IMES

Instituut voor Migratie- en Etnische Studies

MPMC Project

Multicultural Policies and Modes of
Citizenship in European Cities

Working Paper

2

**Immigrants' Participation in Civil Society
in a Suburban Context**

Amsterdam, Athens, Antwerp, Barcelona, Birmingham, Brussels,
Cologne, Liege, Marseilles, Milan, Oeiras (Lisboa), Paris, Rome,
Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Turin, Zurich

UNESCO

Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

UNESCO - MOST PROJECT

Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship in European Cities (MPMC)

2

Immigrants' Participation in Civil Society
in a Suburban Context

Between Top-down Activation
and Bottom-up Mobilisation

By

Maria Margarida Marques
Rui Santos
Tiago Ralha

Foreword

The essence of scientific work lies in the perennial confrontation of theoretical assumptions and empirical data. In the restatemant of the project `Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship in European Cities' of January 1998 a common framework was formulated in terms of the research focus, central problem formulation, operationalisation and data collection. That framework was used as a starting point for field work.

The Portuguese MPMC-team, doing fieldwork relating to organisations in Oeiras, a municipality within the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, found a more complex structure of organisations of immigrants and their connecting networks than they could accomodate in the common general framework. That led them to propose a more comprehensive framework and a new typology of organisations and their relations. They argue first of all that organisations cannot easily be connected to one particular level, that forms of organisations and their activities at different levels and in different arenas do occur simultaneously and influence each other. Secondly, they show that the discrete distinction between `bottom up' and `top-down' and their association with organizations on the one hand and politics, policy making and public institutions on the other needs further refinement in order to be applicable and relevant.

The Portuguese team thus contributes significantly to the development of a better instrument for analysis.

The Steering Committee

Dr. Marco Martiniello
Prof. dr Rinus Penninx
Dr. Steven vertovec

IMMIGRANTS' PARTICIPATION IN CIVIL SOCIETY IN A SUBURBAN CONTEXT:
BETWEEN 'TOP-DOWN ACTIVATION' AND 'BOTTOM-UP MOBILISATION'

1. RESEARCH CONTEXT[1]

This paper basically deals with the way local (*i. e.*, at the municipal level) associations and public authorities come to communicate and interact, *maxime* in decision-making issues that in some way concern immigrant or ethnic minority populations. Research was carried out in Oeiras, a municipality within the Lisbon Metropolitan area with a very large presence of first or second generation immigrants from the African countries that were once Portuguese colonies, especially Capeverdeans. As both the field research and the presentation of the results were designed according to the MPMC general theoretical framework, we will start by providing a brief sketch of that framework, which provides a hierarchical model of institutional arenas, ranging from the immigrant or ethnic minority communities to the municipal political institutions. We will then proceed to present a reappraisal of the theoretical framework based on our empirical findings and a suggestion for its further elaboration as a result of its confrontation with the data. The main objective of this elaboration is to better account for the complexity of the data, which we found hard to manage within the single dimension MPMC typology, by introducing as a second dimension the different institutional levels, ranging from neighbourhood to supra-national levels. This, we believe, enabled us to grasp more fully the complex set of actors and relationships, setting the foundations for a more accurate description of the networks in which they are embedded.

2. AN OUTLINE OF THE MPMC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The basic framework laid down for comparative research in the MPMC project[2] starts from a 'Top-Bottom' typology of actors and institutions focused at the municipal level. The 'top' is defined as 'the institutional framework of the society of settlement', including 'municipal decision-makers and other significant actors in the various societal domains'. The 'bottom' level is defined as the 'immigrant and ethnic minority communities' and their organisations. The main research problem revolves around the relations between these two poles. The 'top-down' approach studies the ways in which the institutional framework is open to or stimulates minorities' participation in the several society spheres; and the 'bottom-up' approach focuses the ways in which minority communities act

---

[1]   Paper presented at the 4th MigCities Conference held in Lisbon, November 1999. Throughout this paper, several sections extensively reproduce the paper presented at the MPMC second workshop held at Liège on the 1st November 1999.

and organise to assert their rights and participate in or influence decision-making institutions. The first approach deals with processes that are termed 'activation', and involves organisations, institutions or actions performing the function of 'channels of activation'. The second conversely deals with 'mobilisation processes' and 'channels of mobilisation'.

