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From integration mainstreaming to convivial
disintegration: how superdiversity shows
the pitfalls of (mainstreaming) immigrant
integration



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Abstract

The emergent literature on mainstreaming immigrant integration frequently references the term superdiversity. The diversification of migration is put forward as one rational for implementing measures to support immigrant integration across policy fields and across levels of policy making. In this paper I reflect on those assertions and argue that contrarily using superdiversity is not an argument in favour of mainstreaming immigrant integration, but that instead a superdiversity lens is uniquely placed to critically examine whether the goal of mainstreaming should be integration at all. To move this argument forward I propose more concerted thinking about the merits of better understanding *convivial disintegration* as a more adequate starting point for thinking through the social and economic implications of international migration and how to address them through policy interventions.

Keywords: Convivial disintegration, mainstreaming, integration policy, superdiversity, uncertainty and complexity

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Introduction¹

The diversification of migration and with it the emergence of superdiversity are often put forward as one reason for implementing measures to support immigrant integration across policy fields and across levels of policy making. Efforts towards this end are referred to as integration mainstreaming. Discussed as a relatively recent and promising policy trend, integration mainstreaming is seen as an alternative to integration as a stand-alone policy realm (Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic 2014). Including immigrant integration concerns across different levels of government and making migration and its implications a broad policy concern are central facets of this new trend. Further, integration mainstreaming also involves shifting who or what is targeted by policy. The targeting of specific migrant groups is – at least in the framing of policies – made less prominent. The emergent literature on mainstreaming migrant integration references the term superdiversity not least to challenge ethnofocal and group focused approaches to immigrant integration (Grzymala-Kazłowska and Phillimore 2017).

In this paper I advance the argument that superdiversity, beyond serving as a rationale for mainstreaming, is uniquely placed to critically examine whether the goal of mainstreaming policies should be framed in terms of immigrant integration. I propose that instead it may be time to consider the analytical (and policy) advantages of talking about convivial *dis*integration. To develop this discussion I start with a brief overview of the literature on integration mainstreaming in the European context. I then delineate how the term superdiversity is used in this paper. I emphasise that the term is not synonymous with more diversity. The notion instead challenges simplistic presumptions such as that more diversity also means a need for more integration work. In a second section, I present my reading of the empirical chapters presented in Scholten and van Breugel (2018), a recent book analysing case studies of integration mainstreaming in different contexts of diversity and at different levels of governance. Building on those chapters I identify several fault-lines at odds with seeing integration mainstreaming – the way it is currently implemented – as an adequate response to superdiversity. What is mainstreamed is a vaguely defined notion of integration. Mainstreaming integration rarely responds to ideas about complex interconnections of difference – a central facet of the superdiversity concept. Going

¹ I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of the MPI Working Paper Series for helpful comments. I would like to thank Ilona van Breugel and Peter Scholten for asking me to write the charter this working paper grew out of.

hand in hand with this blind spot is that uncertainties of outcomes and continuities of change in superdiverse contexts do not resonate well with a vague notion of integration. I note that the goal of integrating migrants has become a maxim and a putatively necessary characteristic of what constitutes a desirable outcome for what Fourtan (2016) refers to as a post-migration society². As a goal integration is now seemingly without viable alternatives.

In a third section I discuss why this is problematic and point out how mainstreaming practices may suffer from the murkiness of what integration in superdiverse contexts is (or ought to be). I thus shift the discussion's focus to superdiversity and its discord with the concept of integration. I develop and discuss the notion of convivial disintegration and assess how it is better suited to the way everyday diversity is practiced. I can thus contribute to a more concerted engagement with complexity and uncertainty as undergirding the analytical purchase of superdiversity (Vertovec 2017). In conclusion I highlight the multiple ways in which linking superdiversity with discussions about mainstreaming can go beyond thinking about responses to a broader relevance of migration related diversity.

