A report on six European Union Cities

EUROPE'S
WHITE
WORKING
CLASS
COMMUNITIES

THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS
WORK TO BUILD VIBRANT AND TOLERANT
SOCIETIES WHOSE GOVERNMENTS ARE
ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR CITIZENS.
WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES
IN MORE THAN 100 COUNTRIES, THE
OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS SUPPORT
JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, FREEDOM
OF EXPRESSION, AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC
HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

Acknowledgements

Preface

Over the past 50 years states in western and northern Europe have undergone dramatic demographic, social and economic changes, including de-industrialisation, a shift to a service economy, growing inequality, challenges to the sustainability of social welfare, and increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. The challenges these changes create to sustaining social cohesion and ensuring integration are experienced at the local city-level.

Since 2007, the At Home in Europe Project of the Open Society Foundations has worked to support improved social inclusion, participation and advancing equality across 20 cities in 10 countries, in partnership with local policy makers, practitioners and civil society. The impetus for the engagement arose from Open Society Foundations' mandate to address and mitigate the concerns of vulnerable groups at a time when Europe's governments were beginning to accept that it's myriad of immigrant communities—particularly those with a Muslim background—were here to stay and an integral part of the social, political, and cultural landscape. As Europe's Muslims and other minorities became more visible and demographically larger, there has been a pursuit of policies to encourage integration but this has been set against a backdrop of growing anxiety about migration, the perceived erosion of national identity, and the perception that communities from the majority population of European countries have been ignored and consequently disenfranchised.

While there is rhetoric of integration as a 'two way' process, too often integration and social cohesion policies have failed to engage with the views and experiences of existing settled communities, focusing instead on what immigrants or their descendants must do to integrate. For many this failure to address the concerns or anxieties created by changes in the economic and social structures of their neighbourhoods reinforces a sense of being ignored, left behind and demonised. In some cases this has fed into resentment of mainstream political parties and the liberal political values they are seen to represent and increased the appeal of populist parties on mainly the right but also the left. Too often this has led to disengagement from political processes of any kind.

The Europe's White Working Class Communities project documents the experiences of 'white' communities in six cities across Europe (Aarhus, Amsterdam, Berlin, Lyon, Manchester, and Stockholm). Each report in the series focuses on a specific district or neighbourhoods within the city. In doing so it provides new groundbreaking research on the experiences of a section of the population whose lives are often caricatured and whose voices and views are rarely heard in public debates and discussion on integration, cohesion and social inclusion. Through a comparative lens, the project seeks to highlight parallels and differences in policies, practices and experiences across the different European cities.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 | BROAD OVERVIEW

In Britain, they're derided as "chavs"; uneducated, feckless benefit scroungers. In Sweden, the media debates the rise of "white trash". In Germany, they're sent up by comedians, while in the Netherlands a whole genre—aso-tv ("anti-sociables television")—has grown up to depict the bad behaviour of "problem" families. Meanwhile, it's the refrain of populist and far-right politicians in many countries that white working-class people have lost out amid increasingly diverse societies, the victims of positive discrimination and policies that promote cultural difference over majority values. In the 2014 European Parliament elections, radical right-wing parties topped the polls in the UK, France and Denmark, while far-right parties gained seats in Germany and Sweden. There is growing evidence in many countries that such parties are moving beyond their traditional constituencies and picking up votes from disaffected working-class voters.

Is it time to look beyond the stereotypes? Spanning six cities in six different countries, the Open Society Foundations' Europe's White Working Class research studies districts or neighbourhoods where there are high concentrations of white people on low incomes. In the past 30 years, Western European countries have shifted, to varying degrees, away from manufacturing industries and towards service-based economies. At the same time, the post-war welfare states—social democratic in the case of most, Stalinist in the former East Germany—have been reformed, placing an increasing emphasis on individual self-sufficiency and removing elements of the social safety net. Jobs that once provided not only a stable income for individuals and families, but also a sense of identity and belonging for communities, have been replaced by low-paid, precarious work—and the increasing focus on individual responsibility has led to the rise of negative media stereotypes that seek to blame the poor for their own poverty.

The shift is not absolute—it has occurred to greater or lesser degrees in different countries—but it marks a trend that has a particular impact on low-income communities from all ethnic backgrounds. People face inequalities in education, housing, healthcare provision, job opportunities—and they may live in neighbourhoods that are isolated, or suffer from dilapidation or a lack of investment. The challenges they face have become all the more difficult in the wake of the 2008 financial crash and, in many countries, the ensuing recession. The increasing ethnic diversity of Western European cities also poses challenges for integration and social cohesion. Following on from work by the Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe project on Muslim and Somali communities in Western Europe, this research focuses on marginalised white working class communities.

1.2 | THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS STUDY

The six city studies of marginalised white working class communities are part of the Open Society Foundations' At Home in Europe project. At Home in Europe is a research and advocacy initiative that works to advance the social inclusion of vulnerable communities in a changing Europe. The project explores the political, social, economic and cultural participation of marginalised majority and minority communities in Western Europe. It places high priority on local community and city level practices that mitigate discrimination and seek to ensure equal treatment for all. The project's underlying themes are to identify the barriers to full and equal treatment, better understand the factors leading to marginalisation, identify and promote effective integration policies and practices in Europe, and undertake research-based advocacy in order to improve participation and opportunities through engagement with residents, civil society and policymakers.

The studies cover six cities in Western Europe: Aarhus (Denmark), Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Berlin (Germany), Stockholm (Sweden), Lyon (France) and Manchester (United Kingdom). The focus of these studies is to report on the experiences of marginalised white working class populations and communities living in these cities. Each report in the series focuses on a specific district or neighbourhoods within the city.

It is recognised that the term "white working class" does not translate neatly into the public and political discourse in different European countries. In this project it is used as shorthand for members of the "majority" population living in neighbourhoods and districts with high indicators of social, economic and political marginalisation. The definition and concept of a "majority" population is also problematic. In this research it was defined as individuals who are citizens of the country where the research was taking place and born in that country and whose parents also were both born in the country and citizens of that country.

These are qualitative studies, with field research concentrating on focus group interviews with local residents. In each of the six cities, research teams identified local areas that had high indictors of economic, social and political marginalisation. Within these neighbourhoods they recruited participants for focus groups from local resident who identified themselves as members of the "majority" population. In each city, around 12 focus groups were carried out, some discussed particular thematic areas (identity and belonging, education, policing and security) while others were organised by age and gender (for example, a focus group with older women only or one with young men only). The focus groups provide a rich source of data and give a voice to the lived experience of local residents. Researchers also interviewed local stakeholders in government, public services and community work. They also studied the available literature to sketch out the historical, economic and political context of the neighbourhoods and cities.

1.3 | THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

1.3.1 | TRIGEPARKEN, AARHUS

Trigeparken is a housing area, built in the 1970s and early 1980s, within the town of Trige on the outskirts of Aarhus, Denmark's second-largest city. Around 1,050 people live in Trigeparken, from a total of 2,800 living in Trige overall. Majority Danes are defined as being a Danish citizen with at least one parent born and raised in Denmark: from Aarhus's total population of 320,000, 84.7 percent belong to the majority population. The largest immigrant groups are Lebanese, Turkish, Somali, Iraqi, Vietnamese, Polish, German, Afghan and Romanian. An above-average share of residents in Trigeparken are from immigrant backgrounds. Immigrant groups there also include people from the Danish territories of Greenland and the Faroe islands. Approximately 51 percent of residents are from a majority Danish background. The population is on average younger than in Aarhus as a whole.

In 2010, in response to negative media coverage of public housing projects with large numbers of non-Western immigrants, the Danish government produced a "ghetto list". Housing projects were included on this list if they had a certain number of immigrant residents, above-average unemployment and crime rate, and below-average levels of educational achievement. The policy was promoted as a way of preventing the development of "parallel societies" with different norms of behaviour and values from mainstream society. However, it has been criticised for stigmatising public housing and causing resentment among the local populations. Trigeparken was placed on the "ghetto list" in 2011 and subsequently including 2014.

The municipal administration of Aarhus is headed by a mayor, who is supported by five council executive officers. The city council has 31 elected councillors. For most of the administration's history, the mayor has been a Social Democrat, although the position was held by a Liberal from 2002–2005. In 2007, Danish municipalities had their areas of responsibility extended: Aarhus gained greater control of healthcare, alcohol and drug rehabilitation, physical rehabilitation, public transport and certain areas within education such as special needs training. A reduction in block grants from the state has hit the municipal budget, and in 2012 the administration began to devise a strategy to cope with this and to work more efficiently. Different departments of the administration address issues of marginalisation—but the main ones are the departments of Social Service and Employment and Family, Children and Youth.

Aarhus has shifted its focus from marginalised individuals to marginalised neighbourhoods, establishing a HotSpot Centre in 2010. These aim to improve the quality of life in marginalised neighbourhoods by working with local stakeholders—supporting youth work, for example. Trigeparken has also been subject to a "revitalisation plan" since 2008: social workers and project planners are employed to

find ways to improve a sense of belonging among residents, boost social cohesion and reduce the level of residential turnover.

1.3.2 | AMSTERDAM-NORTH

Amsterdam-North is a submunicipality of the Dutch capital. Located across the IJ lake from the rest of the city, it is relatively isolated. Most of the area was built after the Second World War, but some parts were built earlier. It has a population of 88,434—a relatively low-population area in a city that has 790,110 inhabitants in total. Amsterdam is what is known as a "majority-minority" city, where slightly less than half of the population is of Dutch heritage, while the other half has roots in as many as 176 different countries. This shift away from a majority Dutch population has taken place in two generations. Amsterdam has an ageing population, but it is ageing at a slower rate than the Netherlands as a whole.

Inequality is growing in the city, with educational inequality beginning to constitute the most important dividing line, rather than social class or occupation. Poverty has increased in recent years, in the wake of the recession. Two neighbourhoods in Amsterdam-North have been selected for the Open Society Foundations study: Tuindorp Buiksloot and Floradorp. Both began as housing projects for working-class people in the early 20th century. The developments, known as garden cities (*Tuindorpen*), were based on the idea that decent housing with plenty of light, fresh air and green surroundings would improve the social and individual wellbeing of the inhabitants. Both neighbourhoods have a majority of people of Dutch heritage, although the populations from immigrant backgrounds are growing. Residents have lower than average incomes and levels of education.

Amsterdam is governed centrally by a City council, with a mayor and cabinet running the day-to-day administration. Currently, the cabinet is made up of a coalition between the Social Democrats (PvdA), Liberals (VVD) and Greens (GroenLinks). Whilst writing this report, negotiations were taking place on the formation of a new governing cabinet following the March 2014 municipal elections. Many policy tasks are delegated to the submunicipalities, which also have their own councils but following the recent municipal elections, the governing structure has been altered and the submunicipalities have been replaced by territorial governing committees with a more restricted mandate. Recent urban policies in the Netherlands have been concerned with the links between a person's immediate environment and their socio-economic status and development, following a trend present elsewhere in Western Europe. The focus is not on poverty itself but on processes of social exclusion that could lead to poverty, such as interactions between adults, the presence or absence of supportive social networks, youth behaviour, exposure to crime and violence, the quality and availability of public services and distance of the neighbourhood from places of employment.

In 2007, the Dutch government launched an action plan to improve living standards in 40 deprived neighbourhoods, including the one that Floradorp is part of. When the budget for this was cancelled in 2012, the city of Amsterdam decided to continue the programme. From 2014 onwards, the city of Amsterdam is implementing a new policy approach called "area-focused working" (*Gebiedsgericht Werken*), which seeks to respond to concrete demands in a particular area by involving citizens, non-governmental organisations and businesses, with government playing a reduced role.

1.3.3 | MARZAHN-HELLERSDORF, BERLIN

Marzahn-Hellersdorf is a district with a population of around 250,000, located on the eastern edge of Germany's capital city (total population: 3.5 million). Until 1990, it was part of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), an authoritarian Stalinist state. In the 1970s, the government of the GDR transformed the area from a collection of villages into one of the largest housing projects in Europe. The Soviet-style housing blocks, built from concrete slabs, were intended by the GDR's regime to be an example of "real Existing Socialism", and an improvement on the dilapidated inner-city districts from which many new residents were moved. By 1990, the area housed around 290,000 people, drawn from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. After German reunification, the area was recast in the media as symbolic of everything that was wrong with the former East Germany: decaying, substandard housing and a range of social problems including high levels of poverty and racist violence. This portrayal contributed to the economic decline of Marzahn-Hellersdorf and thousands of people left.

While the area was largely populated by white people of German descent, people from different immigrant backgrounds have lived there for decades. A Vietnamese community dating back to the days of the GDR was later joined by ethnic Germans who moved from the former USSR in the 1990s. More recently, poor young families of migrant origin (Eastern Europeans, Turkish and Arab families) have moved there in search of cheap housing, although the proportion of people from immigrant backgrounds living in Marzahn-Hellersdorf is lower than elsewhere in Berlin. The district is divided between the north, where the GDR-era housing projects are located, and the south, where wealthier people live in private single-family homes. In the north, a high proportion of residents are unemployed, or on low incomes, or are recipients of state benefits. The population is split between an older generation—those who moved there during the days of the GDR and lived through the years after reunification—and younger families, who have moved there in more recent years. In the past decade, the housing blocks have undergone a programme of state-funded revitalisation.