Elaborating a bit on this typology, one can consider that between the minority groups, on the one hand, and the decision-making institutions on the other, there are conceivably intermediate steps. Indeed the very framework suggests it by naming both minority *communities* and minority *organisations* as part of the 'bottom' position, as well as municipal *political institutions* and a more general municipal *public sphere* as part of the 'top' position. Clearly the relationships between immigrant or ethnic minorities *as communities or groups* and *organisations* claiming to represent them or their interests are no less problematic than any such form of social representation through formal organisations, thereby involving their own mobilisation and activation channels. Likewise, the relationships between minority communities, their organisations and the municipal public sphere at large, including a multiplicity of civil society institutions, as well as between the latter and the municipal power institutions are encompassed by the framework's typology. It therefore appears as a multi-step 'top-bottom' continuum through which activation and mobilisation processes may flow that originate or end at several possible positions.

If we translate this continuum into an axis, representing what we propose to call 'institutional arenas', we get:

¬ ¾ **ACTIVATION**

BOTTOM

Immigrant/ethnic minority groups	Immigrant/ethnic minority associations	Organisations of the civil society at large	Political decision-making institutions

¾ ® **MOBILISATION**
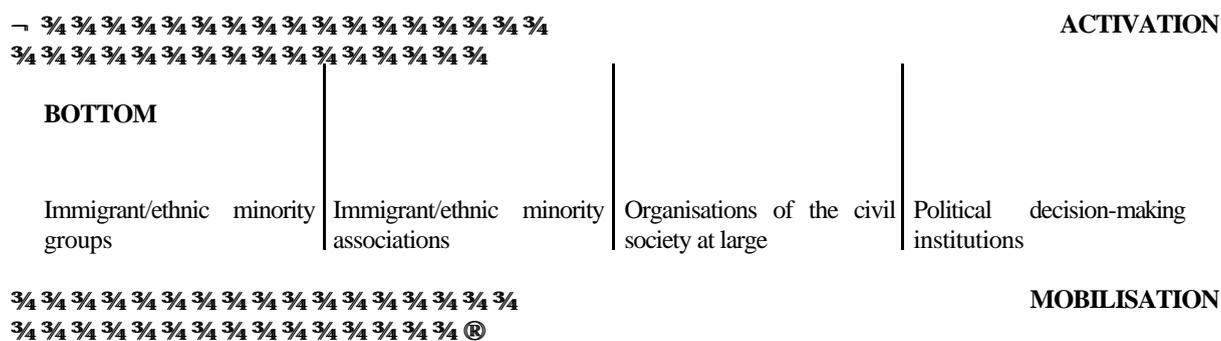
It may be admitted that this axis can express a continuum of degrees of access or participation in the civil society at large, ranging from mere self-perception as *minority groups* (which should not be taken for granted), through *ethnically particularistic organisations* (though these may claim rights of an universalistic nature, or clad in universalistic languages), *ethnically non-particularistic organisations* (though these may express other kinds of particularisms, e.g. local or

---

[2] Refer to Working Paper 1.

class) to the *political decision-making institutions* of the host society. This image of a hierarchical continuum seems to rest on a conception of relatively strong and formally organised civil societies, with a well established tradition of group interests representation through formal corporative channels into the public sphere and the political institutions, in a way that tends to create coherent activation and mobilisation vectors. In this sense, the typology becomes reduced to a single dimension bipolar topology whose poles communicate with each other through linear series of hierarchical mediators. This is a premise that our data seem to challenge, as we will try to demonstrate below.

3. ON THE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FRAMEWORK: A REAPPRAISAL

To begin with, the hierarchical continuum model, as stated above in section 2, must acknowledge the possibility that the "senders" and the "targets" of both activation and mobilisation initiatives can be located at variable points on the axis. By this we mean that, for instance, minority organisations may seek to activate ethnic groups – even to the point of trying to create them *as groups* – as much as they may result from group mobilisation. And they may either succeed or fail in doing so. Minority organisations may mobilise to participate in or influence civil society organisations and political institutions, even in the absence of significant mobilisation of the minority groups that they are supposed to represent. Civil society organisations such as political parties, NGOs, churches, may seek to activate minority groups and/or organisations irrespective of, or indeed against, the institutional policies, as seen for instance in the downright dismissal as 'racist', by the Lord Mayor, of activation attempts directed to immigrant Africans by NGOs or by a missionary-like priest of a local Catholic organisation. Therefore, mobilisation and activation channels don't necessarily cross the whole range of the continuum, nor coalesce into a coherent process. Evidence in support of this more complex view is clear in our case-study. This is a point that, although not in formal contradiction with the original statement of the MPMC framework, is somewhat obscured by the conflation of immigrant or ethnic minorities' *groups* and *organisations* into the bottom category, as well as of civil society organisations and political decision-making institutions into the top category.