Integration mainstreaming as a new policy trend

While Joppke and Eule note, that “[t]here is still a lack of empirical and conceptual clarity over ‘mainstreaming’” (2016, 354) an emergent literature on the topic is devoting its attention to filling this gap. For example, in 2014 a large-scale EU-funded research project on mainstreaming integration governance, called UPSTREAM³, was kick-started. This and other projects have advanced empirical investigations and theoretical explorations on an emergent but by no means evenly practiced policy trend in the European Union. Next to the UPSTREAM case studies (EU-Level, the Netherlands, the UK, France, Spain and Poland) investigations for other publications have looked at integration mainstreaming in the context of Denmark (Jørgensen 2014), Germany (Bendel 2014), Greece (Anagnostou 2016) and in regions of Italy (Schmidtke and Zaslove 2013). Many of these studies were conducted with backing from the Brussels based Migration Policy Institute⁴ where integration mainstream-

2 Foroutan (2016) defines a post-migration society as one saturated with the implications of migration over multiple generations.

3 <http://www.project-upstream.eu/>

4 <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/mpi-europe>

ing has been hailed as allowing for mobility and diversity proofing service provision (Benton, McCarthy, and Collett 2015) and for being ‘the future of immigrant integration’ (Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic 2014).

The notion of mainstreaming immigrant integration can be traced back to ideas and efforts implemented to mainstream gender equality, disability but also environmental policy concerns. These policy fields have in common that they effect, often in everyday settings, all of society and are thought to be necessary concerns not just in and of themselves but across varied sets of policy areas. Such an implementation across policy fields is one of the three key characteristics that Scholten and van Breugel (2018; see also: Scholten, Collett, and Petrovic 2016) highlight as relevant for assessing integration mainstreaming. The second necessary marker they propose is that mainstreaming is not only about the horizontal spread but also about a vertical working together of different levels of governance. The final characteristic of mainstreaming relates to the targeting of specific groups of migrants and how this is significantly reduced, if not completely halted. It is noted that we can thus see “mainstreaming as a process towards generic and poly-centric policies, most closely associated with interculturalism” (Scholten, Collett, and Petrovic 2016, 8). Impetus for increasingly mainstreaming integration was evident in the 2005 Common framework for the integration of non-EU nationals⁵ which calls for ‘mainstreaming integration in all relevant policies and reinforcing the capacity to coordinate national integration strategies across different levels of government’. How the three named characteristics of integration mainstreaming play out in practice however differs significantly in different EU member states.

As Martinelli (2014, 3) points out there is “a tension between mainstreaming and migrant-specific policies” and empirical investigations of mainstreaming show that there is reason to be critical about how effective current approaches to mainstreaming immigrant integration are. The questions, how and indeed whether this policy trend presents a viable approach to dealing with the implications of immigration is a central aspect of the mainstreaming literature which often takes cues from critiques of how gender mainstreaming pans out in practice (Meier 2018). At the same time, there is general agreement that migration has (gained) a social relevance that requires the coordination and board application of measures countering the relative disadvantage of immigrants and their decedents in European social and economic

5 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Al14502>
[accessed: 22.02.2018]

configurations. Promoting integration is supposed to advance overcoming this challenge even if implementations of integration are not without their problems. For example, Bendel (2014), looking at the German case, notes that there is a need for mainstreaming even though she also notes difficulties in the coordination of mainstreamed approaches to immigrant integration. These problems are particularly obvious in her work which looks at how different German federal states follow the call to mainstream. Other concerns include that with insufficient data it is difficult to assess if and how mainstreamed integration is indeed a successful policy strategy (Simon and Beaujeu 2018). Despite these concerns a central point communicated to policy practitioners remains that '[m]ainstreaming is not just an option, but also a necessity, for policies in super-diverse cities, where group distinctions can no longer be made' (Scholten et. Al. 2016). The diversification of diversity and superdiversity as a context is thus a primary incentive in trying to discern if and how integration mainstreaming can be made more effective. In the following I question if this is the only way in which the superdiversity notion can further our thinking about integration mainstreaming.

Superdiversity terminological clarifications

It is now common that superdiversity is primarily used to describe contexts of increased diversification (e.g. Scholten and van Breugel 2018). Such assertions however often leave implicit what it is that is increased and how. At its extreme, pointing to more diversity as the reason for integration mainstreaming would be suggesting that more migration-related diversity requires more integration work. This simplistic link needs to be disbanded from the start. The world has for instance not become more migratory since the 1960's, instead migration has concentrated with people moving from more places to fewer destinations (Czaika and Haas 2014). As a result, in the European context, an increasing number of cities are inching their way to becoming minority majority cities – meaning that a previous majority population has numerically become one of many minority populations in the city (Crul 2016). Such changes in the population make-up have been noted both for larger cities and smaller urban municipalities. At the same time there are many urban centres that have seen an increase in their share of foreign born, but that remain far from becoming majority minority cities. Rural areas are also increasingly arenas in which migra-

tion related diversities are negotiated in everyday settings. The bottom line is that local diversification trends are variable. To be a useful concept, superdiversity must account for this – especially in considering its relevance for policy strategies like integration mainstreaming.