The Federal Republic of Germany is divided into three administrative levels of government: Federation (*Bund*), Federal states (*Bundesländer*) and communes (*Gemeinden*). The state of Berlin is governed by an elected mayor—currently from the

Social Democratic Party (SPD) —plus senators. In Berlin, city districts do not count as communes, so responsibility for governing Marzahn-Hellersdorf is divided between the city and the district council. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, there is strong support for both centre left and the radical left-wing party Die Linke, formed in 2007 by a merger between the successor to East Germany's ruling Socialist Unity Party and a coalition of left-wing groups from the former West. Members of Die Linke sit on the district council along with members from the SPD. Various federal government-sponsored programmes aimed at stimulating socio-economic development, such as the revitalisation of the housing blocks, are focused on specific parts of the district. Others include a neighbourhood management programme, aimed at involving local residents in decision-making. At district level, plans for economic development bring together local stakeholders in efforts to, for example, find apprenticeships for young people. Social inclusion and cohesion issues are dealt with by the district Integration Office. Various grassroots initiatives, such as youth clubs, women's groups, senior citizens' associations and immigrants' associations are all present. Many of them use the local community centres and come into contact with one another.

1.3.4 | LYON'S 8TH ARRONDISSEMENT

The city of Lyon has a population of 484,000, with the larger urban area (Greater Lyon) comprising 1.2 million. Depending on how these wider urban areas are defined, it is France's second-largest city, comparable in size to Lille and Marseille. Its economy is booming and the city sits in one of the most prosperous regions of France, Rhône-Alpes. It has an average level of economic inequality for France. The largest groups of immigrants with foreign nationality today are Portuguese, Moroccan and Algerian, but Lyon has a long history of immigration: in the 19th century workers came to the city from elsewhere in France; they were followed in the 20th century by other Europeans. From the 1980s onwards, immigrants arrived from South-East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, joined more recently by people from Portugal, the former Yugoslavia, India and Turkey. Lyon is split into nine numbered boroughs (*arrondissements*).

The 8th arrondissement is in the south-east of the city and has 76,000 inhabitants. It is close to the city centre and poor areas are interspersed with wealthier areas. Overall, the 8th arrondissement is one of the two poorest boroughs in Lyon itself— but as in other French cities the poorest areas are in outlying suburbs. Lyon has an ageing population, a need for investment in housing and public infrastructure and its economy has shifted towards the service sector.

Lyon is governed by a municipality headed by a mayor. Each arrondissement also has its own mayor, who is answerable to the city mayor. Politically, the city has long been dominated by the centre-left Socialist party. Lyon is subject to France's City Policy (*Politique de la ville*), a strategy for improving poor and disenfranchised urban areas developed in the 1980s. The aim is to concentrate public policy efforts in areas such

as housing, town planning, economy, or cultural and social activities on specific parts of the city identified as priority areas. Lyon city authorities have collaborated with civil society organisations and local residents on a social cohesion initiative (the *Contrat urbain de cohésion sociale*), a document that identifies urban and social projects needed to integrate these priority areas, by improving daily life and providing equal opportunities for residents. The 8th arrondissement has three areas targeted by the Politique de la ville.

1.3.5 | HIGHER BLACKLEY, MANCHESTER

Manchester is a city within the United Kingdom's second most populous urban area (2.55 million), known as Greater Manchester. Higher Blackley is a ward (a political division of the city) in the far north of Manchester, with a population of 13,686. It remained a rural village during Manchester's growth in the 18th and 19th centuries as the centre of the Industrial Revolution, but was absorbed into the city in the 1930s, when mass housing considered to be of a very high standard was built there. Many working-class residents moved out there from inner-city areas; Higher Blackley was the base for the chemicals manufacturer ICI, which employed 14,000 people there at its peak in 1961.

Manchester underwent acute de-industrialisation and by the end of the 20th century it had a falling population, high levels of unemployment and dereliction. However, in the last 15 years it has seen its economy grow again, with traditional manufacturing jobs replaced by an economy based on high-skilled knowledge-based industry (e.g. science and technology development) and low-skilled service industry jobs. In Higher Blackley, one of the largest local employers is a Sainsbury's supermarket. Where many residents of Higher Blackley used to work in manufacturing, 40 percent of those with jobs now work in caring, sales, customer services and elementary work.

Manchester suffers high levels of deprivation—poverty, unemployment and poor health—and Higher Blackley has neighbourhoods that are among the top 1 percent of deprived areas in England, mixed with others that are better off. Some 76.9 percent of the ward's population identified themselves as White British in the 2011 Census—down from 85 percent in 2001. There are residents from Asian, black Caribbean and non-British white backgrounds—but Higher Blackley has a higher proportion of White British residents than other areas of Manchester. Although Higher Blackley is often viewed as a place with an ageing population, the median age is 36, lower than the figure for Manchester as a whole.

As a ward, Higher Blackley elects three councillors to Manchester City Council, which has 96 elected councillors in total. The Labour Party holds 95 of the council seats, and as the largest party elects the leader of the council. Manchester City Council is also part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, which allows local authorities to

cooperate on areas of transport, economic development and regeneration. Greater Manchester benefits from an arrangement with national government called the City Deal, which gives the region more powers to make decisions about economic growth, boost skills and encourage local decision-making. Public service providers are able to set "community budgets", which enable them to share resources and reduce waste. Since 2011, Manchester has had an elected Police and Crime Commissioner, who is responsible for holding the local Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public.

Various national government policies have a direct impact on marginalised populations in Manchester. The Work Programme, which is aimed at getting long-term unemployed people back into work, is contracted out to companies who are not subject to local democratic control. Since 2012, public health services have been delivered by an independent National Health Service commissioning board, with some commissioning powers devolved to GPs. The coalition government, formed after the election in 2010, is also reforming the welfare system, in an aim to reduce costs. Policies include a change to housing benefit that means payments are reduced if claimants have extra bedrooms. This affects over 12,000 residents of Manchester.

1.3.6 | SOUTHERN BOTKYRKA, STOCKHOLM

Botkyrka is a municipality in the Greater Stockholm region of Sweden. Its population in 2013 was 86,657, the fifth-largest in Greater Stockholm, which has a total population of 2.1 million. It has a growing population, with a relatively high birth rate and an annual number of new residents—most of whom come from immigrant backgrounds—that exceeds the annual number of people who move out. Botkyrka is the municipality with the highest proportion of residents from a foreign background: 53.2 percent, which makes it the first municipality in Sweden where the majority Swedish population is no longer the majority locally, but the biggest demographic segment among many minorities. Botkyrka's history of migration stretches back to at least the 1960s. Yet there is a sharp divide between the northern part of the municipality, which is ethnically diverse and poorer, and the southern part, which is dominated by majority Swedes.

Northern Botkyrka is a product of the housing programme of Sweden's Social Democratic government of the 1960s and 1970s. Originally inhabited by lower middle-class and working-class Swedes, these housing projects became home to immigrant workers from other European countries, plus Turkey, Syria and Lebanon from the end of the 1960s onwards. Now, minority groups come from many other parts of the world too, including Latin America, South Asia, and Russia. Over 65 percent of residents in northern Botkyrka have a foreign background.

In southern Botkyrka, 25 percent of residents have a foreign background, but they are more likely to be white and come from European countries with a Christian heritage,

adding to the sense of ethnic homogeneity. The area's history goes back to an 18th-century mill town and a 19th-century railway station. It is also the location of an English-style "garden town", Tullinge. Northern Botkyrka is considerably poorer, while southern Botkyrka's majority Swede-dominated population is a mix of poor and high-income residents that matches the average for Greater Stockholm.

Botkryka's population generally votes for the Socialist and Social Democratic parties. The municipality has its own Parliament that consists of 61 elected councillors, with a municipal council of 13 members and two deputy municipal commissioners. The Parliament does not reflect the diversity of Botkyrka's population, although it has several councillors from minority backgrounds. Municipalities have a great deal of autonomy, including the ability to set their own tax rates. This means that even if the country is ruled by one party (currently a coalition of the centre-right parties), the party in charge of a municipality (currently the Social Democrats in Botkyrka) can enact many of its own policies.

At the same time, Sweden is a heavily centralised nation-state, where healthcare, cultural policies, transport and regional planning are determined nationally. Botkyrka has high levels of reported discrimination and of hate crimes. The municipality has its own local policy for social equality called the "intercultural strategy", which aims to tackle discrimination against minorities and promote social cohesion. Botkyrka is also targeted by a national policy aimed at reducing housing segregation and unemployment rates. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has identified segregation along racial lines in Greater Stockholm as a serious threat to future regional growth and social sustainability.

2

IDENTITY AND BELONGING

2.1 | NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Official conceptions of national identity—particularly when it comes to dealing with ethnic diversity—vary considerably from country to country. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to compare France with the United Kingdom. In the former, there is a strong emphasis on French identity, which has required immigrants to assimilate French culture and adopt the values associated with the French Republic. In the latter, a more flexible approach has been pursued over recent decades, allowing ethnic minority groups more space to retain and celebrate different identities and the development of hyphenated identities, British-Asian or Black-British.

The way in which a country deals with these issues has repercussions for the way it responds to marginalised groups within the majority population. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the Open Society Foundations researchers for Manchester point out that the idea of "white working-class" identity grew from the 1950s onwards, in response to post-war immigration. The concept was linked to fears—justified or not—that working-class gains such as the welfare state were threatened by outsiders. In this context, anti-immigrant feeling among marginalised communities may be part of a wider set of insecurities about socio-economic status.

It is striking that even in those countries which have developed initiatives and policies for integration (the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Denmark) these are largely directed at new migrant or minority groups and fail to involve marginalised white working class communities or engage with their concerns about demographic changes.

In other countries, official efforts to promote integration have led to a certain ambiguity when it comes to discussing issues of ethnic diversity, inclusion and exclusion. Swedish legislators abolished the term "race" from official language in 2001; this was followed by the removal of race as a ground for discrimination in 2009. Yet the focus group interviews in Stockholm suggested that other terms—such as "culture"—have stepped in to fill the gap. While in theory all citizens are regarded as Swedish, the term "Swede" was used to refer to individuals from the majority who were white, Swedish-speaking and Christian, at least culturally. Focus group participants in Lyon expressed the view that French identity was in crisis—yet when the former president, Nicolas Sarkozy, tried to start a public debate on the topic in 2009, he was widely criticised for linking the issue too closely with immigration and giving space to the far right. France bans the collection of data based on race or ethnicity, making racism difficult to track.

Focus group participants in several cities expressed openness towards people of different cultural backgrounds and a willingness to interact with them. But there was a strong emphasis on the need for migrants to learn the cultural habits and values of the majority: language was seen as a significant potential barrier to this. In Lyon and

Aarhus, participants welcomed the ethnic diversity of their surroundings, while in others—such as Manchester and Amsterdam—increasing diversity was seen as more of a threat to an existing way of life. While some participants expressed views that were racist, most participants expressed a desire to get to know people from other cultures.

Overall, the idea of "majority" or "white" identity remained ill-defined—or defined in a negative sense, as in against the identity of people from immigrant backgrounds. This can obscure the ways in which people from the majority population are marginalised on other grounds—or share different cultural values from, say, middle-class white people. The Open Society Foundations researchers in Manchester point out that strong kinship ties among white working-class communities are often overlooked in negative media portrayals. In Berlin, there was a lingering resentment among older focus group participants who remembered life under the GDR, that, while they identified as German, they had been ignored and treated as second-class citizens since reunification.

2.2 | LOCAL IDENTITIES

Focus group participants in all cities reported strong attachments to their local surroundings, although sometimes for very different reasons. In Lyon's 8th arrondissement, a centrally located neighbourhood in an economically thriving city, participants said they felt proud to be Lyonnais and identified with festivals, the football club, the local biomedical industry and the city's reputation for fine food. They had a weaker attachment to their own neighbourhood, but this may be due to it not being unduly stigmatised within the rest of the city. Participants from the Etats-Unis area, a subset of the 8th arrondissement, had a stronger attachment to their neighbourhood in comparison to those from other parts of the 8th arrondissement.

By contrast, areas such as Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Berlin, or Trigeparken in Aarhus, were praised by many focus group participants for being outside the city and near large areas of green space. In the case of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, some participants compared the area favourably with inner city districts, which they viewed as chaotic. The inhabitants of Amsterdam-North, which is separated from the rest of the city by water, expressed a strong sense of neighbourhood identity, while also saying that they felt like they belonged to the city as a whole. Amsterdam-North is poorer than other parts of the city and policymakers are worried about economic disparities leading to a sense of "two cities". Focus group participants suggested that while they felt like they belonged to the rest of Amsterdam, the feeling was not mutual. Residents of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, felt there was a split between the north of the district, inhabited by low-income families in large housing blocks, and the south, where better-off families lived in private individual housing.

