



# **Governing Urban Diversity.**

## **Immigrant Integration Policies and Discourses in Dublin and Vienna**

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### **Abstract**

This thesis explores how city governments respond to the presence of immigrants and the increasing ethno-cultural difference that comes with it, and seeks to explain these responses. The thesis analyses both discourses about immigrants and immigration by relevant policy-makers and immigrant integration policy types.

The thesis is conducting a comparison (longitudinal and across-cities) of the capital of Ireland - a city of recent immigration - and the capital of Austria, a city with a long history of immigration. These contrasting cases, which concurrently time exhibit similar positions within both their own nation states and within the global setting, allow examination of processes of convergence, as well as scrutiny of particularities of European cities in the domain of immigrant integration.

The thesis argues that an analysis of both discourses and policies contributes to a more accurate understanding of the dynamics of immigrant integration in the urban space. The majority of research on immigrant integration in cities tends to focus solely on policies. This research has established a narrative of cities as an inclusive and liberal arena in contrast to the one nation state (e.g. Penninx 2009).

Cities potentially differ from nation states. The nation state and national citizenship are institutions that are based on principles of social closure and the notion of the imagined community (Brubaker 1992). Rights and resources are widely accessible to its members, while this is not necessarily the case for others. Cities, in contrast, are potentially more predisposed to welcoming strangers. You become a member of the city by residence, and you lose membership automatically by giving up residence (Bauböck 2003) or, as Soehl (2008) stated: "people vote with their feet, joining or leaving is a matter of moving".

To a certain degree, the research findings of the thesis challenge this idea of the open city. It is shown that cities are clearly embedded in the national categorisations of boundary-making (Wimmer 2009) and are constrained by institutional mechanisms located at the nation state level. The thesis demonstrates that cities are not only 'pragmatic' actors who have to deal with

'problems of integration on the ground' (Spencer 2012), but also that urban immigrant integration policies are led by cost and benefit considerations of policy actors confronted with global economic competition. Moreover, the cities' policies, as well as the discourses about immigrants are led by ideas such as the collective memory of a city and cross-city travelling concepts of immigrant integration. Urban responses to immigrants are also driven by institutional factors such as the make-up of the welfare regime and the electoral and the party system. In particular, political party competition is a relevant factor, shaping discourses as well as policies substantially.



**Jury:** Bryan Fanning (University College Dublin), Rainer Bauböck (EUI) (Supervisor), Donatella Della Porta (EUI), Andrew Geddes (University of Sheffield)

### **Bio**

Leila joined the European University Institute as a Ph.D. researcher in 2009. Her Ph.D. thesis „Governing urban diversity“ is a comparative analysis on political responses to immigrant residents (local immigrant policies and discourses about immigrants) in the European capital cities Vienna and Dublin. Her doctoral thesis is supervised by Rainer Bauböck and Donatella Della Porta.

Leila was a visiting researcher at the University College Dublin (09-11 2011), and a fellow at the Institute for Higher Studies in Vienna (02-03 2011).

Prior to coming to the EUI she has been a researcher, project manager and lecturer at the Institute for Political Sciences, University of Vienna. She has also been lecturing at the Institute for European Studies and International Relations, Comenius University Bratislava, and at the Rosa Mayreder College, Strobl.

Leila started her career as a research assistant and project manager at the Austrian Institute for East- and Southeastern European Studies (Department of Social Sciences) in Vienna.

Her research focuses on international migration, multiculturalism and cities, managing religion in Europe, Islam, politics of recognition, politics of belonging, and populist right-wing parties.

She has participated in several international, interdisciplinary research projects among them the EC funded project "Values, Equality and Differences in Liberal Democracies. Debates about Female Muslim Headscarves in Europe" (VEIL) (EC/6FP, project leading institution: University of Vienna, coordinated by Sieglinde Rosenberger/Birgit Sauer). During her participation in the VEIL project she has been a visiting researcher at the UMR Cultures and Urban Societies, CSU, CNRS Paris (2, 2007).

She has taught courses on migration, political systems, qualitative methods, gender & politics, and racism.

She has a masters degree in political science from the University of Vienna (cum laude), and a degree in tourism management from the University of Economics and Business Administration, Vienna. During her undergraduate studies she spent one semester as an exchange student at the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest.