasinitz et al. 2008) and colour lines are increasingly 'blurred' (Alba 2009).

The comparative European study however also triggers questions about the US centeredness of the American theoretical frameworks. Are differences in outcomes for the various ethnic groups in the US not partly a reflection of American institutional arrangements in school and labour markets? The New York second generation study, for instance, can be read as an example of how different ethnic groups are able to deal with the school system in place (Kasinitz et al. 2008). If a group lives in a poor neighbourhood with low quality public schools (Portes et al. 2009, p. 1081; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008, pp. 88-145), their children will have little chances to enter (prestigious) colleges. Extreme differences in quality of schools are typical features of American institutional arrangements in education (Crul and Holdaway 2009). Although some lower class ethnic minority groups may find better ways to overcome the inequality of chances in American schools than others, the results in the US, above all, reflect the American way of integrating children into educational institutions. These observations should caution us to transfer American assimilation theory to other national contexts. Even if in other countries we find similar segmented outcomes, the mechanisms and institutional settings behind them will most probably be very different than those described by segmented assimilation theory.

We found out through the TIES project that across Europe, the different contextual frameworks have (very) different consequences. In some national contexts there is a rapidly growing upcoming elite of immigrant descent in the cities, while in other contexts the

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2  
3 second generation is mainly settling among skilled workers (Crul and Schneider 2009).

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5 This will obviously have important consequences for how the ethnic communities will de-  
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9 velop and how integration or assimilation processes will develop in the future.

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11 The challenge for European researchers is to comparatively explain different inte-  
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17 gration outcomes across Europe. In this article we have tried to formulate some first build-  
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17 gration outcomes across Europe. In this article we have tried to formulate some first build-  
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A similar argument can be made for the influence of the national discourses on ide-  
als of assimilation or integration. They play an important role in who is considered inte-  
grated or assimilated in both the public and the academic debate. The implicitly formulated  
'ideals of integration or assimilation' differ greatly across countries. We should be aware  
that in the US-debate the notion of 'assimilation', i.e. becoming similar to the 'mainstream  
population', is built upon the necessity of a country formed by immigrant groups of many  
different origins to create common denominators and identifiers. In the Scandinavian coun-  
tries, by contrast, it is especially the tradition of the strong welfare state and the ideal of  
overcoming inequalities, which formulates the main end goals of integration. In France, the  
republican model with its radical egalitarian view of citizenship, poses yet again another  
normative integration goal. A good example of how this works in practice is religion:  
Strong particularistic ethnic and religious institutions are mostly considered an important  
stepping-stone for assimilation in the US. The most contrasting case in Europe is certainly  
France, where religion is mostly looked upon with great scepticism (Foner and Alba 2009).  
This obviously also has implications for the ways in which immigrant and second genera-  
tion religiosity is judged in the two settings.

Especially in the field of identities and social relationships, normative ideas of pre-  
ferred integration outcomes seem to most easily slip into academic integration models. Im-  
plicit normative connotations of terms and concepts frequently prevent posing the right

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3 scientific questions and developing analytical models, which address integration dynamics  
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5 in order to *understand* and not to judge them -- or in other words, the ‘concern with policy  
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7 problems (should not) impair the search for intellectual problems’ (Banton 2008, p. 7).

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10 Cross-country and transatlantic comparisons may greatly help to raise awareness for the  
11  
12 specific limits of every national debate between prescriptive and descriptive, normative  
13  
14 and analytical.  
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38  
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44  
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46  
47 completed.

48  
49 <sup>2</sup> TIES investigates the second generation of Turkish, Moroccan and former Yugoslavia descent in fifteen  
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51 cities in eight European countries ([www.TIESproject.eu](http://www.TIESproject.eu) for more details). It has a special focus on the educa-  
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53 tional, professional and housing careers of the respondents, and it allows both for reconstruction of individual  
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55 life trajectories, and relation of them to background and contextual factors (see Crul and Heering 2008).

56  
57 <sup>3</sup> See for instance the CILS and ISGMNY studies.

58  
59 <sup>4</sup> Another problem with the rather static notion of in- and outsiders is that it presupposes that 'the people',  
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'the nation' and 'the state' would all fall within the same boundaries. It neglects, as theorists of trans-

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6 nationalism have pointed out, the relationships and constant movements of individuals across the nation-state  
7 borders (Waters and Levitt 2002).  
8