Communities in several cities displayed evidence of close-knit networks of kinship; sometimes based on geography or town planning—at other times based on people's socio-economic status. The strong family and social networks in Higher Blackley, Manchester, which stretched back over generations, served as a way of helping people cope with low incomes and job insecurity. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, the older generation had built a shared sense of identity through the hardships they faced when they first moved to the area under the GDR. They refer to themselves as the "Wellington boots generation", on account of how muddy the unfinished roads were in the early days of development. In Trigeparken, participants talked of a close sense of community among some residents but not others, on account of the high turnover of tenants.

There were also various kinds of hyper-local identity: people in Berlin shared close links with others in their housing blocks; residents of Botkyrka identified with particular neighbourhoods; and residents of Amsterdam-North talked of the friendly territorial rivalries between one another.

2.3 | CONFLICTS AND BOUNDARIES

Focus group participants had a wide range of views on ethnic diversity and what impact this had on their own senses of identity and belonging. Certain focus group participants expressed strongly racist or xenophobic views: in Amsterdam-North, one interviewee claimed that Dutch people of immigrant background could not be really Dutch, as many of them held dual nationalities, while others spoke negatively of the presence of Muslims in their city (referring to them disparagingly as "headscarves"). Older interviewees in Marzahn-Hellersdorf complained about the high numbers of Turkish residents in inner-city Berlin districts and claimed that "our culture is ceasing to exist". In certain cities, anxieties about social issues such as housing or crime combined with hostility to people of immigrant background—these will be discussed in more detail in the relevant chapters.

Yet negative views were by no means universal—a focus group participant in Stockholm who expressed a negative attitude to ethnic minorities was strongly challenged by others in the group. In Trigeparken, Aarhus, participants welcomed the district's ethnically mixed population and even took pride in their community's ability to absorb other cultures. In Lyon, participants were keen to welcome diversity overall whilst desiring more social diversity—and this attitude has also been reflected by city policymakers, who signed Lyon up to a Charter of Diversity in 2005, which promotes non-discrimination in both public and private sectors—while criticising some aspects of behaviour; one interviewee worried that the fear of being called racist prevented her from challenging children who misbehaved.

This fear, or a sense of being ill-equipped to approach people from immigrant backgrounds, was prevalent in the focus groups in Higher Blackley, Manchester. While interviewees expressed worries that immigration would threaten the close-knit community links they valued, they also spoke of a desire to get to know immigrants better—on some occasions feeling that a lack of openness from people on the other side was the problem. In Amsterdam-North, some participants complained that increasing diversity was threatening their "way of life"—but it would be a mistake to see these fears as merely a case of "majority" vs. "minority" populations. In both Manchester and Amsterdam, the focus group interviews suggested that the key issue was the ability of newcomers to adapt to unspoken codes of behaviour, such as greeting people in the street, and to contribute to the existing community spirit. Interviewees in Amsterdam-North also expressed worries about "yuppies" moving into the district, who were described as dressing differently and choosing different schools for their children.

Elsewhere, there were specific local concerns that could potentially make people feel marginalised or excluded. One area—Tullinge—of southern Botkyrka, Stockholm, has its own political party which advocates for the area to secede and become its own municipality because they feel they are paying too much tax, which is spent on deprived minority areas of northern Botkyrka. The municipality has launched a "myth-busting" campaign to try and tackle this complaint. The inclusion of Trigeparken on the Danish government's "ghetto list" was felt to have stigmatised the area, and several focus group participants felt the municipality was using it as a dumping ground. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, the social problems that arose after reunification were associated in many people's minds with the arrival of Russian-Germans, who although officially recognised as German, remain "immigrants" in the minds of many other locals. Interviewees also complained of a lack of shared social spaces, such as youth clubs, that could help promote integration.

2.4 | KEY POINTS

- Successful integration policies need to involve all parts of the population. A failure to involve or engage with marginalised white working class communities in integration policies will undermine their impact and effectiveness.

- Official bans on discussing race or collecting data on ethnicity do not prevent racist views or stop the spread of negative myths that one group is favoured over others. Instead, they prevent the collection of evidence to identify patterns of systemic discrimination and make it harder to tackle racism when it arises.

- While fears about a perceived cultural threat from immigration are widespread, people in the communities studied here are curious about people from other cultures and are willing to welcome them as long as they are confident that

values they hold to be important, such as a strong community spirit, will not be undermined.

- Strong ties of kinship and social networks are a sometimes overlooked feature of working-class communities. These are a strength, which policymakers might want to draw on in future.

- Strong local identities—sometimes in opposition to the rest of the city—are a source of community cohesion, but there is a danger that when combined with economic disparities they might lead to further marginalisation.

BEST PRACTICE: THE OASIS CENTRE, AARHUS

At the centre of Trigeparken lies the Oasis (*Oasen*). It is a centre where residents' associations organise activities and social workers can be found. Many focus group participants emphasised the importance of local social workers for the neighbourhood's revitalisation plan and referred to the Oasis as what the Open Society Foundations researchers describe as a "pivotal" institution for the sense of belonging in Trigeparken. In the words of one local resident,

> *Something is being done ... to avoid crime and to strengthen residents. The Oasis has a lot of events and activities ... which make it a good place to live. Also, since we are very multicultural out here, you meet a lot of people across [ethnicities]. I actually think it's an enriching factor that you live [in] a place where there are so many different cultures, and that they do something at the Oasis for you to meet across cultures.*

3

EDUCATION

3.1 | THE SOCIAL DIVIDE

Education plays a hugely important role in determining people's access to the labour market in later life, as well as their wider participation in society. It is also where the effects of social inequality are most keenly felt: at a national level in all six countries studied for this Open Society Foundations research, there is a link between a disadvantaged background and low educational achievement. And the authors of two studies—France and the Netherlands—point out that rising inequality in those countries threatens to make the situation worse. Inequality in the education system might manifest itself in a disproportionately high dropout rate (as in the case of Denmark or the Netherlands), poorer than average exam results (as in the case of the United Kingdom), or discrimination in the selection of children for the upper tiers of secondary education (as in the case of Germany).

However, it must also be recognised that this is not necessarily a direct causal link— as the authors of the Manchester study point out—and that a range of other factors come into play, particularly at a local level. These may be family-related issues such as social insecurity (a stakeholder interviewed in the Manchester report referred to the "chaotic lifestyles" of some families), single-parent families where the parent is likely to have less money and be overworked, poor nutrition, poor housing or employment prospects. Or they may be issues related to policy: in Sweden, for instance, deregulation of the school system in the 1990s led to what the authors of the Open Society Foundations report describe as "extreme segregation" between schools on the grounds of both class and race.

In Denmark, meanwhile, school segregation has been exacerbated by the private housing market; while in France it has been suggested that underpaid teaching jobs have encouraged teachers to avoid schools perceived as difficult. There is a high turnover of teachers in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, linked to a similar perception of the schools. It is crucial not to see any of these factors as automatically leading to poor educational achievement, but rather as risk factors that should be acknowledged and responded to.

In several countries, while there has been a focus on supporting disadvantaged children from ethnic minority or immigrant backgrounds—because they have tended to be the most in need—there has been a relative lack of attention paid to marginalised white working class children. Class affects the educational prospects of children from all ethnic backgrounds—but there is evidence in the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands, for instance, that the gap between disadvantaged and advantaged majority children is more pronounced. In Stockholm, school segregation appeared to have exacerbated hostility from majority Swedes towards the small numbers of ethnic minority children in south Botkyrka schools—but in Aarhus, focus group interviewees spoke approvingly of the ethnic and cultural diversity in Trigeparken's secondary school.

3.2 | INTERVENTION

A range of local and national programmes already exist to tackle the problems of low attainment outlined above. These include out-of-hours activities such as homework cafés or students' clubs; money spent on renovating buildings and providing children with new equipment; mentoring or a focus on developing key skills (reading, writing, arithmetic); and measures to address concerns over behaviour.

Yet beyond individual measures, there seems to be potential for developing integrated programmes that identify children potentially in need of help at an early age and encourage different agencies to communicate well and work together. In Manchester, a city-wide "schools alliance" was launched in 2012, as a response to a more fragmented education system (as a result of successive government policies that have taken control of some state schools away from local authorities). Its slogan is "cooperation, collaboration and reciprocity". One element of this is the Early Years New Model, a strategy for identifying children whose family life might not adequately prepare them for school—and a programme of activities to correct this. It is intended to halve the proportion of children who are not school ready within the next ten years. In Lyon, meanwhile, individual pupils are identified as being at risk of dropping out and then given a range of activities to help them improve their skills and ambitions.

An important aspect in all cities is the way in which education and care professionals relate to parents. In Amsterdam, for example, focus group interviewees complained of the way in which they felt like they were not being listened to by schools—and the Open Society Foundations study quoted wider research that found schools in the Netherlands had a hard time engaging parents, who were often put on the defensive. A new national pilot project, *Allemaal opvoeders*, is intended to put parents and professionals on a more equal footing when it comes to discussing children's education—based on the idea of a partnership. This approach already seems to have had some benefits in Higher Blackley, Manchester, where teachers interviewed talked about informally approaching parents of children with deprived or chaotic family lives and offering informal support.

The success or failure of education policy has an effect on the wider community. In Amsterdam, some focus group interviewees complained that disorder at a local school made their area feel unsafe. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, some interviewees displayed negative attitudes towards single parents, since they were perceived as not having an interest in their children's education. This plays into a wider stigma attached to the neighbourhood, which has been associated with crime, unemployment and high levels of welfare dependency in the German media. By contrast, the pre-school day-care nurseries (Kita), a legacy of the GDR, were perceived to help introduce children of different ethnic backgrounds to one another and aid social cohesion.

Good communication between schools, officials and the wider community is important—and when it breaks down it can cause problems, even if a policy has beneficial effects. When children at a school in the ethnically diverse northern half of Botkyrka, Stockholm, were given laptops, it caused resentment among parents in the mainly majority Swedish southern part of the district. All school children in Botkyrka were to receive notebooks eventually, but not all schools received them at the same time, and this did not appear to have been made clear to parents. It may be that because Sweden has a policy of not officially acknowledging race (see chapter 2 Identity and Belonging), these sorts of misunderstandings are harder for officials to anticipate and avoid.

What is more, as the authors of the Open Society Foundations study of Stockholm point out, Swedish textbooks still present the history of Sweden as one of a homogenous culture and do not acknowledge the diversity of the modern nation. This may be a factor in fears expressed by focus group interviewees that traditional Swedish culture is at risk of being eroded by foreign traditions.

3.3 | EMPLOYMENT

Efforts to improve children's educational achievement are intended to equip them with skills for life and help them find jobs after they leave school. One element of these efforts is to raise children's aspirations—but as the authors of the Manchester Open Society Foundations study point out, a focus on aspirations alone ignores wider structural and environmental factors. The particular state of the jobs market is one; the particular aspirations of working-class children and families is another. In at least two countries (Denmark and the United Kingdom) there has been a shift away from vocational education towards more academic programmes. While many children may aspire to higher education, many others may aspire first and foremost to a stable income with which they can support their family, particularly if they have come from an insecure background.

In Lyon's 8th arrondissement, focus group participants all wanted more attention to be given to vocational training—but further discussion suggested they were not aware of the range of training already on offer. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, there appeared to be a demand for vocational training as well—but one stakeholder interviewed felt that the negative media view of the district had given rise to a perception that local children were not suitable for apprenticeships. Finally, as the authors of the Manchester study point out, where economies have shifted away from stable, industrial jobs-for-life towards more precarious service industry work, children need to be well equipped to operate in a jobs market where they may have to change occupation a number of times. Youth unemployment is not the only risk—so is the prospect of children doing courses of study that do not actually qualify them for the jobs available.

3.4 | KEY POINTS

- There is a link between economic deprivation and low educational achievement. This is not simply a function of poverty, but the result of a complex set of circumstances, including family instability, poor diet, etc.

- Reforms to the education system in some countries have encouraged segregation on the grounds of both class and ethnicity.

- Successful efforts to identify children at risk of early dropout involve integrated programmes where different agencies communicate and work together, particularly with young children.

- Efforts to support children in diverse communities need to be managed sensitively so that marginalised white working class populations do not feel they are unfairly losing out.

- Policymakers should recognise a desire among working-class people for more vocational training. They should also ensure that people are given the opportunity to take up further and higher education courses that will get them into jobs.

BEST PRACTICE: CRAB LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MANCHESTER

Crab Lane Primary School in Higher Blackley has a higher than average proportion of children who receive free school meals (a key indicator of deprivation). The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. In 2008 the school was judged by inspectors to be failing, but from the following year it implemented a range of measures that have turned the school's fortunes around. These involved strong leadership, effective teaching, knowledge of the community, rigorous monitoring, cross-agency work, the creation of a secure and attractive place to learn and engagement with parents and carers. One example of this coordinated approach is how the school cook knows which families are struggling and which children might need extra food. Good nutrition is regarded as important for effective learning, so the school identifies children in need and invites them in for breakfast, or invites parents in to help them devise packed lunches for the children that include nutritious items such as fresh fruit.