The analytical promise of superdiversity is in considering changing and complex patterns rather than in thinking about continuously increasing levels of diversity (Meissner 2016). A central message in talking about superdiversity is that a diversification of origins and an increase in the count of resident migrants, went hand in hand with other stratifications of migrant populations (Vertovec 2007). Superdiversity research often thematises how migration related differences become habitual in everyday living together (Wise and Velayutham 2009; Vertovec 2015; Wessendorf 2014). Such a focus on the interplay of broad and detailed aspects of migration-related differentiations exposes one superdiversity thesis, still subject to empirical verification: that new configurations of multidimensional differentiations alter the dynamics of diversity.

Superdiversity is a useful lens to examine contexts that have experienced exceptional increases in the numbers of foreign born. Yet, as a concept the notion is also useful to consider the ‘social organisation of difference’ (Vertovec 2016) in contexts of moderate or longstanding diversities. Whether there are low or high levels of new migration, superdiversity highlights the notable entanglement of many differentiations that both constrain and provide opportunities for migrants to participate in local social, economic and political structures. This point is important as it counters claims that superdiversity is primarily about an individualisation of difference which has been linked to a recent diversity turn (Boli and Elliott 2008) and that thus superdiversity is unsuitable to being proactively used to uncover structural barriers that may precisely require very targeted policy approaches. Comparing patterns and processes exposes how international migration is part of multiple registers of social, cultural and regulatory complexity. Less category focused differentiations – such as those deriving from the interplay between the restrictiveness of immigration rules and migration patterns – are central to how the word complexity is used in this paper. Those differentiations do not only distinguish individual migrants from each other and from the long term resident population through static differences. They are differentiations that both are co-dependent and have an accumulated history in contemporary configurations of diversity. This history derives from consecutive changes in how migration alters social settings and gains situational social relevance (Mitchell 1987). We get to the heart of superdiversity research by considering the simultaneity

of multiple differentiations. Such a focus should dissuade us from elevating difference to a pedestal where the presence of difference is priori thought of as socially destabilising and requires proactive efforts to foster integration.

Defining and talking about superdiversity entails paying attention to complexities in contexts where the sum of differences cannot explain the social dynamics that international migration entails. It is often a fear of small numbers that is framed in terms of large threats which are linked to heightened levels of diversity (Appadurai 2006) – so long as this continues, difference in general will also continue to be eyed as disruptive – as a threat to integration. Yet at points more diversity may entail less antagonistic differences than if relatively clear and contested cleavages dominate in social settings (Brubaker 2008). Considering multidimensional differentiations poses new challenges for addressing and understanding the implications of international migration in local contexts. How those interconnections and their appropriation by migrants produce sometimes unexpected and hard to predict feedback-loops is important for changes in how diversity is perceived and how it is dealt with (Vertovec 2017). It is through such feedback-loops and how they introduce multiple possible but difficult to predict outcomes that uncertainty becomes a characteristic of superdiverse contexts. This uncertainty is not necessarily destabilising or undesirable. It has been noted how remarkably well cities work despite their evident accumulation of difference (Magnusson 2011). More migrants and more categories applied to those migrants – and with it more difficulties in targeting any one migrant group – is a clear implication of the emergence of superdiversity, but it does not constitute what is at stake in thinking about superdiversity. Central is the multidimensionality of diversifications and how differentiations co-evolve and change over time (Meissner 2016). Thus, if superdiversity is portrayed as a reason or rationale for mainstreaming policies it is important to assess whether those complexities are considered in moving towards integration mainstreaming. In the next section I will turn to this task.

Before doing so we need to recall that superdiversity was ‘to encapsulate a range of [...] changing variables surrounding migration patterns – and, significantly, their interlinkages – which amount to a recognition of complexities that supersede previous *patterns and perceptions* of migration-driven diversity’ (Meissner and Vertovec 2015, 542, emphasis added). Two aspects are important in this definition. First, with reference to changing approaches to governing diversity, superdiversity thought about in this way – more as a concept than as a context – makes it difficult to consider policy shifts as responding to superdiversity. In fact, the very changes in policies and how they are implemented directly impacts on the complexities a superdiversity per-

spective highlights. Integration mainstreaming is maybe best thought of as a driver of superdiversity.