9  
10 <sup>5</sup> The TIES survey was carried out by survey bureaus under supervision of the eight TIES partner research  
11 institutes: the Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research [ISPO], University of Leuven in Belgium;  
12 the National Institute for Demographic Studies [INED] in France; the Swiss Forum for Migration and Popu-  
13 lation Studies [SFM], University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland; the Centre for Research in international migra-  
14 tion and ethnic relations [CEIFO], University of Stockholm in Sweden; the Institute for Migration Research  
15 and Intercultural Studies [IMIS] University of Osnabruck, in Germany and the Institute for European Integra-  
16 tion Research [EIF], Austrian Academy of Sciences in Austria; The National Interdisciplinary Demographic  
17 Institute [NIDI] in The Hague and the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies [IMES] in Amsterdam, the  
18 Netherlands.  
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27 <sup>6</sup> This index combines four items in the TIES questionnaire addressing the attachment to the neighbourhood,  
28 feeling comfortable in it, feeling a responsibility for its life quality, and having good contacts with the  
29 neighbours. In the other cities only two of these items were asked, but the results are in line with this picture.  
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33 <sup>7</sup> Practically all the comparative research on various immigrant groups in one national or local context takes  
34 the 'group hypothesis' more or less for granted. On the one side, this is difficult to avoid, because especially  
35 quantitative work has to create analytical units in order to make comparisons. On the other side, we should be  
36 aware that these units, in any case, are analytical artefacts, whose relation to reality has to be well considered.  
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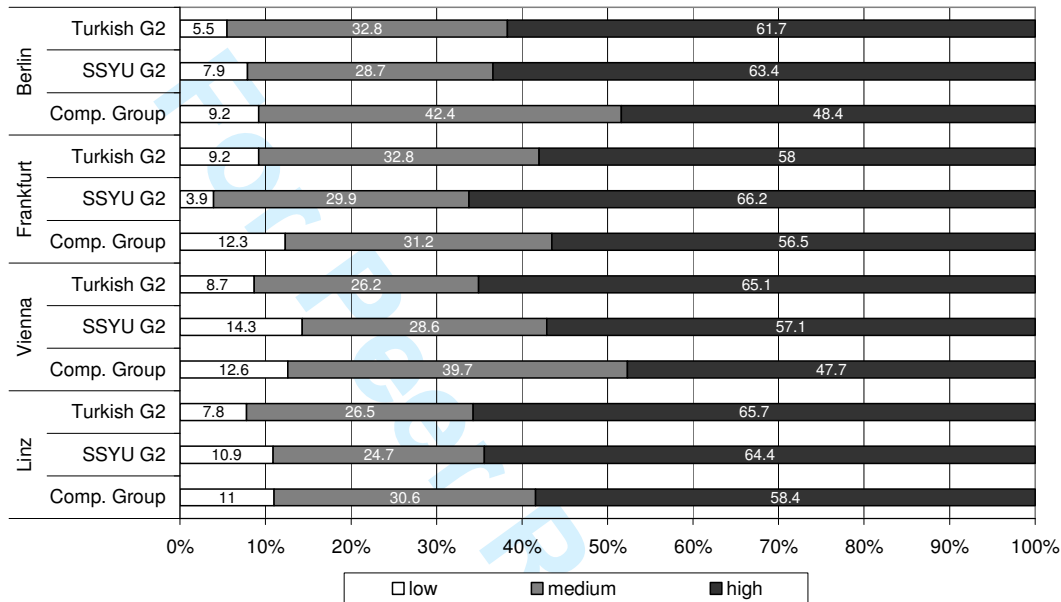
40 <sup>8</sup> It suffices to look at the annually registered moves to and away from a city at hand -- accessible through the  
41 population registers in many municipalities. Obviously the phenomenon has a similar magnitude in the US  
42 and is constantly changing their 'ethnic landscape' in a similar way.  
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47 <sup>9</sup> Fathers with a primary school diploma at most make up about half of the total Turkish sample. The TIES  
48 study compares two cities per country; it is thus no national survey. Yet, with regard to education the out-  
49 comes did not significantly differ across the two cities in each country (except for France).  
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**Figures for Crul & Schneider: “Comparative Integration Context Theory: Participation and Belonging in New Diverse European Cities”**  
ERS Special Issue “Theorizing Assimilation and Integration”

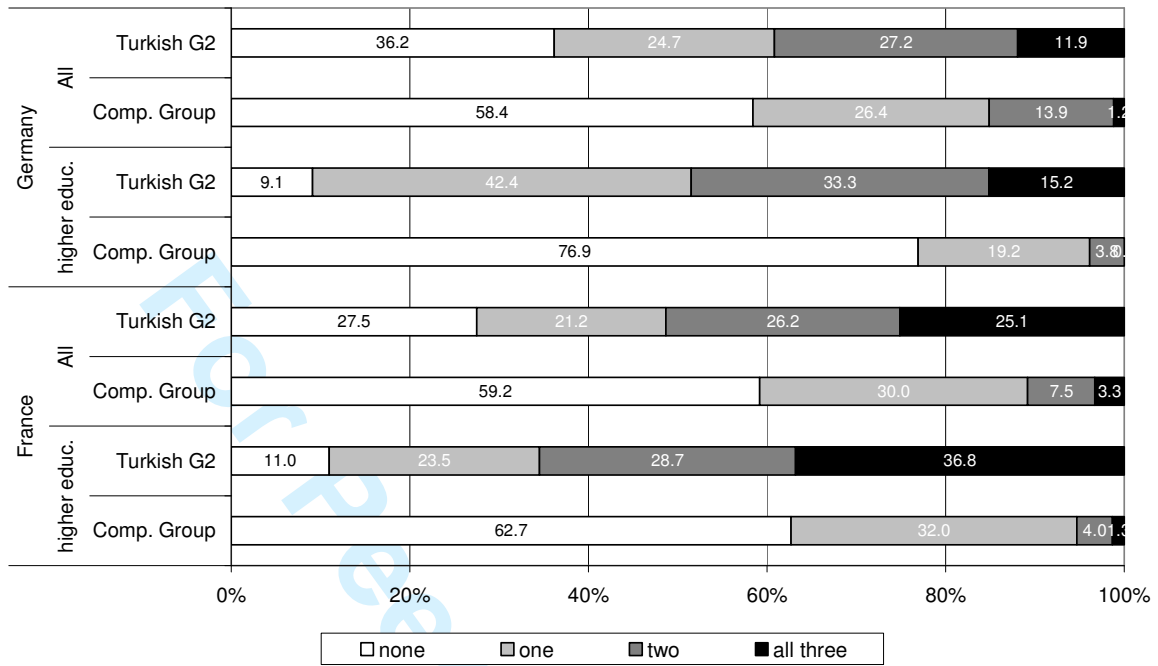
p. 3:

**Figure 1. Degree of involvement with one's neighbourhood (4-item index)**



Source: TIES 2007, 2008

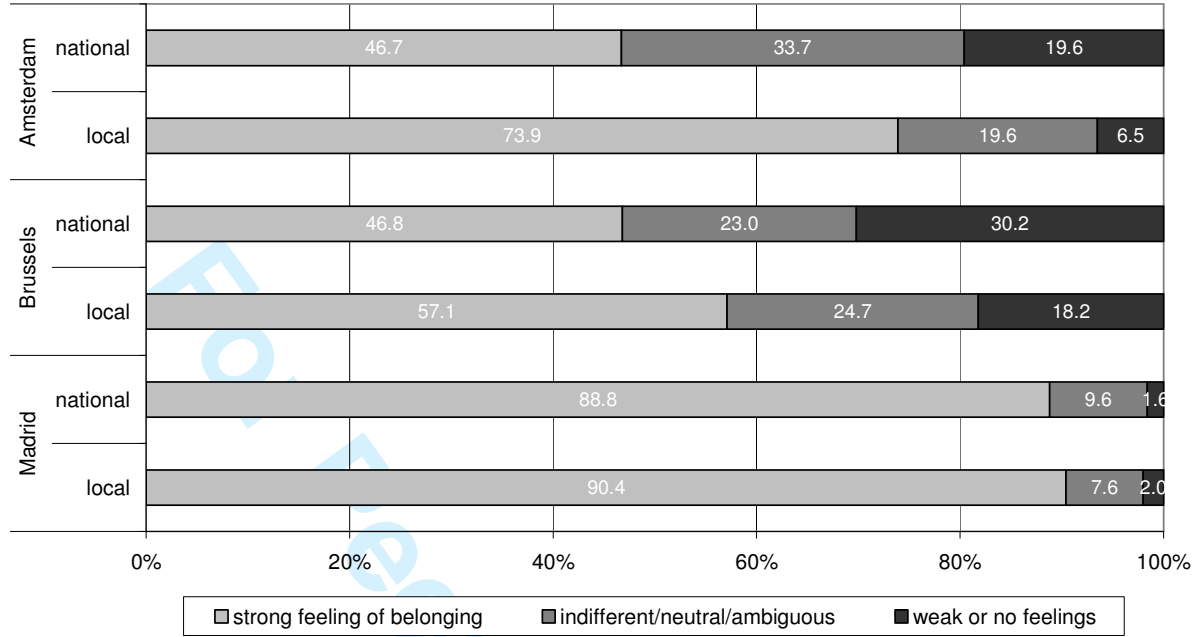
Figure 2. The three best friends: How many are of a different ethnic background?



Source: TIES 2007, 2008

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Figure 3. Moroccan G2: Local belonging vs. National belonging



Source: TIES 2007, 2008

**Tables:****Table 1. Who should take care of the children, if you have a family?**

	Mostly the mother	Mostly the father	Both equally	Mostly some family members together
Moroccan G2	9,8%	0%	85,2%	4,9%
Comparison Group	9,3%	0%	86,6%	4,1%

Source: TIES 2007,2008

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**Table 2. Second generation Turks with a father with maximum primary education: Highest diploma of those who left school and the present level of schooling of those still in school**

	Lower Secondary at most	Upper Secondary	College and University
Austria	35,9%	49,6%	14,5%
Belgium	24,0%	50,2%	24,8%
France	15,8%	44,6%	39,6%
Germany	34,7%	62,3%	3,0%
Netherlands	32,1%	42,3%	25,6%
Sweden	7,9%	55,0%	37,1%
Switzerland	19,8%	67,0%	13,2%

Source: TIES 2007,2008

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**Table 3: Comparison Group: feelings towards people of Moroccan descent (in temperature from 0 to 100 degrees Celsius)**

	Amsterdam	Brussels	Madrid
0-25 degrees	14.0%	8.6%	2.8%
26-50 degrees	50.4%	34.0%	24.7%
51-75 degrees	26.0%	29.9%	37.7%
76-100 degrees	9.6%	27.5%	34.8%
N	250	244	247

Source: TIES survey 2007, 2008

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