4

EMPLOYMENT

4.1 | THE ECONOMY

To varying degrees, in recent decades there has been a shift in Western European economies away from industry and towards the service sector. This has had a particular impact on working-class communities, with reliable, local manufacturing jobs being replaced in many cases by low-paid precarious work. The effects of the recession, combined with the austerity policies of certain governments (Britain and the Netherlands) and trends in welfare reform, have increased the pressure on marginalised communities—with rising living costs adding to the sense of insecurity.

The area of Higher Blackley, Manchester, for instance, suffers from the effect of an "hourglass" economy, where intermediately skilled jobs have disappeared (the area was once home to a thriving manufacturing industry), leaving a gap between low-skilled work in retail and other services, and the high-skilled "knowledge economy" jobs upon which Manchester's economic growth is based. In Sweden, the deregulation of the labour market in the 1990s has led to rapidly rising inequality. These wider shifts have not only affected people's economic prospects but their sense of identity: in Lyon, for instance, focus group participants bemoaned what they saw as a lack of respect for manual jobs. Participants in Amsterdam talked of how they had been raised to value tough, physical work.

In countries that have experienced economic crisis or recession since 2008, deprived communities have been particularly hard hit. In Britain, where wages have remained relatively stagnant and food prices have shot up, focus group participants from Higher Blackley reported a sense of feeling "the squeeze", and that it was more of a struggle to make ends meet. In the Netherlands, a rise in unemployment has led to the phenomenon of "displacement"—people taking jobs for which they are overqualified, pushing people with lower levels of education out of the market. There is also a growing instance of self-employed workers, who do not always have access to social security, as they are often uninsured. Germany has avoided recession, but reforms to the welfare system have been accused of reducing wages and masking underemployment. Berlin experiences high unemployment and public debt partly as a legacy of reunification—and the district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf is particularly affected by persistent unemployment.

There is some evidence that in Amsterdam competition from Eastern European migrant labour has had a limited effect on job prospects for marginalised white working class Dutch people, but the research suggests this is less significant than the factors mentioned above. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, people with an immigrant background are more likely to face unemployment; the same is true in Botkyrka, Sweden. But this in itself is a potential source of resentment among the majority population, particularly when it comes to accessing income support payments.

4.2 | WELFARE TO WORKFARE?

A persistent stereotype of people in communities that experience high levels of unemployment is that they don't want to work, that they're happier receiving state handouts. This view has arguably influenced policymakers in several countries, with an emphasis placed on changing people's attitudes to work rather than tackling problems in the labour market. A local politician interviewed by the Open Society Foundations researchers in Manchester talked of the need for unemployed people in Higher Blackley to "take responsibility" for their own lives.

Yet researchers in many of the cities find that a strong work ethic was prevalent among the people interviewed, and that it was even a crucial part of their "working-class" identity. In Lyon, participants referred to the French quality of "*la débrouillardise*", an ability to cope and be flexible and get by. Interviewees in Aarhus were reluctant to openly discuss their experience of receiving benefits because they felt there was a stigma attached to not working. In Manchester, focus group participants spoke of how living on benefits was not an easy life and the fact that they would rather work. While in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, whereas one young participant claimed to prefer not working and planned to continue relying on income support long-term, many others among his contemporaries spoke of the difficulty they had in finding jobs.

In a number of countries, reforms have brought state support for the unemployed closer to the US model of "workfare"—a system that requires individuals to participate in training, or voluntary work, or types of paid labour in order for them to continue receiving benefits. In some cases, this less reliable safety net has added to the pressure on people who have already been feeling the stresses of increased precarity and higher unemployment since 2008. The Open Society Foundations study of Trigeparken, Aarhus, found that while certain people had benefited from targeted measures (such as support for those with psychological or other health problems), the constant monitoring of individuals and requirements for them to carry out job searches when there did not appear to be any jobs was humiliating and stressful. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, the effect of welfare reforms that abolished a scheme to help people who lost jobs after Reunification get back into work had made the problem of long-term unemployment worse. There was even evidence that this long-term subsistence on welfare was being passed down to a younger generation.

In Higher Blackley, Manchester, there was an acute feeling among focus group participants that jobs for working-class people simply did not pay any more. Low wages and rising living costs, combined with the rise of jobs on "zero-hours contracts" (an agreement whereby the employer does not have to guarantee the employee a minimum number of hours, yet can call them in for work at very short notice— essentially preventing the individual from committing to work elsewhere) had made people feel very insecure. Some participants expressed the view that while a life on

benefits was not easy, at least it gave a basic level of security they could not find with paid employment.

In Amsterdam-North, which has relatively high unemployment but has not been as hard hit by the recession as surrounding areas, participants spoke of an increased fear for their job security—but also a perception that some people were illegitimately receiving out-of-work benefits.

4.3 | STRAINS AND STRESSES

Among the communities studied, certain groups of people were particularly vulnerable to difficulties in finding employment. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, young people who could not find jobs were keen to leave the area, while men over 50 who had lost their jobs during Reunification were spoken of as a "lost generation". In the Open Society Foundations study of Manchester, it is noted that while women's work has become increasingly central for maintaining living standards (as traditional, male-dominated manufacturing jobs had disappeared), they face systematic lower pay and particular barriers to accessing the labour market, such as the availability and affordability of childcare. In Trigeparken, Aarhus, the regime of incentives and sanctions in the benefits system is particularly harsh on those who have extra difficulty finding work—such as the long-term unemployed or people with drug addiction or alcoholism.

It should also be noted that in several countries studied, people from immigrant backgrounds were particularly vulnerable. In Sweden, people from ethnic minority backgrounds experienced a far higher unemployment rate than majority Swedes, although there were pockets of high unemployment in the majority Swedish areas of southern Botkyrka. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, people from a Russian-German background experienced long-term unemployment, and this was a source of resentment among some majority background residents who saw them as abusing a welfare system that did not belong to them. This should be noted because unemployment and low pay affects all communities—but disparities and misunderstandings could also become a source of tension if not addressed.

4.4 | LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Many of the factors that affect people's employment prospects are national—or even international. But there is a range of local interventions that help, or could help, marginalised communities. Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Berlin was originally designed to be a residential area separate from places of work. As those workplaces have now largely gone, the district government is focusing on supporting what remains of local

industry, developing the healthcare sector and attracting high-tech companies to a Clean Tech Park. Not all of these measures will help the local unemployed: jobs at the Clean Tech Park are likely to be highly skilled and require a level of education beyond that of many local residents. Healthcare has greater potential. Marzahn-Hellersdorf faces a further problem in that the area has become stigmatised by negative media coverage: plans for a Gardens of the World park could help reverse this and attract tourists.

In Higher Blackley, Manchester, the city council's Family Poverty Strategy stresses the need to encourage private sector companies to pay fair wages to their lowest-paid employees—and the City Deal programme shows an awareness of the need to create more jobs as well as focus on the unemployed themselves. Along similar lines, Lyon benefits from the "*emplois francs*" scheme, in which city officials help private employers find jobs for young people under 30 who have been unemployed for more than a year.

Lyon and Aarhus also have coordinated schemes to help boost employment— although the former has only just been launched and the latter has only seen limited success so far. In Stockholm, a summer vacation job programme to give young people work experience was well received. Those who took part praised it for giving them contacts and networks useful for finding jobs later on. Informal networks were important in Manchester, too: focus group participants said they found family and friends a better way to find out about jobs than the official Job Centre Plus service. And in Amsterdam, self-employed workers who did not have access to social security have formed a "bread fund", a civic initiative to collectively pay and provide for each other's social protection.

4.5 | KEY POINTS

- A shift away from manufacturing and towards service-based economies has removed jobs that were once the mainstay of working-class communities, providing not only secure employment but also a sense of identity.

- Reforms to welfare systems that replace the old social-democratic model with one that requires a higher level of participation from the individual in order to continue receiving benefits can place undue stresses on low-income and vulnerable people, particularly during periods of recession and high unemployment. An overemphasis on the role of the individual obscures the need to provide good, secure jobs.

- Attracting new industries, encouraging private employers to hire locally and launching coordinated schemes to get the long-term unemployed back into work are important ways to promote job creation locally.

• Social networks and community solidarity are important tools for people when they are faced with uncertain employment prospects.

BEST PRACTICE: MARZAHN-HELLERSDORF, BERLIN

Marzahn-Hellersdorf is a potentially attractive area for businesses. It is cheap, accessible and near Berlin's main international airport. But the area suffers from a negative image that puts off investment. The local government's Master Plan for economic development focuses on three areas: supporting the remaining local industries, such as the Coca-Cola plant and the Clean Tech Park; the growing elderly care and medical services sector; and service industries related to the expansion of the nearby airport.

Local officials are aware that not all potential jobs will suit young unemployed people from the neighbourhood—the Clean Tech Park, for instance, employs highly skilled people from outside the area—but they are reworking the range of local apprenticeships to better prepare young people who live in the district for jobs in healthcare. The administration is also devising ways to counter negative images of the district, such as the Gardens of the World tourist attraction, which will remove stigma by encouraging people to visit, and therefore encourage more businesses to relocate to Marzahn-Hellersdorf.

5

HOUSING

5.1 | PUBLIC OR PRIVATE?

In all six cities, the communities studied have historically been reliant—to greater or lesser degrees—on forms of social housing. In the post-war period, state-supported social housing was a key way in which European social democracies—or in the case of East Germany, an authoritarian regime that claimed to be run in the interests of workers—provided a basic standard of living for working-class citizens. New social housing projects were often intended to clear slum areas of inner cities, solve incipient housing shortages and to create "mixed" communities where people from different socio-economic backgrounds could live side by side.

What the cities also have in common is that from the 1980s onwards, there has been a move away from public provision of housing to one where construction, renovation, levels of rent and patterns of settlement have been increasingly influenced by market dynamics. How much this has happened varies greatly from city to city, depending on the wider political context: in Higher Blackley, Manchester, for instance, the situation is shaped by the mass privatisation of council housing that took place under the government of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, with the result that there is now an acute shortage of suitable homes for families on low incomes; in Greater Lyon, by contrast, between 4,000 and 4,500 new apartments—largely privately-owned, but rent controlled and subsidised by the state under the Low-Rent Housing (*Habitation à loyer modéré*, HLM) system of social housing—are built every year.

This historical trend is directly relevant to the communities that live in these cities today; it has shaped both the physical environment in which people live and the way they feel about themselves, as a community and in relation to others. Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Berlin, for instance, is physically divided between the private single-family dwellings in the south of the district and the huge block housing projects in the north. The blocks were built in the 1970s and 1980s by the Communist East German government and were originally meant to be a symbol of how the state provided for its workers. After reunification the area fell into socio-economic decline and became associated with high unemployment and social problems like unemployment, crime, youth violence and drug addiction. This perceived failure of a state-run housing project was contrasted unfavourably in the German media with better-off, private housing such as that in the south of the district. There is a pronounced generational split between residents of the blocks who first moved there and saw the area as a "step up" from their previous living conditions, and younger people, who want to leave.

The current situation, an interplay between market forces and what remains of social housing schemes, creates specific policy challenges and opportunities in the six cities under consideration.

5.2 | IDENTITY

In the six studies, two factors related to housing appear to play a key role in influencing people's sense of identity: the specific condition of the built environment; and the community's geographical relationship to the city centre. In Amsterdam-North, for instance, focus groups reported a strong sense of community spirit, praising a "village atmosphere" that was linked both to the neighbourhood's distance from the city centre, and the fact that it is comprised of low-rise homes with front and back gardens. This, combined with the fact that people tended to live in the area for long periods, meant that residents of Amsterdam-North tended to judge newcomers on their perceived commitment to the community.

It is not only one style of building that appears to contribute to a shared sense of identity, either: in Berlin, older residents of the housing blocks had a collective memory of living there in the early days, when building work was still ongoing—they refer to this as the "Wellington boots" period, since many of the roads were unfinished and became muddy when it rained. This forms part of a wider sense of solidarity, one these interviewees contrasted unfavourably with life after German reunification, when the district fell into decline. In Higher Blackley, Manchester, the concerns were not linked to the homes themselves but to their geographical location: interviewees talked of the importance of family members being able to find homes in nearby streets, thus enabling a close-knit community to maintain its links.

In terms of location, being at a distance from the city centre can be perceived both as a benefit and as a disadvantage. The "village atmosphere" in Amsterdam-North was praised by its residents; yet in Trigeparken, Aarhus, there was a general attitude that the poor quality of the buildings (not well maintained, lack of integration into surrounding urban areas), combined with their distance from the city centre, meant it was perceived as not worth the money and a chore to live there.

Transport also matters: Lyon's 8th arrondissement is more central than the five other neighbourhoods studied, yet interviewees there were keen to praise a new tram line that ran straight through their district, highlighting the speed with which it enabled them to cross the city. This was not merely a practical concern; it appeared to give them a sense of pride in their neighbourhood and was perceived to help alleviate segregation between poorer and richer areas of the city. In Botkyrka, Stockholm, by contrast, a lack of good transport links between the two parts of the district (only infrequent and slow bus routes) appeared to reinforce the separation and thereby exacerbate tensions between the ethnically diverse northern half and the more homogenous Swedish southern half.