Second, following the above definition, we should note the importance of *changed perceptions*. It is a valid and important question whether mainstreaming efforts show that changed perceptions of diversity altered strategies for addressing the implications of migration. In other words we need to ask, if newer and more critical approaches to discussing migration-driven diversity and its implications also change thinking about immigrant integration and the practical tools used to foster it. In extension this means querying whether mainstreaming efforts are satisfactorily responding to a recognition of superdiversity. In the following section I review the empirical chapters brought together in Scholten and van Bruegel (2018) which provide insights into integration mainstreaming in various contexts of diversity. Based on my reading of those chapters, I highlight several fault-lines at odds with seeing integration mainstreaming – the way it is currently implemented – as an adequate response to the emergence of superdiversity.

Superdiversity as a rationale for integration mainstreaming?

How diversity is perceived and imagined is of particular importance for integration policies which arguably, like migration policies, have to satisfy related and sometimes contradictory standards of legitimacy (Boswell 2007; de Jong 2016). If superdiversity is to be thought about as a guiding idea for integration mainstreaming, it is reasonable to assume that in implementing it, there must be some recognition of the complexities discussed in the previous section. To assess this, we need to look at mainstreaming across different levels of governance and at how mainstreaming pans out in its local implementations. The selection of empirically based chapters in Scholten and van Bruegel (2018: Chapters 2 -7) helps us do this while also focussing on contexts where migration driven diversity was – and is – of vastly different prevalence.

The six chapters considered all draw on research conducted for the previously mentioned EU-funded UPSTREAM project. This project was based on a nested case study. The research focused on national immigrant integration policies in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Poland and Spain. For each country relevant city policies for two cities in each country also form part of the underlying data. Finally the project considered policy developments at the EU level to fully engage with

the different scales at which integration mainstreaming is taking place.⁶ To account for this variety, the chapters do not constitute clear case studies but assessments of mainstreaming by juxtaposing comparisons of identified developments. One chapter focusses on old immigration countries (Netherlands, France and United Kingdom) while a second one focusses on newer immigration contexts in Spain and Poland. Two chapters consider findings from different cities and one dissects developments at the EU level while another inspects the rationales of mainstreaming across these levels. Each chapter offers illuminating analysis of what mainstreaming means in practice in the different contexts.

The full breadth of the analysis of these chapters can here not be synthesised. I selectively probed the chapters for the role of superdiversity to make sense of the described new policy developments. After looking at these varied chapters and how they present the underlying case studies, it is possible to note three main points about superdiversity and integration mainstreaming. First, there is a clear scalar shift in how much importance is attributed to the recognition of the complexities of superdiversity, second even in more localised settings where serving diverse communities is more and more an implemented objective, integration work still builds on less superdiversity sensitive thinking and tools, and finally despite recognising different problems with current approaches to integration mainstreaming – integration as an objective remains as a maxim and little questioned goal in what is to be mainstreamed. I now briefly expand on each point.

First, the nested case studies looked at show a scalar shift in the relevance of changed perceptions of migration-driven diversity. At the urban level ideas about diversity are shown to have been activated to justify and implement mainstreamed approaches to immigrant integration with more stakeholders and a more varied portfolio of policy areas (Józwiak, Sánchez-Domínguez, and Sorando 2018; Jensen 2018; Gidley, Scholten, and van Breugel 2018). At the same time similar trends discussed in the book at the national level are not framed in terms of the complexities of diversity. Instead here a clear shift towards generic often socio-economically focused policy concerns has been identified to be of increasing importance. This goes hand in hand with strong tendencies to target migrants by proxy which does not necessarily counter prevalent divides and inequalities (Simon and Beaujeu 2018; Ilona van Breugel and Scholten 2018). Justifications for generic policy frames at the national

6 For more information please consult: <http://www.project-upstream.eu/about>.

level are promoted by pointing to austerity and cost-effectiveness and diversity and its challenges only play a marginal role.

