

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research will collect the necessary information at three different levels of analysis:

(1) The contextual or macro level, through the use of secondary sources and interviews with political and administrative authorities.

(2) The organizational or meso-level, through the study of immigrants' organizational structures and networks, carried out with surveys to immigrants' associations.

(3) The individual or micro level, through a survey to immigrant residents of different origins (with a control group of national-origin citizens).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A better understanding of the factors improving or preventing the political participation of migrants at the local level may have a significant impact on how opportunities for participation will be structured and supported in the future by policy-makers.

At the end of the research, we shall draw a blueprint on policy implications summarizing the main findings of the research in a practical and policy-oriented perspective. The research will provide policy makers with useful and updated information about the immigrant communities and their behavioural patterns, and on "best practices" in neighbouring countries as well.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The project website:
www.um.es/localmultidem

The project email address:
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Join the e-newsletter at:

http://listas.um.es/sympa/info/localmultidem_newsletter

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Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge
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<http://www.cordis.lu/citizens>



LOCALMULTIDEM

**Multicultural Democracy and
Immigrants' Social Capital in
Europe: Participation,
Organisational Networks, and
Public Policies at the Local Level.**

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The LOCALMULTIDEM Project

The main objective of this project is to study multicultural democracy at the local level by analyzing the degree of political integration of immigrant residents, in its attitudinal and behavioural dimensions, in six European cities: Lyon (France), Budapest (Hungary), Milan (Italy), Madrid (Spain), Geneva (Switzerland), and London (United Kingdom)

The central question for research is to what extent immigrants from different ethnic groups are politically integrated in the local life of their cities, and what explains the variations in the degree of political integration from one ethnic group to another.

In order to answer these questions, our research will examine the impact that social inequality has on political inequality in terms of individual or micro-level attributes, collective organisation resources and political and discursive opportunity structures. In particular, the project will examine:

- (1) The extent to which the immigrant population is politically integrated into the local life of their cities.
- (2) Whether there are significant differences in the degree to which different ethnic, cultural or national groups are politically integrated into the local life, or not.
- (3) If such differences exist, what are the factors that help explain the variations in the degree of political integration from one immigrant group to another.

OBJECTIVES

In order to adequately address these issues, our research will analyse the level of political integration of immigrant residents, in its attitudinal and behavioural dimensions.

The concept of political integration is operationalized in this project through the consideration of two different dimensions:

- Political orientations: political trust, interest in politics, political knowledge and information, feelings of identity and belonging, feelings of political efficacy, democratic values, social tolerance, concepts of citizenship, etc.
- Socio-political behaviour: involvement in different kinds of associations (ethnic, political parties, trade unions, cultural groups, NGOs, etc.) and various forms of political action (electoral behaviour, and non-electoral behaviour)

These two dimensions of political integration will be studied with an aim to determine:

- (a) The differences that exist between immigrants and the autochthonous population in their levels of political integration.
- (b) The variations that can be found in the levels of political integration of different groups of immigrants depending on their ethnic, cultural, religious or national origin.
- (c) The variations that can be found in the levels of political integration of all immigrant groups within cities, and of the

same immigrant groups across different institutional settings.

Once differences and variations across and within groups are identified, our research will analyse:

- 1) To what extent various individual or micro-level attributes are important factors in explaining those differences in terms of the level of political integration of immigrants. We will especially pay attention to analysing whether the same social and economic resources are relevant to explain different levels of political integration both for immigrant and autochthonous populations, and also across different ethnic, national, cultural, or religious groups. In particular, we will analyse whether gender has a different impact for the political integration of immigrant versus autochthonous populations, and across different groups.
- 2) How do collective organisational resources (immigrants' associations and organisations, as well as the characteristics of their inter-organisational networks) are a source of social capital that determines in important ways the capacity for political integration of different groups of immigrants. In other words, we aim to study how inequalities in the access to organisational resources (their social capital) across ethnic groups might have important consequences for the political integration of individual immigrants.
- 3) The direct impact that political and discursive opportunity structures have on immigrants' political integration. Special attention will be given to the actions, institutions and discourses that are specifically related to local governments.