5.3 | COMPETITION

What makes people more or less likely to feel that their neighbourhoods are being undermined? Immigration or increasing ethnic diversity is sometimes cited as a factor. When it concerns working-class communities who are reliant on some form of social housing, two groups—the "natives" and the newcomers—are cast as being in competition for scarce resources.

This was certainly the fear among some residents of Higher Blackley, Manchester, when they were interviewed. There was a perception among some that people from ethnic minorities were being unfairly favoured by decisions about the allocation of housing—or even, as some suggested, that the city council was deliberately trying to alter the ethnic make-up of the district. In southern Botkyrka, Stockholm, some residents expressed fears about the increasing diversity of one area of the district and social cohesion. These fears may have also been manifested in a relatively high vote for the far-right Sweden Democrats party in that particular area. In both cases, while some interviewees wished to raise concerns, they were anxious not to be seen as "racist" and felt that this was preventing them from discussing the issue fully.

However, what the six studies indicate is that when it comes to the question of who belongs and who doesn't, and who is receiving fair treatment from officials and who isn't, concerns about immigration are not always dominant. In Amsterdam, for instance, long-term residents were made uneasy by the influx of better-off Dutch families, because they were perceived as having not as strong a commitment to the community, and so were likely to move out again sooner. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, it was in fact the departure of people and not their arrival during the 1990s that had led people to feel that social cohesion—and even the identity of the community—was under threat.

What drives many fears is the state of the housing market in a particular city, and the way in which state resources are allocated. Rising rents in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, pose a threat to particular marginalised groups: older people whose children have moved away and who are looking to downsize; and young unemployed or underemployed people looking to move out of the family home. In Amsterdam-North, increased demand for housing, combined with budget cuts in the wake of the economic crisis, has made it more difficult for young people to find social housing. In Higher Blackley, Manchester, a general shortage of social housing, plus government reforms to the welfare state (in particular the "bedroom tax", which penalises social housing tenants for having unused bedrooms in their homes) appeared to have created a great deal of anxiety among interviewees. And in Trigeparken, Aarhus, a lack of funding has led to an increasing disparity between public and private housing, with the former perceived as an increasingly unattractive choice.

5.4 | INTERVENTION

The research illustrates the crucial role housing plays in how people feel about their neighbourhoods, their community and their wider place in society. When it comes to the decisions made by officials, two key concerns emerged in the six studies: perceptions and participation.

In Higher Blackley, Manchester, there is a perception—erroneous or not—that people from ethnic minorities were being unfairly favoured in housing allocation was prevalent among residents interviewed. Likewise, many residents expressed fears about insecure tenancies, seemingly unaware that the city council had recently made a decision to maintain assured tenancies. This sort of thing may point to a need for better communication between official bodies and residents.

There is also a wider issue, whereby policy failures or inconsistencies can contribute to negative perceptions of an area, which can in turn cause further problems. Residents in certain districts, such as Botkyrka in Stockholm and Amsterdam-North, appeared to feel that their neighbourhoods had lost out in investment, as a result of being situated close to districts deemed to be in more urgent need of help. In Amsterdam-North, residents felt their district had lost out, while other nearby areas had benefited from recent regeneration programmes. In the case of southern Botkyrka, the municipality was unable to deal with a shortage of apartments for rent because its resources were focused on northern Botkyrka, where the problem was worse. This is a potentially divisive issue since the north is far more ethnically mixed—a distinction that could be exploited by racist politicians, for instance.

Participation—to what degree residents are involved in decisions about their housing and its upkeep—also matters. Residents in several of the cities remarked on how engagement in collective activities, such as clean-ups, or the maintenance of shared spaces, helped to build a sense of community spirit. Yet this is not necessarily a replacement for well-funded public services: in Amsterdam-North, for instance, interviewees complained that the municipality had cut back on waste clearing and people were being left to organise garbage removal themselves.

Participation also matters when it comes to major regeneration and refurbishment projects. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, for instance, there was a lot of bitterness among interviewees about a programme of renovations that took place from 2002–2008. Kindergartens and schools were demolished, because at the time there was an ageing population; however, now that new people have moved into the area, there is a shortage of such places. What is more, some residents suspected that empty buildings were demolished as a way of pushing up property prices (i.e. by artificially creating a shortage). This perception seems to have been exacerbated because residents did not feel they were consulted about the regeneration programme.

In Lyon's 8th arrondissement, where the study found a high level of satisfaction among residents, there were still worries that too much decision-making power about

housing allocation was concentrated in too few hands—and there were concerns that new building work would squeeze out the remaining city green spaces, or push low-income families elsewhere.

But local participation has its limits. In Denmark, residents elect the boards of their housing associations. Yet the residents of Trigeparken are unable themselves to do anything about the increasing disparity between the private and public housing sectors, which the Open Society Foundations study found had created a vicious cycle where funds for the upkeep of social housing were stretched increasingly thin. As with Higher Blackley, Manchester, whose residents are affected by reforms to the welfare state, this is an example of where national policy decisions play the leading role.

5.5 | KEY POINTS

- A historical shift away from public housing to a more market-based model has in some countries led to a shortage of social housing, upon which many people in economically deprived communities still rely. In others, reforms have led to rising rents or an increased turnover of residents.

- People may be reluctant to express concerns about immigration and access to housing for fear of being dismissed as racist. Tensions can often arise from a lack of accurate information being given to the public, or from negative rumours spreading, so good communication from local authorities is essential.

- Worries about a perceived threat to community spirit can also be class-based, as in the case of Amsterdam-North. What matters is that people feel their neighbours are committed to the area where they live.

- Shared experiences, such as memories of moving into a neighbourhood or taking part in collective neighbourhood clean-ups, can help build a sense of collective identity and community spirit.

- Involving residents in decisions about their housing and the upkeep of shared spaces is a way to build community cohesion.

BEST PRACTICE: THE ENQUÊTE ÉCOUTE HABITANTS, LYON

In 2009, the Lyon municipality began an open consultation process with inhabitants of deprived areas such as the 8th arrondissement. Residents were asked about the atmosphere of their neighbourhood, with questions designed to reflect precise details, such as the condition of individual staircases in housing blocks, or the cleaning of communal areas. Such details matter, because a large council block can have several entrances, each with their own lift and staircase. Graffiti or damaged equipment in one particular entrance can make a huge different to how residents feel about their neighbourhood in general.

6

HEALTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

6.1 | WHO IS AT RISK?

There is a well-established link between poor health and economic marginalisation. This affects marginalised communities in all six cities covered by the Open Society Foundations studies, with certain groups of people at particular risk. Low incomes, low levels of education, unemployment, single-parent families, early parenthood and poor housing were all cited as factors that played into poor health.

The Open Society Foundations researchers emphasise different aspects of this problem, according to the particular circumstances of the marginalised communities they studied. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, there was a particular issue with children whose language, motor and cognitive skills were developing more slowly than in other districts. This phenomenon was clustered in an area of the district with a high rate of early parenthood, single parents and smoking at home. Too much television and not enough outdoor activities were also cited. Marzahn-Hellersdorf's ageing population was also an issue, with the district mayor highlighting the need to support elderly people in their own homes. Ageing populations—and the need for specialised elderly care—were also an issue in Stockholm and Amsterdam.

In Higher Blackley, Manchester—an area of poor health in a city whose health problems are already worse than the UK average—the researchers find that mental health problems are of particular concern. These were linked to a high level of insecurity because of low pay, precarious employment and long-term unemployment. Poor nutrition linked to a lack of fruit and vegetables in the diet was also an issue. In Denmark, average life expectancy is lower than other Western European countries— and is lower still among poorer communities like Trigeparken, Aarhus, where long-term unemployment is an issue. This had a stronger impact on men than on women. In Amsterdam-North, obesity in children and substance abuse or sexual health problems among young people with low levels of education are identified as areas of concern. Even in Lyon, which had good overall levels of health compared with the rest of France, there was a pronounced difference between rich and poor areas of the city.

These health problems can affect marginalised people from all backgrounds, but the Open Society Foundations studies find differences in the ways majority and minority communities were affected by particular issues. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, for instance, children of German majority background were more at risk of delayed development, but women from a Russian-German immigrant background were experiencing health problems associated with a higher unemployment rate among their peers. In Stockholm, officials had identified women, immigrants who work in working-class trades or are unemployed, young people with low education and people with disabilities as groups in need of particular help, while in Trigeparken, Aarhus, alcohol-related health problems were seen as a greater risk than in areas with more Muslim residents, who are less likely to drink.

What this suggests is that it is not possible to generalise about one particular "side" (majority or minority) needing greater attention, but rather that interventions need to be tailored to specific needs and circumstances.

6.2 | QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICES AND ACCESS TO THEM

The way in which public health services operate differs significantly from country to country, which in turn influences the way in which people access healthcare in the districts covered by the Open Society Foundations studies. Various recent reforms have also affected marginalised communities. In Britain, a taxpayer-funded, free-at-the-point-of-use National Health Service is available to all, but recent budget constraints have put an extra strain on services. There are also inequalities in the treatment people living in different areas receive—something Manchester City Council has tried to address recently with a Health and Well-being Board that allows health, care and community sector leaders to coordinate their work.

In both the Netherlands and Stockholm, which operate forms of compulsory health insurance, there has been a move towards marketisation of the system. A recent package of austerity measures in the Netherlands has increased the amount patients must pay up front for treatment (the "deductibles" on their insurance packages), and while measures to compensate low-income patients have been introduced, the Open Society Foundations study found evidence that marginalised groups (people on low incomes, people with chronic illnesses or in receipt of disability benefit) were being adversely affected by these reforms. There were accounts of people avoiding seeking medical treatment in order to save money. In response to an ageing population, the Netherlands has also introduced cost-cutting measures for elderly care.

Elsewhere, aspects of the healthcare systems were highly valued by local residents. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, the principle of "doctors of trust" in primary care—a legacy of the GDR, in which patients have the right to choose their doctor, ideally one who knows the patient and their family—was praised in the focus groups. In Trigeparken, Aarhus, the "Health Café" initiative is designed not only to provide basic check-ups for housing association residents, but also to engage people who might not normally contact the health services about damaging lifestyles or unhealthy habits. Infrastructure matters, too: in Lyon, the city hospitals were easily accessible, whereas poor transport links in Botkyrka, Stockholm, made it difficult for residents to reach the local health and welfare centre.

6.3 | WHAT PATIENTS WANT

The health problems that disproportionately afflict marginalised communities are not easily treatable, since they are closely linked to structural and environmental factors. This fact was not lost on focus group participants in Higher Blackley, Manchester, who spoke of the connection between unemployment and depression, or that worries about making ends meet were a source of chronic anxiety. Participants also felt that General Practitioners (GP – general medical doctor) were sometimes unwilling to recognise the specific difficulties faced by marginalised communities: when the discussion turned to healthy eating, some participants said the rising cost of living had made fresh fruit and vegetables unaffordable, but that patients were simply being told by doctors, "you should be eating more healthily". On the other hand, some health professionals in Manchester interviewed by the Open Society Foundations researchers felt that patients needed to engage more: one GP claimed that patients were asking to be prescribed statins (drugs that lower cholesterol in the blood), simply so they could carry on eating unhealthily.

This exchange underlines how participation works both ways. Patients in focus groups in several cities stressed the importance of attentive doctors who were interested in their lives beyond fixing any immediate health problem. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, for example, interviewees defined a "good" doctor as one who spends much of the appointment asking about a patient's family, before they turn their attention to any specific ailment. Alongside this sit a range of concerns about access to health services: participants in several cases wanted shorter waiting times, while in Lyon interviewees said they would like doctors and medical staff in hospitals to spend more time with patients during appointments. Young people interviewed in Amsterdam were aware of the problems caused by excessive alcohol consumption, but they also emphasised that drinking socially at the end of the week was an important way to unwind: "we want to toast", as one interviewee put it.

Yet as with the issue of healthy eating in Higher Blackley, Manchester, there is a need for patients to be engaged with their own treatment. This may require better communication and outreach efforts by health professionals—the example of "Health Cafés" in Trigeparken, Aarhus, mentioned in the previous section is one example of how this could be done. Family and social contacts were also mentioned as important networks of support, particularly when it comes to mental health and caring for the elderly. "Choice" is often seen as a desired goal of modern healthcare reforms, but the experiences of patients in Marzahn-Hellersdorf show how choices can exclude people on low incomes: focus group participants said they felt better informed about treatment options thanks to media coverage, but that the rising costs of medicines meant that they were often only prescribed the cheapest, since their health insurance did not cover anything more expensive. Older participants contrasted the complex, bureaucratic current system with the cost-free healthcare system of the GDR.

Furthermore, social networks should not be seen as a replacement for support from the health system. In the Netherlands, care for the elderly is being "deinstitutionalised"—patients are being moved from nursing homes into private homes. While this was welcomed, participants also expressed fears about how specialist care could be provided; this was of particular concern against a backdrop of austerity measures and cuts to the healthcare budget.