At the EU-level, it is shown that commitment to promote mainstreaming has been limited despite initial intentions for mainstreaming having been articulated at this level. The Common framework for Integration of third country nationals and with it concerns over migration and its implications remain a relevant topic at the EU-Level. However, little in the analysis of the relevant chapter looked at (Collett, McCarthy, and Benton 2018) suggests that this is spurred by a changed perception about the complexities in migration-driven diversity. Instead the EU-level analysis shows that at this level of governance it is not the why but the how that is driving mainstreaming efforts. Pressures to facilitate sufficient adaptability of policy tools is paramount to ensure that implementation in different national contexts and across different policy fields is made possible at all.

Entanglements of multiple migration-related differentiations noted in local contexts disappear in the abstractions of higher-level frameworks. It is thus not surprising that we can note a hierarchy of importance attributed to superdiversity. As Jensen et al. point out in their analysis: ‘the city [...] constitutes the coalface of integration where policy frames confront the lived reality of an increasingly diverse population’ (2018, 71). Whether mainstreaming happens in response to the recognition of superdiversity would thus necessarily depend on how close those developing and implementing efforts are to the practical needs that integration efforts should address.

Second, this hierarchy has the interesting side effect that generic policy frames developed at the national level end up having an immigrant integration focus at the local level (Jensen 2018). It is important to caution that even if policy approaches are responsive to ideas about altered and heightened diversity, this is not always due to a recognition of the multidimensionality of superdiversity. This is shown by the types of initiatives described by Jensen (2018) as well as by Józwiak, Sánchez-Domínguez, and Sorando (2018) whose chapters review how mainstreaming is evident in city contexts both in older and newer cities of migration. In both chapters, and regardless of whether diversity is locally presented as an opportunity to be harnessed or as a challenge that needs to be addressed, central concerns often remain with questions of multi-ethnicity rather than with incorporating additional stratifications of difference. Efforts in multiple European cities described by Jensen show that mainstreaming in local contexts while not targeting any specific origin group, often remains based on the idea that the disintegrative potential of international migration is found in insufficient contact and understanding between people of different origin groups

(cf. Schönwälder 2016 on variability of contact patterns). Where migrants are from and ethno-cultural differences remain central in community cohesion and intercultural approaches. This is the case despite shifting debates away from directly targeting specific origin groups a practice prevalent in previous approaches to migrant integration.

Ethnic and cultural differences play an important part in understanding and making sense of post-migration societies – and superdiverse contexts are often marked by the everydayness of this type of diversity. A recognition of the simultaneous stratifications along other migration-related differentiations however is rarely subject of relevant policies something that given the reviewed case studies is also not (yet) directly remedied through mainstreaming. One example that serves to support this is the fact that few city governments are aware of, or actively seek to understand, the spatial distribution of migrants who moved through different immigration channels. This is surprising given the possible connection between legal status and the socio-economic outcomes of migrants (Söhn 2013). Recent increases in refugee migrations and imminent questions about where in cities new residents will find more sustainable housing, have increased sensitivities in this area (Bolzoni, Gargiulo, and Manocchi 2015). To date these mostly fail to address how migrations through various different more or less regularised routes add to multiple speeds of change in local diversity configurations and in how diversity is differently experienced and conflict prone in those uniquely configured contexts (for two exceptions see: Phillimore 2013; Biehl 2015). Thinking about mainstreaming as a response to superdiversity these questions should be taking a more central place in broader applications of integration efforts. It is thus not entirely clear whether the reviewed examples of integration mainstreaming do respond to a need for whole society approaches, at least not, if we presume that addressing everyone also must be sensitive to the everyday complexities of diversity. In this vein it does have to be noted that street-level bureaucrats are accredited in the reviewed analysis as introducing these complexities to integration work (Gidley, Scholten, and van Breugel 2018).

A sensitivity for multiple differentiations and how they may effect different migrants and their social participation in a destination context is certainly not staunchly translated in policy innovations. This carries relevance for discussing the argument that for integration mainstreaming it is necessary to pay attention to the ‘dilemma of recognition’ (Scholten and van Breugel 2018, 7). This dilemma highlights the question whether to target specific migrant groups or build solely on generic policy interventions and proxy targeting, for example by devising policies directed at certain

areas such as disadvantaged neighbourhoods. We can note that efforts described as building on this prerogative are not necessarily successful in doing away with some of the stigmatisation associated with group targeted initiatives. Simone and Beaujeu (2018) show that shifting policies to area or needs based targets is not in and of itself a solid strategy to counter pre-existing stigma and structural barriers faced by different migrants. Interconnectedness of multiple differentiations and how they play out in specific contexts appears poorly addressed in making decisions about when, who or what to target. In terms of superdiversity the relevant question might be: in how far can mainstreamed and devolved policy approaches be successful if other policies push exclusionary agendas (Gebhardt 2015).

Area based targeting is not performed in a policy vacuum and approaches that result in proxy-targeting putative groups are likely to not respond to the complexities of superdiversity. As the empirical examples indicate, a lack of sensitivity for how policy is calibrated risks developing tools that poorly benefit anyone. Such practices carry the added danger of further reducing openness towards needed redistributive efforts, which are linked to attitudes towards migration in general (Dancygier and Donnelly 2013; Bauböck and Scholten 2016). This would reinforce the interlinkages of differentiations and how migrants contribute to social change. It is also why I suggested that considering mainstreaming as a driver of superdiversity may be more useful than to see superdiversity as a rationale for mainstreaming.

To pick up on another theme explored in the considered chapters, needs based proxies, face similar difficulties, as forecasting where policies have to steer their focus requires high levels of flexibility that may still not bridge the gap between experienced and presumed needs (Phillimore 2015). Changes in patterns of diversity often result in previously not considered scenarios – as noted in the introduction, uncertainty is a core element of complex social configurations and increasingly a tenet in talking about superdiversity. It is this uncertainty that ideally needs to become part of mainstreaming efforts if they are to adequately respond to superdiversity. Empirically it is not (yet) entirely clear if this is feasible or if the needed flexibility poses new and different challenges for dealing with diversity. There are evident difficulties in devising policies that are general enough to work across levels of government and areas of policy making which at the same time can respond to the specificities of superdiverse contexts. Further, proxy approaches expose the importance of highlighting that anti-discrimination measures and measures designed to foster equality and support in emergent and variegated arrival structures, do not always sit easily together under the umbrella term integration (Bozec and Simon 2014). The danger of dilution of

problems is then another non-negligible issue that is important for the third and final point to be briefly elaborated on in this section.

Third, beyond the noted concerns, what is interesting in reviewing the researched policy shifts is that at each level considered there appears to be one consensus. This consensus reads along the lines of: if there is something that needs to be done in response to international migration and heightened levels of diversity this must be done under the umbrella of integration. Such a desire is also reflected in much of the literature that grapples with various redefinitions of integration in times of diversified diversity. It is therefore possible to suggest that integration as a goal has become a maxim, a leitmotiv, in what needs to be done to counter the inequities migration entails and to foster a 'good' post-migration society – where the question of what constitutes good is frequently left vague (Schinkel 2017). Some (but certainly not all) of the migration-linked differentiations that a superdiversity lens points to are subject to and product of policy tools framed in terms of migrant integration. The link between superdiversity and integration debates is thus not surprising – yet given the observations that mainstreaming in practice is so far not necessarily an adequate response to dynamically changing configurations of diversity, it is important to question whether those dynamics can be made compatible with the far from unproblematic notion of integration.

Integration as a maxim? Towards convivial disintegration

There have been shifts in how integration policies are framed and implemented – not least as multicultural approaches have widely fallen out of favour (however see: Banting and Kymlicka 2013) and ideas about assimilation have proven to be too one sided (Crul 2016). A turn towards new understandings of integration and what it should entail (Gidley 2012) offers considerable extensions to earlier more rigid ideas that saw integration responsibilities to rest exclusively with non-nationals. However, as the example of mainstreaming integration at the EU level shows – what is mainstreamed may purposively be left open for interpretation in different national and local contexts. Migrant integration even if dispersed through multiple levels of policy making is subject to different policy frames that are applied in local contexts (Caponio, Jubany Baucells, and Güell 2015). This vagueness is relevant for what

types of policy interventions are thought of as mainstreaming integration and which goals these should achieve considering altered perceptions about diversity.