In England, where budget cuts are also stretching resources in the health service more thinly, some focus group participants from Higher Blackley blamed this on the presence of immigrants. One GP explained how at busy times in their particular surgery, this could lead to hostility from members of the majority population. The fact that participants were keen to identify immigrants as the reason for pressure on the health service, rather than budget cuts, may be linked to widespread anti-immigrant media coverage in the United Kingdom.

However, it is important to stress that anti-immigrant views are often challenged by peers. A focus group in Botkyrka, Stockholm, discussed the provision of free health and dental care for refugees. When several people, who identified themselves as members of the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats party, expressed their opposition to this policy it was strongly challenged by other participants, one stressing the need to help all people in acute need of care. This suggests that when local tensions arise over immigration and access to public services, they are not set in stone and can be defused if dealt with sensitively.

6.4 | KEY POINTS

- People who live in economically deprived areas face a greater risk of a range of health problems. Particular attention needs to be paid to certain groups, such as children of single-parent families or the elderly.

- Individuals on low or insecure incomes are particularly disadvantaged by reforms to health systems that require patients to pay more for their treatment up front.

- People place a high value on attentive doctors who know them well.

- Efforts to promote healthy lifestyles must recognise the specific pressures marginalised communities come under, such as rising costs of fresh fruit and vegetables. Professionals need to find ways to contact and reach out to vulnerable individuals who might not seek treatment themselves.

- Tensions may arise over immigration and access to health services, and they can be exacerbated by budget cuts, but there is a range of opinion within communities.

BEST PRACTICE: THE HEALTH CAFÉ IN TRIGEPARKEN, AARHUS

In an attempt to improve the health of residents, housing associations in five Aarhus areas have cooperated with the municipality to establish the "Health Café", a mobile health service for residents, which is usually attended by a nurse and an assistant. The Health Café visits each neighbourhood approximately once a week (in Trigeparken it is slightly less because of a limited demand) to offer residents a basic health check, for example blood pressure, BMI, blood sugar, etc., and to discuss the residents' health-related concerns.

Health is here understood both as physical and mental health, as well as habits affecting health, for example eating, drinking, smoking, drug use, etc. The purpose is thus not only to check the physical condition of people, but also to reach out to those who would otherwise not deal adequately with their health-related issues, and to encourage residents to change their lifestyle and unhealthy habits, for instance through events and activities that focus on various aspects of health. This includes talks by health professionals or events focusing on healthy food habits.

7

SECURITY AND POLICING

7.1 | ACTUAL CRIME LEVELS

As will become apparent in this chapter, the statistical occurrence of crime and people's perception of crime in the area where they live are two very different things. This first section will focus on the former, and sketch out the situation in the six countries under consideration.

Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Berlin has a very low crime rate in comparison with other districts. A stakeholder who worked for the police told the Open Society Foundations researchers that there were no "spaces of fear" in the district, which has wide, well-lit and clean streets—but acknowledged there were "unpleasant" individuals associated with certain forms of behaviour such as drinking alcohol excessively in public. Another interviewee identified places where drug dealing and consumption took place—and while youth violence is decreasing overall, fights in public were linked to the disappearance of youth centres. The district has a history of violent right-wing extremism, but incidents are relatively infrequent (the police stakeholder estimated two a year).

While deprived areas are often associated in the popular imagination with higher crime rates, this is not inevitable. Amsterdam-North has relatively higher levels of crime than other areas, with a recent increase in burglaries and a higher rate of youth crime. In Denmark, where crime has been falling overall, there are higher levels of crime on council estates in general. Yet crime in Trigeparken itself has fallen significantly in recent years. A major issue is unpleasant but non-criminal behaviour: groups of youths menacing or shouting at passers-by; sleeping alcoholics and drug addicts; vandalised property and burned-out car tyres; used syringes in basement shafts. These phenomena are similar to what in the United Kingdom is termed "anti-social behaviour", an issue of particular concern in Manchester, where overall crime rates have fallen in recent years. In France, this type of behaviour is referred to as "*incivilités*"—and in Lyon this was again a salient issue, even though crime in France has fallen since 2000 and has remained static or even decreased locally in the last few years.

However, as will become apparent in the next section, perceptions of crime and general feelings of safety do not necessarily relate to the statistical picture. The authors of the Stockholm study draw attention to a broader trend within Western societies identified by sociologists, characterised by people's increasing individualisation, a higher attentiveness to risk, as well as the effects of cultural diversity brought about by globalisation and migration.

7.2 | FEAR OF CRIME AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE POLICE

Overall perceptions of safety differed greatly between focus groups in the six different cities. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, participants were largely unhappy about security in the area, while others complained that they had little contact with police. They felt that security was lower in their district compared to others nearby—a perception that clashes with the statistics referred to above. Some of the fears were linked to specific places: older men identified trams as a space of fear, because they are automated and rely on CCTV for security. These were contrasted unfavourably with buses, where there is a driver who can stop the bus if trouble breaks out. Graffiti and vandalism were also mentioned as reasons for feeling unsafe.

Other fears were more generalised. Old and young participants spoke of a lack of respect among young people. Some participants linked a feeling of insecurity to the perceived increasing diversity of the area and hearing different languages spoken in public. Certain types of crime were linked to certain ethnic minorities: cigarette smuggling with the Vietnamese; aggression and violence with Russian-Germans. Despite the historic presence of violent neo-Nazi groups in the area, none of the participants appeared to see this as a threat to their own safety.

Others pointed to the widening gap between rich and poor as a reason for crime and suggested that some crimes were a result of marginalised people venting their frustration, while among the older generation the fear of crime appeared to be tied up with the traumatic experience of Reunification: one participant mentioned "economic crimes" committed by the former West Germany against "Ossis" (former citizens of the GDR)—a sense that the area had been deliberately marginalised.

A police stakeholder interviewed by the Open Society Foundations researchers also drew attention to the history of Reunification: he suggested that some fears among the older generation were the result of a "block warden" mentality and excessive social control. Under the GDR, where there was no reporting of crime in the media, Marzahn-Hellersdorf was a place where many police officers and STASI employees were settled; older focus group participants felt that whereas police were respected during that era, these days they were treated as "second class citizens". Cuts to the policing budget had led to longer response times and a less visible police presence, said the participants.

Many of the above concerns were shared by participants in other cities. Participants in Stockholm identified parks and poorly lit pathways between neighbourhoods as places where they felt unsafe. Older women said they felt unsafe waiting for the bus at night, while younger men worried about physical violence. In Lyon, participants generally felt very safe in the city, although older women reported not feeling safe at night

and that they would stay indoors. Participants expressed concerns about anti-social behaviour—as they did in Manchester, Aarhus and Amsterdam, too. A connection between ethnic or cultural diversity and fear of crime was made by participants in Stockholm. They pointed to excessive media coverage of gang rapes (presumably committed by people from ethnic minorities) and "honour killings" as having encouraged majority Swedes to fear minorities. Participants suggested that fears would decrease the more people from different cultures got to know one another—although others suggested that it was up to people from ethnic minorities to learn "Swedish" customs, most important of all the language, to achieve this. It was also suggested that if people from immigrant backgrounds felt safer they would be more confident about interaction with majority Swedes.

What differed most strikingly between the cities, however, were attitudes to the police and to official efforts to boost community safety. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, no doubt because of the area's history as a place where state security officials were housed during the GDR days, there was a high level of sympathy for the police—and in some cases a wish that they could exercise their powers more freely. By contrast, in Amsterdam-North, the focus groups revealed an attitude that residents should sort out their own problems and that reporting incidents to the police would make one a "traitor". This hostility was most strikingly present in the Higher Blackley, Manchester, focus groups, where a profound cultural divide between police and the community appeared to reach back over several generations. As in the case of Amsterdam, there was an attitude that reporting incidents to the police made one a "grasser", and that it was better to rely on networks of friends or relatives to resolve disputes.

On the other hand, there was also a clear desire for responsive, fair treatment from police officers—something that many participants felt was lacking. They expressed the view that the police were slower to investigate reports of crime in Higher Blackley, and treated residents more brutally, than they would do in wealthier areas of the city. Two specific incidents appeared to have had a lasting effect on attitudes towards the police: one was the murder of a local young white man in 2006 after an altercation with a group of Asian youths. Participants felt that the police's failure to bring charges against anyone was linked to race—that they were being soft on men from an ethnic minority background. The other incident was of a man shot dead by police while sitting in his car. No firearms were found on him, yet the public prosecution department decided not to charge the officer involved. The Open Society Foundations researchers find evidence to suggest that accounts of these two incidents had spread by word of mouth throughout the community and had entrenched hostility towards the police.

7.3 | HOW TO RECONCILE THE TWO

What the research outlined above suggests is that reducing the instance of crime may not automatically make people feel safer in their own neighbourhoods. There is a class element at play, too, where resentment against the police can build if people feel they are being treated unfairly because of their socio-economic status.

Yet successful initiatives are possible, as the Open Society Foundations research indicates. In Denmark, where crime has fallen significantly across the country, studies indicate that people feel safer when they are given reason to believe that something is being done about crime. This includes more visible policing and effective communication between officials and the public; or improvements to physical aspects of the neighbourhood, such as street lighting or encouraging people to go out at night. More mixing between different ethnic groups and local participation in community security—volunteer patrols, for example—help too. This was all reflected in the Trigeparken focus groups, with both residents and stakeholders stressing the importance of good stories about the district. Crime may have fallen statistically, but self-image seemed to matter as much if not more.

In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, stakeholders were keen to find new ways to make people feel good about their neighbourhood beyond increasing police presence. The Open Society Foundations researchers cite a study by the Max Planck Institute which suggests that the fear of crime is self-reinforcing: people don't go out at night because they don't feel safe, which in turn empties the streets, which in turn makes the streets look unsafe. This issue particularly affects older people, who are most at risk of isolation. An initiative called "breaking up loneliness", run by a local community centre and financed by a public housing company, aims to solve this by involving senior citizens aged 65–80 in organising "thematic breakfasts" where topics of interest for older people are discussed. Local connections are important: in France, the Ville-Vie-Vacances project, set up after the riots of 1981, works to engage young people. It has sometimes been criticised for sending youths away on trips rather than engaging them at home, but the Open Society Foundations researchers in Lyon find praise for the "*passeurs d'images*" initiative, which gets young people to take photos and make films in their local area.

The key to a good relationship between the community and the police seems to be an approach to policing that responds to local concerns and involves residents in keeping their own neighbourhoods safe. In that respect, the solidarity between residents of Higher Blackley, Manchester, or Amsterdam-North—both places where there is a culture of suspicion and hostility towards the police—does not have to be seen as a disadvantage. In Stockholm, for instance, the municipality organises local volunteers for neighbourhood watch and night watch patrols, while a professional "safety coordinator" acts as an intermediary between police, social services and the emergency service. Similar efforts in Manchester have not yet been successful at

engaging the community in this way, perhaps because they are not responsive enough to the particular needs of residents. Manchester's Neighbourhood Policing strategy identifies crime hotspots and policing priorities in consultation with local people, but efforts to engage the community through public meetings have been criticised because they only make contact with the kind of people already willing to turn up to public meetings—those whose hostility to police runs deep are unlikely to attend.

A new strategy, for developing "key individual networks" of people who are interested in making their local area safer, may have more potential. While civilian street patrols have worked well in Trigeparken, Aarhus, and Botkyrka, Stockholm, the "street coaches" initiative in Amsterdam-North has sparked a negative reaction from local people. While the street coaches are meant to intervene between groups of young people before more serious trouble breaks out, focus group participants expressed the view that they contributed to the social nuisance rather than solved it—and even provoked young people into behaving badly so that they could call the police. A new youth centre was also regarded as a failure, because it brought young people from several districts together in one building; young focus group participants said they would prefer to remain in their own neighbourhood. The above accounts emphasise the importance of responding to local conditions, but also suggest that responses will be less successful when residents feel they are imposed "from above".

Finally, particular attention needs to be paid to crimes perceived to have a racist motive, or crimes that have been associated with a particular ethnic group, and the impact they have on wider feelings of community security. As the murders in Higher Blackley, Manchester, show, a failure to deal quickly and efficiently with complaints allows space for resentment to grow. This also seemed to be a risk in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, where police were unwilling to intervene in the illegal cigarette trade (a crime associated with the Vietnamese community), because they believed it was a matter for customs officials and not the local police. However, the interviews with residents of Stockholm suggested that even when their perception of crime was being shaped by media coverage and fear of the unknown, increased interaction between communities could defuse tension.

7.4 | KEY POINTS

- There is a mismatch between statistical levels of crime and how safe people feel within their own neighbourhoods. Both need attention.

- There is a need for police forces to communicate effectively and reflect local concerns in setting their priorities. However, in some neighbourhoods, such as Higher Blackley in Manchester, there has been a profound breakdown in trust between the police and the people they are supposed to serve.

- When policing is well integrated in the community, it complements volunteer initiatives that engage local people in patrolling their own neighbourhoods.

- Poor police responses to crimes can inflame tensions, particularly when it is believed there is racist motivation to the crime or when the perpetrators and victims are of different ethnic groups.

BEST PRACTICE: THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH PROGRAMME IN BOTKYRKA, STOCKHOLM

The Botkyrka municipality supports a range of residents' own safety initiatives and employs a safety coordinator who liaises with the municipality, the police and the emergency services. If a resident is a victim of a crime, the municipality offers a victims' helpline *(brottsofferjour)*, through which victims can get help from psychologists, protected accommodation *(skyddat boende)* or urgent financial support. Assistance is available for contacts with the authorities and information on the rights to compensation or redress.

The municipality offers help with neighbourhood support in cases of burglary, a support centre for young victims (12–20 years) and fills the function as a broker *(medlare)* between victim and perpetrator. It is a method, whereby an intervention *(medling)* is arranged for victim and perpetrator to meet, in order to ease the process for a crime victim.

Furthermore, the municipality organises neighbourhood watches, in which volunteers walk through neighbourhoods or ride the neighbourhood watch car (financed by the municipality), and the night walkers *(Nattvandrarna)*, adults who are out on the streets during the evenings at weekends to act as social support and prevent crime and drug abuse. There is also an anti-bullying and anti-harassment programme in schools. Focus group participants who were engaged in the neighbourhood watch programme felt that it helped bring people together and was generally viewed very positively.

8

PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

8.1 | CONCEPTS OF CITIZENSHIP

As researchers for the Open Society Foundations study in Aarhus point out, increasing participation among marginalised white working class communities facilitates political equality and their effective autonomy. Through participation, people can protect their own rights and interests—and it may also promote self-esteem and an inclusive civic identity.

Citizenship differs from country to country, so before moving on to a discussion of participation, below are some important features highlighted by the Open Society Foundations researchers.

8.1.1 | ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

As a legal concept, citizenship defines the rights and obligations of citizens towards the state. This balance can vary, and in certain cases there has been a shift in recent years. In the Netherlands, for instance, the Social Support Act of 2007 indicated a move away from the traditional welfare state model, in which citizens had an entitlement to benefits, to one that is sometimes referred to as the "big society", which places a greater emphasis on self-sufficiency and a need for individuals to "take ownership" of the challenges in their lives. At a local level, there is a greater emphasis on civic responsibility, with individuals being encouraged to volunteer more in their communities. This is a trend to a greater or lesser degree in many Western European democracies, but it is particularly strong in the United Kingdom, where the current government's reform of the welfare state has also been justified with reference to the idea of the Big Society. There is also an older concept of active citizenship—rooted in the social movements that grew among communities from the 19th century onwards—such as the labour movement, or movements for democracy or women's rights.

8.1.2 | LEGAL VS. CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

Full legal and political rights are generally linked to nationality, although even then there may be some exceptions—under-18s and people under tutorship or guardianship in France, for instance. The process by which foreign nationals and others born abroad can attain citizenship varies from country to country, but is generally linked to parents' nationality, length of time spent in the country, or the nationality of a spouse. In Sweden, where policy is guided by the principle that statelessness should be avoided, stateless people are often granted Swedish nationality.

But citizenship—who "belongs" to a nation-state—also has a cultural dimension. The definition of a migrant background does not elide neatly with citizenship; some "migrants" may have been granted nationality, while others may not. In the case

of Germany, ethnic Germans who were displaced from Eastern Europe after 1937 and their descendants have German citizenship, share the same ethnic origins as the "majority" population, yet are still regarded as a migrant group in the popular imagination.

In light of this, the formal process of attaining citizenship can also be viewed as a tool for integration. There may be requirements to learn the language, pass a "citizenship test" (as in the United Kingdom), or citizenship may only be granted if the applicant has behaved well during their stay in the country (as in Sweden, for instance).

8.1.3 | THE EUROPEAN UNION

The strongest link between citizenship and democratic participation is arguably through the voting process. In the past this has been very strongly linked to nationality, but this link has been weakened somewhat in countries that are part of the European Union, particularly since the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. Citizens from other European Union states resident in a particular EU country have the right to vote in local and European elections. EU citizens also benefit from agreements on freedom of movement, which allow them to travel, live, work and access public services in other EU countries.

8.2 | PARTICIPATION

The engagement of communities and individuals with the political process varies considerably from city to city. This is shaped both by national patterns and specific initiatives available (or not) at a local level. In the United Kingdom, for example, there has been a long-term decline in turnout at both national and local elections. This is something that has particularly affected white working-class communities, who feel a disconnect from a professionalised political class whom they view as socially liberal "do-gooders" whose concerns do not reflect theirs. Higher Blackley, Manchester, fits this pattern. A similar lack of trust in national politicians and in institutions is present in the Netherlands, with Amsterdam-North showing higher than average levels of disaffection. France and Sweden have also seen growing distrust of politicians in the last decade, but there seemed to be a pronounced difference between these national pictures and seemingly high levels of participation in local neighbourhood initiatives. Indeed, in Sweden, focus group interviewees expressed pride in doing volunteer work and contributing to Swedish democracy in the footsteps of the old 19th-century social movements.

In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, older focus group participants expressed resentment at the way in which they believed citizens of the former GDR had been shut out of the process of drawing up a new constitution after unification, but this did not appear

to have made them switch off from politics altogether. Participation in Denmark appeared to be much higher than anywhere else, something the Open Society Foundations researchers explain with reference to the country's tradition of consensual decision-making and egalitarian political culture.

At a local level, certain features crop up across the cities in the Open Society Foundations studies that seem crucial to engaging communities. Tenants' and residents' groups—whether the French "*Conseils de quartier*" (groups of 15–20 locals who meet regularly) in Lyon, or the citizens' initiative to revamp a high street in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin—have two important functions. One is to engage local people in the upkeep and organisation of their neighbourhood, such as over issues like rubbish collection, local road safety, or communal gardening. The other is that it brings people together and helps them establish social networks among their neighbours, to build friendships and share information.

In Trigeparken, Aarhus, where tenants are given a relatively high degree of democratic control over decisions about their homes—examples given were choices of television and internet provider; whether or not to allow cats in apartments—one focus group interviewee stressed how having informal contacts (meeting people in the street on the way to the shops, knowing the people he passed) was crucial to this kind of decision-making. Interviewees also noted that people from minority backgrounds had recently begun to participate in the tenants' groups, too—suggesting a potential role these groups can play in integration. Even in Higher Blackley, Manchester, where there was widespread disengagement, tenants' and residents' associations were a key community network, although older focus group participants complained that they had difficulty in getting younger individuals to join.

Official efforts to inform or consult with local people were also important. These ranged from citizen consultation hours in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, where residents could meet the district mayor and council officials to ask questions and raise concerns, to a professional "democracy developer" in Botkyrka, Stockholm, whose job it was to advise the municipality on ways it could connect with "forgotten" individuals from the majority Swedish community. A citizens' proposal initiative allowed individuals to submit plans for local projects to the municipality, which was obliged to consider (but not necessarily to approve) them.

However, focus group interviewees also identified areas of weakness, some of them serious. In Lyon, the interviewees complained that the French political and administrative system is too complex and has too many layers. This system, it was felt, led to officials only looking after "his or her own personal interest"—one interviewee gave the example of a pavement divided into two parallel parts, each managed by a different administration. In Amsterdam-North, some focus group participants felt that their efforts to engage with the submunicipality (by writing letters or emails, for example) had come to nothing because officials were not listening or did not care.

This sense of officials not listening was also present in southern Botkyrka, Stockholm, where some interviewees suggested that the municipality's "citizen dialogue forums" were more of a monologue where politicians informed the community of decisions they had already taken. There was also a desire for more places where people of all faiths and ethnicities could meet without having to spend money—a concern that particularly affects low-income communities. In Berlin, too, interviewees felt that "participation" in society was increasingly becoming defined by consumption— something they were excluded from because they were poorer. Cuts to public spending were raised as concerns in the Open Society Foundations reports on Berlin, Aarhus and Amsterdam.

Finally, it should be noted that even where there is a high level of disaffection with the political process and distrust of institutions, people still expressed a desire to have a say in managing their surroundings. In Higher Blackley, Manchester, there was evidence of a profound disconnect between the white working-class community and what they perceived as the socially liberal "do-gooders" in official positions who did not share their values. At the same time, focus group interviewees said they wanted more of a say in how resources were deployed: "that's our money", as one participant put it.

8.3 | EXPRESSIONS OF DISCONTENT

The most obvious expression of political discontent—and the one that has generated much media coverage in recent years—is when people vote for a populist or far-right party. These parties range from profoundly racist groups with neo-Nazi origins, such as Britain's BNP or the Sweden Democrats, to anti-immigration populists such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP) or the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party. Patterns of support for these parties are varied and complex, but the Open Society Foundations research indicates how some of the challenges outlined above relate to support for right-wing populism.

Focus group interviewees in certain of the Open Society Foundations studies suggested that sympathy for the populist right is closely linked to a feeling of powerlessness and the sense that mainstream politicians break their promises. In this context, voters may see immigration or cultural diversity as yet another sign that they do not have control over the political process. In Amsterdam-North, interviewees who expressed support for the anti-immigration PVV (a right-wing party led by Geert Wilders) linked the increasingly multicultural nature of the Netherlands—"all these people with double passports", as one put it—with a feeling that they were unable to influence politics at all. Amsterdam-North registers relatively high levels of support for the PVV, with the party having received 30 percent of the vote in one district in 2010. In France, the far-right Front National (FN) has made significant electoral gains in the last

decade, but its support is less strong in urban areas like Lyon's 8th arrondissement than in small towns and semi-rural areas well outside the big cities. Nevertheless, the Open Society Foundations researchers find a high level of dissatisfaction among focus group participants with the country's national political class—as well as evidence from newspaper reports to suggest that people sympathised with the FN. This translated into a sharp increase in the FN vote between the 2008 and 2014 municipal elections although figures for Lyon remain under the national average.

However, the study of Higher Blackley, Manchester, suggests it would be a mistake to see support for these parties as mere "protest votes", responding to national political trends. One party—the Labour Party—dominates local politics across Manchester. This has traditionally been the party voted for by working-class communities in places like Higher Blackley, but as one interviewee suggested, the roots of its support might have decayed. A well-known local figure, a former pub landlord, has stood as a candidate for the BNP in several elections, receiving up to 15 percent of the vote. One strategy the BNP has pursued is to identify white working-class communities where there is a high level of political disaffection and then find an ethnically charged crime to exploit. The party did so in Higher Blackley with the 2006 murder of David Lees (discussed in chapter 7 Security and policing). Although the Lees family rejected the BNP's overtures, focus group participants commented that at least the BNP were out there speaking to people, and that local councillors had not been so attentive. The BNP's vote has declined since the party collapsed in 2010, but this does not mean the reasons behind its rise have disappeared. It appealed to people's sense of powerlessness, their loss of faith in local politicians and a feeling among marginalised white working class communities (discussed in earlier chapters) that if you voice your fears about immigration or cultural diversity you will be dismissed by a "do-gooder" elite as racist.

However, while votes for populist or far-right parties are easy to track, high rates of abstention (voter turnouts were notably low in Manchester, Lyon and Amsterdam) deserve as much attention. The Open Society Foundations researchers in Amsterdam identify three forms of political discontent among their focus group participants: the "angry"—people who were most likely to vote for the PVV or other right-wing populists, responding to national issues such as immigration; the "disappointed"—people who had tried to engage by contacting local officials and felt that they weren't being listened to; and the "indifferent"—people who thought there was no point in trying to change anything. Even here, however, participants still expressed a desire to be engaged, but they resented the closure of facilities and had the impression that other nearby areas received more support than their own.

Such a background of disaffection needs to be taken into account when planning efforts to encourage participation. If handled badly, and if the sensitivities around ethnic diversity are not taken into account, resentments can erupt into violence, as two cautionary tales from the Open Society Foundations research indicate. The first is in

Amsterdam-North, where in 2013 the submunicipality announced it would be closing a popular children's playground and community centre due to budget cuts. Residents felt that the project played an important role in community cohesion and preventing misbehaviour by youths. In line with the recent shift towards "active citizenship" (see the opening section of this chapter), the submunicipality organised a consultation meeting with residents on the future of the playground. At this meeting, officials from the submunicipality proposed that a social enterprise would be set up and that residents should draft a project plan—yet only three weeks later, the submunicipality rented out the centre to a commercial tenant, a Ghanaian church community. Enraged residents burned down the building in protest. Although officials later apologised and acknowledged a lack of communication between different departments in the submunicipality, this also shows how wider factors—the national government's austerity policies and the marketisation of public goods; a longer-term feeling among marginalised individuals that officials don't listen to them; a perception that other communities get preferential treatment—can combine in a toxic mix at the local level.

The second example is from Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, where the regional authority (the *Land*) decided to place a home for asylum seekers in the district. The district council held public meetings to discuss plans, but it was not made clear that the decision to set up the home had already been taken by a higher authority. What is more, because the district had only been informed at short notice, the meetings were held only a month before the home was due to open. Many residents thought they were being consulted, only to find out that they had no say in the matter. Since the meeting was public, anybody could attend, and a number of activists from the neo-Nazi NPD party hijacked the discussion. NPD members also set up a "citizens' initiative", which attracted a number of local people opposed to the home. As a result, rival groups of far-right and anti-fascist protesters clashed violently on several occasions, generating media coverage that further reinforced negative stereotypes of Marzahn-Hellersdorf.