As I suggested at the end of the last section, integration stands somewhat as a maxim in many debates. Particularly in public and often politicised debates it is common that perceived or actual increases in migration go hand in hand with debates about how best to integrate new migrants. Here integration stands as a goal that if reached is the beacon of post-migration societies. A preoccupation with integration in discussing the implications of migration can be explained by considering how previous strategies for dealing with new migrants often precluded meaningful participation and resulted in sometimes devastating differences that disproportionately left many non-nationals in socially and economically disadvantaged positions. Emphasising integration, both of settled and new or short-term migrants, then emphasises predictability by addressing those shortcomings and not repeating the same mistakes. That some of the inequities pointed to in calling for more integration may already be embedded in other policy realms – particularly those of regulating migration (Meissner 2017) – too easily disappears from debates if a unified goal of integration dominates agendas.

Integration as a goal is certainly not equivalent with the many ways of thinking about what challenges and dynamic changes in social configurations international migration entails. Integration is then seen as a process with many neglected dimensions (Catney, Finney, and Twigg 2011) or as having to be expanded on beyond policies targeting people directly or by proxy, to embedding integration by generating change in institutions charged with mainstreamed policy interventions (Phillimore 2017; Benton, McCarthy, and Collet 2015). The latter efforts, which have the most promise for substantially altering how integration ‘is done’, however remain mostly the exception rather than the rule. Instead ideas about integration are often built on a rhetoric of a two-way process in which ‘the degree of change is almost always unequal, much greater on the immigrant side’ (Alba and Foner 2016, 7).

Considering superdiversity this highlights at least two problems. First, integration as a goal perpetuates the reproduction of an image of society where some are thought about as needing to be integrated and others as doing the integrating (Schinkel 2013). It is not surprising that this unhelpfully stirs animosities, both amongst those who never feel integrated regardless of the efforts invested and for those who do feel that they have reached the integration threshold but who neglect that the circumstances and contexts of, for instance, learning the language or participating in the labour market are vastly different for different migrants. The integration dichotomy has

divisive characteristics. Secondly, but relatedly, the goal of integration is difficult to align with uncertainties about how the complex interconnections of difference play out in superdiverse contexts. As I noted integration debates tend to be driven by suggesting certainties and the ability to control the implications of international migration in local and supra-local settings. Thinking about superdiversity however is not least about presuming that different contexts subject to similar policy interventions can still diverge in their outcomes as often a condition of ‘*ceteris paribus*’ – of all else being equal, is not feasible given local complexities of diversity. Complexity is not least about an inability to trace initial conditions or as is often implied in integration debates refashioning those conditions.

With those two concerns in mind we may ask whether mainstreaming as a strategy for mobility and diversity proofing policies should be framed in terms of integration at all? Can we be as bold as to say that thinking about mainstreaming and superdiversity challenges us to consider alternatives? Should integration be a beacon of what identifies a ‘good’ post-migration society or is disintegration – as distinct from a lack of integration – permissible? Let us think about the example of mobility proofing services and ‘adapting to the realities of high population turn-over’ (Benton, McCarthy, and Collet 2015, 10) which was less prevalent in discussed chapters but as one objective of mainstreaming directly linked to dynamics of diversity it offers a useful extension to further think through the contention I am putting forward. Strictly speaking the objective of mobility proofing policies – taking the call to mobility proof service provision one step further – is at odds with integration as a maxim. Relevant socialites and modes of living together are re-configured constantly and individuals and groups need to engage with those changes. What was there before is to a degree disintegrated and reassembled constantly but never quite integrated. Those reconfigurations happen against the backdrop of multidimensional differentiations that are emblematic of superdiverse contexts. Even if those contexts can be marked by a familiarity with difference, where at times new strangers are perceived as familiar strangers (Ye 2016), it is clear that high mobility always entails at least minute changes which make it difficult to clearly define when and how integration as a goal is reached to everyone’s satisfaction.

Measuring integration by the presence or absence of certain policies may say something about intentions but not least because of the multiscale adaptations of policies it does not necessarily say much about contextual outcomes. Processes of disintegration do not have to go hand in hand with the perpetuation of inequities or with conflict prone social settings. If what was there before is reconfigured con-

stantly and sometimes in bursts – meaning in faster and slower successions and to smaller and larger degrees – this may also lead to what I term *convivial disintegration*. Considering research into superdiversity with a focus on when diversity works we will note that this is by no means a rare occurrence (e.g. Amin 2010; Wise and Velayutham 2009; Wessendorf 2014).

The idea of conviviality is frequently emphasised in the literature that alludes to superdiversity (e.g. Nowicka and Vertovec 2014; Wise and Noble 2016; Padilla, Azevedo, and Olmos-Alcaraz 2015). Whilst often linked to the writings of Gilroy (2009) Wise and Noble (2016, 423) have suggested that conviviality ‘is part of an older and broader concern with the ongoing question of how communities/cultures/societies/nations “stick together”’. They argue that thinking about conviviality moves concerns about cultural difference into the centre of analysis (Wise and Noble 2016, 424). I would suggest that from a superdiversity perspective it is precisely the co-relevance of cultural aspects and other social, economic and regulatory differences which is moved into focus. Importantly the simultaneity of those differences, highlights complexities in contexts of diversified diversity (Hannerz 1992). Conviviality is no longer thought of as a concept that can only account for positive encounters. Conflictual negotiations of difference and tensions that may persist or ebb and flow in their intensity (Heil 2015) add to developing ideas about convivial disintegration. Considering tensions helps us to critically evaluate inequities even in those situations where diversity seems to work. Some also link the notion of conviviality to ideas about degrowth and thus a critical appraisal of the objectives of policies more generally (Les Convivialistes 2014). Such elaborations require quite radically rethinking the benchmarks of a ‘good’ post-migration society. Those last two points are particularly important as they help make the argument that convivial disintegration should not be conceptualised in a dialectic with integration or as a pre-stage of integration. To be useful convivial disintegration should not be seen as equal to ‘almost integration’ but it needs to be positioned in a space where aspects of both terms convivial and disintegration can be mobilised without resorting to seeking integration as a goal by another name.

The above means that convivial disintegration thus developed would be marked by a layering of differences and posits concerns over how, when and where these take on salience. Keeping the omnipresence of calls for integration in mind, finding new ways to define what it is that needs to be mainstreamed seems sensible as it is out of the question that concerns over the implications of international migration have developed to be broadly relevant rather than marginal concerns – they need to

be mainstreamed without being forced into the mainstream (Yanow 2018). Thinking about convivial disintegration allows for incorporating uncertainties and contextual specificities in making the case for a boarder adoption of concerns with those implications – both across levels of policy making and across policy portfolios. From this perspective it may be possible to seek innovation in what it is that is mainstreamed without losing sight of the specificities and tensions in local contexts and without resorting to the dichotomous distinction between integrated and not integrated. Little is won in replacing one term with a combination of two others and more theorising will be necessary to fully develop the notion of convivial disintegration. Yet in briefly introducing it here, I am proposing it as something else that a superdiversity lens can add to the debates over integration mainstreaming – precisely a reflexiveness about what it is that is being mainstreamed.

Conclusion

As I discussed in the previous sections, beyond equating superdiversity with more diversity and calling for mainstreamed approaches as a response to those increases, there are two arguments that, in a more nuanced way, link a recognition of superdiversity with mainstreaming prerogatives. Firstly, if migration related-diversity is something that increasingly defines social configurations in urban but also in rural areas – a thesis often associated with thinking about superdiversity – then clearly approaches are needed that account for the fact the migration-related diversities are relevant for all of society. Secondly, channelling integration efforts by targeting origin groups is no longer viable. This aligns with the post-ethnocentric positioning of superdiversity research. Policy measures that are supposed to avert the presumed socially destabilising effects of migration thus must be addressed through other foci. In the previous sections I first demonstrated why superdiversity is indeed incompatible with ideas about more diversity requiring more integration and secondly explored how those two latter points match integration mainstreaming prerogatives in practice. Based on this evaluation, in which I identified some mismatch between mainstreaming integration and thinking about superdiversity, I thirdly elaborated on why I see the crux of the mismatch in the presumption that what needs to be mainstreamed are integration efforts – at least so long as it is not clear how integration is defined and used – which seems virtually impossible in multi-level governance structures.

The continued change and interplay of multiple differentiations – both of which I presented as central to thinking about superdiversity – also inevitably mean social rearrangements that entail some disintegration. Therefore we should think more about processes of disintegration and in particular consider that everyday diversity may be better served by exploring modes of convivial disintegration. The question raised is whether this reasoning presents simply a call for reflexivity about what is mainstreamed or whether there is more to be learned in thinking convivial disintegration further. Generally, it seems sensible to promote more openness to finding workable solutions to remove barriers to convivial modes of coexistence and living together. In part this may be facilitated by asking what interlinked differentiations are at stake, what disparities those differentiations produce and to recognise that disintegration is not necessarily the failed version of integration.

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