8.4 | KEY POINTS

- There has been a recent shift in many European countries towards a concept of "active citizenship", where citizens have less of an entitlement to state benefits and are expected to participate more in civic projects. But an older version of this exists among working-class communities, in institutions like the labour movement or voluntary associations.

- Confidence in public institutions and local participation ranged greatly—from Manchester, where there were high levels of disaffection with politics at both national and local level, to Aarhus, where residents had a high degree of democratic control over decisions about their neighbourhood.

- Political discontent can be expressed in votes for anti-immigrant populist parties, but just as significant are high levels of abstention. Yet people are still keen to take part in decision-making processes, particularly at a local level. Withdrawal should not be seen as apathy, but frustration at the sense of being ignored.

- Efforts by local authorities to consult with citizens and boost participation are welcome, but they need to be handled sensitively, particularly in the context of budget cuts and tensions over ethnic and cultural diversity.

BEST PRACTICE: NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCILS IN LYON

In Lyon, it is common for local authorities to hold public consultations on various subjects. Usually these events are organised by the local Mayorship's office *(Mairie du 8ᵉ arrondissement)*. They typically bring together around 20–40 participants. As well as these official consultations, the so-called neighbourhood councils *(Conseils de quartier)* bring together local residents on a regular basis. They play an important role at the micro-level, especially in the city of Lyon where there are 34 such councils. They are a key institution for the transfer of information between residents, and they help to create and maintain social networks within the various areas.

Meetings typically bring together 10–25 people, to discuss topics ranging from bicycle lanes to green spaces, dustbin collection, road safety at the local level, parking space, cultural events, etc. These councils can be used as sounding boards for projects organised by local authorities. Conversely, citizens can use them in order to discuss and promote ideas of their own. Throughout Lyon, it is estimated that around 2,500 inhabitants participate in these councils, on a more or less regular basis.

9

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

9.1 | REPRESENTATION

Recent years have seen the growth of a particular negative media image of white working-class people in several countries covered by the Open Society Foundations study. The trend is most pronounced in the United Kingdom, where the rise of the "chav" stereotype in newspaper coverage and television documentaries has been much commented on. This is analogous to the older US concept of "white trash", a feckless underclass that is not merely poor but unsocialised, lazy and sometimes violent. While Britain leads the field in this respect, similar portrayals have arisen in Sweden, where "white trash" is now a topic of frequent discussion in mass media; in the Netherlands, where "aso-tv" ("anti-sociables television") denotes a particular style of reality television that focuses on "problem families" and conflicts among low-income majority Dutch; and in Germany, where similar programmes were referred to by one participant in the Open Society Foundations study as "Harz IV television", a reference to the welfare system on which many poorer German citizens rely.

The Open Society Foundations researchers in the Manchester study argue that this is not merely a question of accuracy, but a function of an unequal society, where working-class people are largely excluded from jobs in the media and where stereotypes strengthen the perception of poor people having deserved their own poverty. This in itself, the researchers argue, impacts on public policy because decisions are made based on the idea that people's circumstances are the result of their own poor choices (of diet, or financial management, for example).

Focus group interviews suggest that people in working-class communities targeted by such stereotypes are well aware of the imbalance. In Higher Blackley, Manchester, for example, participants complained of journalists being "all born with a silver spoon in their mouth", and that working-class people have little opportunity to correct damaging stereotypes of themselves. In Amsterdam, the researchers find that participants objected to "biased broadcasting", but that it also contributed to their self-image of being rebellious and anti-establishment.

Media coverage can target specific local areas, too. Among older focus group participants in Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, there was a keen awareness of the way the district's image had been completely reversed after unification. Under the GDR, it was treated as a model community—a symbol of "really existing socialism" where the radical modernist architecture was not only desirable but contributed to solidarity between residents. But from the 1990s onwards, those very elements were cast as signs of decay: crumbling grey concrete housing blocks, inhabited by violent racists and welfare scroungers. A popular television comedian even has a persona, "Cindy from Marzahn", that plays to the stereotype of an underclass. Older focus group participants felt that this was part of a deliberate attempt by the former West German media and politicians to exclude former citizens of the GDR—an issue discussed

in previous chapters—while younger interviewees appeared less likely to view the negative image of the district as unfair.

In Denmark, there is a general image of poor housing estates as problem areas, which the Open Society Foundations researchers suggest was an effect of the government's "ghetto list" (discussed in chapter 1 Introduction). Local media coverage of Trigeparken, Aarhus, was felt to be more nuanced—stories about crime and social problems were balanced by reports that tried to show how Trigeparken was bucking the trend—"it's going well in Trigeparken" being the message—but participants said that since the district receives relatively little media coverage, rumour and prejudice were far more important in reinforcing outsiders' perceptions of the area.

A lack of coverage can also breed resentment. A stakeholder in southern Botkyrka told researchers that majority Swedes there were not happy that most media coverage tended to focus on the ethnically diverse north of the borough—as part of a wider pattern of Swedish media linking social problems (for example, gang violence) with ethnic minorities. They felt that they were living in a "media shadow", and that the negative image of the northern part of the district reflected badly on them; some participants even said they were ashamed to say they were from Botkyrka when invited to social events outside the district. This also exacerbated hostility towards people of other cultures. In Lyon's 8th arrondissement, participants felt that the district was hardly ever in the news, and that this should be corrected, although there was no sense that their community suffered from negative stereotyping.

9.2 | COMMUNICATION FROM LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities can communicate information to their citizens through a range of mass media outlets; or they can use online social media; or they can contact residents directly. In France, where there is a lower overall level of newspaper readership—and where the mass media is increasingly concentrated in Paris—officials make regular use of leaflets sent directly to residents or placed in letterboxes. Focus group interviewees felt, however, that while there was plentiful information on major construction developments, communication on smaller projects such as sports or cultural activities was lacking. The council in Higher Blackley, Manchester, was attempting to make innovative use of social media to communicate with citizens, having piloted dedicated Twitter accounts for each council ward.

In Trigeparken, Aarhus, and Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, the local authorities had been making significant efforts to reverse the negative image of their respective districts. In Trigeparken, this formed part of the revitalisation plans discussed in chapter 5 Housing. Making the area a more desirable place to live would attract more stable tenants, which would in turn reduce pressures on the housing budget. Yet there

may be limits to this approach, since the high turnover of tenants is also linked to high rents and the area's distance from the city centre. In Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Berlin, stakeholders spoke of the need to communicate across a range of media (newspapers, television, radio), since different sections of the population favoured different forms of media.

9.3 | LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

Inequalities in the media industry can increase the sense of marginalisation among low-income communities. A reporter for the *Manchester Evening News*, interviewed by the Open Society Foundations researchers, noted that her colleagues were drawn almost exclusively from middle-class backgrounds, and that middle-class readers were much more effective at getting their stories into the paper. They were much keener to phone the office and complain, for example. The declining fortunes of traditional media was also mentioned as a possible barrier to inclusion, since this has led to a fall in the number of reporters who know and can connect with the communities they report on. In southern Botkyrka, Stockholm, focus group participants also complained that journalists wrote about the area despite not living there, or in some cases having never even visited. One positive suggestion from the Lyon focus groups was that new journalists could learn their trade by working in the relatively under-covered 8th arrondissement.

Where traditional media coverage of particular areas has been lacking, use of the internet has grown to fill the gap. In Amsterdam-North, where most residents have internet access, Facebook is used for grassroots initiatives (for example, to distribute information about a local community centre). The Open Society Foundations researchers in Stockholm, however, warn that while Facebook and other social media are important ways for marginalised people to establish a voice for themselves, they can also been used to spread hate speech and establish boundaries about who belongs to a community and who does not. In Trigeparken, Aarhus, the housing revitalisation plan provided funds to set up an alternative media channel, the 8380. dk website. Maintained by social workers and local residents, the site aims to publish positively framed stories about Trigeparken. Residents act as reporters and some have received training, but so far its reach has been limited and only a few interviewees said they used the site regularly.

This also points to the limits of a focus on the tone of media coverage itself. Stakeholders in Berlin were aware of this: while the council has made persistent efforts to improve coverage of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, in order to attract property investors and business owners, the proposed Gardens of the World attraction was regarded as an important way to get people to visit the district who had never been there before—

and that this "come and see for yourself" approach would help correct negative perceptions.

9.4 | KEY POINTS

- A negative media stereotype of white working-class people as feckless, lazy scroungers has grown up in recent years in many Western European countries. This is a product of inequality and can in turn have a distorting effect on policy decisions.

- Negative media coverage contributes to a negative image of neighbourhoods, which deters business investment and professionals from working in those areas. Countering such perceptions is an important part of any regeneration programme.

- If people are excluded from participating in mass media on the grounds of socio-economic status, local efforts can help build inclusion either through training or by supporting their own efforts to spread information and discuss issues on social media such as Facebook.

BEST PRACTICE: THE OPERA IN FLORADORP, AMSTERDAM

In June 2012, an opera was staged in the Floradorp neighbourhood. Leading stars in the opera were residents of the neighbourhood, who sang Dutch-language adaptations of world-famous operatic works. The opera was a civic initiative of a Floradorp resident and documentary maker, René van 't Erve. The initiative was supported by a grant from the Housing Corporation and the submunicipality, and through crowd-funding, inter alia from upwardly mobile ex-residents and the aid of many volunteers. An audience of 2,400 watched the performance. The opera was generally evaluated as being very successful and contributing to social cohesion in the neighbourhood—and its coverage in the local media contrasted sharply with previous negative portrayals of the area as a place of riots and misbehaviour.

10

CONCLUSION

10.1 | KEY OVERALL POINTS

The Open Society Foundations research should counter many of the negative stereotypes of white working-class communities and point to ways for policymakers to support the most vulnerable and help promote integration in cities that are becoming ever more diverse. One striking feature of the research is how often participants display strong local identities and positive views of life in their communities, despite the high unemployment, low income, poor education and skills levels and low levels of civic engagement which define marginalised neighbourhoods. In addition to positive identities and attitudes, the research also reveals community strengths that include a strong work ethic, traditions of mutual support and self-help, volunteering and positive attitudes towards diversity. For policymakers, these strengths can be important as the foundation for further initiatives aimed at tackling marginalisation.

Immigration evoked differing reactions from marginalised white working class communities. The areas chosen for study had fewer immigrants than other marginalised communities, but residents frequently saw immigration as another change to contend with, like the loss of jobs in traditional industries or physical changes to the neighbourhood. Many saw immigration as a threat to the sense of community and national identity. Language, dress, behaviour and the perceived unwillingness of immigrants to associate with the wider community were cited as barriers to communication, interaction and a shared sense of community. Evidence of overtly hostile behaviour such as hate crime, discrimination and racist language and behaviour was more pronounced in some areas than in others. There was some evidence that greater contact with immigrants through schools, community activities and local mechanisms for engagement was associated with greater acceptance of immigrant communities. To be successful integration policies need to engage with and involve marginalised white working class communities.

Local, regional and national policies already target marginalised communities and have generated a wide range of initiatives. The research identifies positive achievements and examples of good practice, but marginalisation persists and there is a need for better evidence to identify effective initiatives that contribute to improvements in key indicators such as employment, education and civic participation. Participants in the research reveal how policies are experienced by residents and suggest areas in which policies need to be improved to reach marginalised residents.

The research shows that policies which promote health, community safety, public spaces and civic engagement can help make communities stronger and more resilient, not only for the sake of their immediate well-being but also because they enable residents to escape marginalisation by improving skills, increasing educational attainment and participating in community and civic life. Communities are also

strengthened by the inclusion and well-being of those for whom employment is not a realistic option, but who can contribute to the community in other ways.

Educational attainment is a key challenge for marginalised white working class communities. Education is an important pathway to employment and inclusion, but marginalised communities are often home to high concentrations of the socio-economic characteristics associated with low attainment. The research suggests that educational attainment can be improved by a coordinated, multi-faceted approach that may include supporting parents, increasing teacher expectations and identifying other ways of motivating and supporting children and young people from marginalised backgrounds to achieve more in school.

Employment is the main pathway to inclusion and is a priority for residents of marginalised white working class communities, who have often seen a decline in the industries that previously provided secure, well-paid jobs and who are disadvantaged in economies that are increasingly knowledge and service based. Employment needs to become more accessible, rewarding and secure for residents who are marginalised due to low skills levels and other barriers. The research suggests that access to employment could be improved by ensuring that marginalised communities are taken into account and benefit from policies on economic and business development, skills, job creation, infrastructure improvement, access to employment, sustainable communities and procurement.

Civic participation is a priority for both residents and policymakers. A wide range of opportunities for engagement is available to residents, and in some cases residents have used these mechanisms to real effect. At the same time, both residents and policymakers recognise the need to strengthen engagement and reach more marginalised residents. Existing mechanisms, a wide range of civil society partners and the experience of previous engagement offer rich potential for extending participation to more marginalised residents, increasing the impact of engagement and developing inclusive participation as a vehicle for identifying shared aims and values and building communities that are both cohesive and diverse.