On the other hand, Portuguese civil society is a very weak one, where estrangement and even suspicion toward formal organisation and dynamics are dominant. Furthermore, although some corporatist type institutions are being framed since the early 80's, in the shape of other North European societies, the remnants of the 'old' corporatist order (before the change in regime in

1974) left deep imprints which still constrain the articulation of collective interests [3].

As Y. Soysal puts it, immigrants normally espouse the dominant matrix of the host society. This is the case insofar as the evidence collected until now shows[4]. Concerning participation in voluntary associations, we find low rates of adhesion, extreme diversity of uncoordinated associations, many of them having a very limited and local scope of activity, distance and even suspicion toward more formalised levels of representation; concerning political participation, low rates of registration and voting, mistrust toward middle and higher levels of representation, and difficult, if any, articulation between local and national levels of representation. Indeed, since corporative modes of immigrant or ethnic representation are, at national as well as at local level, very recent or altogether absent, little stimulus exists for the articulation of immigrants' or ethnic minorities' interests and claims under some kind of unified 'umbrella' associations that would subsume the current fragmentation.

It appears from our observation that participation in the political system (both in the sending and the host societies) by the members of ethnic minorities living in Oeiras is strongly encouraged by the political parties, their local representatives, and the homeland authorities as well. As far as we can understand it at this point, what political participation there is results much more from a pressure from the top, than from a collective push from the bottom. The local associations' leaders who appear as prominent or potential community leaders were recruited as members of the lists of all the political parties in the 1997 local elections, thus fostering the direct access of small local associations to political decision-making institutions in a way that side-steps larger scale associations.

This process appears to be having a double effect: the 'pouring out' of the communities' activities from the ethnic minorities' associations, and the consequent competition for power in the mainstream society. But it also seems to have an important side effect concerning the inherited institutional framework: the challenging of a tacit and implicit hierarchy of associations, corresponding to their distance to power, as a consequence of the diversification of the ways of gaining access to political decision-making instances. This diversity of channels and the relatively informal ways in which even small neighbourhood associations can access resources made available by political institutions reduces the space for overarching immigrants' associations operating as mediators at the national level. This in turn makes it hard for those that exist, or seek to attain that status, to claim legitimacy from their representativeness within the communities, and sets the ground

---

[3] Cf. Lucena, M. & C. Gaspar, 'Metamorfoses corporativas? Associações de interesses económicos e institucionalização da democracia em Portugal II', *Análise Social*, XXVII (115), pp. 135-187, 1991.

[4] Soysal, Y. , *Limits of citizenship*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994.

for competition among them.

Their ability to connect with national (sending and receiving countries) and international institutions and to get results from those connections is quite independent of any form of legitimacy based on representative grounds, such as voting or acknowledged community work. Such ability, along with their acknowledgement by national and international institutions as interlocutors, seems to form a legitimacy basis of its own. When trying to establish their right to act for the communities, they resort mainly to the claim that they have, intend to have, or had in the past a role in activating local associations, rather than that they were formed as a result of community mobilisation. Such activation, however, doesn't quite fit into the typology mentioned above, since it is made up not of relations across a hierarchy of steps towards political institutions at the local level, but rather of relations across different hierarchical levels of institutional arenas. As far as we are concerned this is a difficult situation to grasp resorting only to the MPMC theoretical framework. We intend now to briefly suggest and discuss a way to complexify the model on which that framework stands.

4. COMPLEXIFYING THE FRAMEWORK: A PROPOSAL

A few examples may help to make these points more clearly. We will start with the discussion of two cases of associations acting at national and international levels, and proceed to explore the dynamics of local associations.

The thirty-odd year old Capeverdean Association, whose presence in Oeiras is very scarce and is seen by local associations as an external, Lisbon elite, was in fact founded by a layer of Capeverdean intellectuals, university students, professionals and executives living in Portugal while Cape Verde was still a Portuguese colony, and economic, low skilled immigration to Portugal was as yet insignificant. When the new immigration wave arrived (seventies), some of these elite founders, who were said to be ill at ease with the proletarianisation of the association's public, moved away to form an alternative and more selective association. Most of them came back during the eighties, though, as the association began to pull its weight by addressing the problems of the new wave of Capeverdean immigrants and was granted audience and support by national and international institutions.

It clearly assumes its position as working at the national and international levels at close quarters with political institutions. Namely, it claims to have been the first to put pressure upon the media to create public awareness and bring into the political agenda the problems of the immigrants. It is the formal representative of the Capeverdean community in the Consultative Council to the High Commissioner for Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities (HCIEM) created in 1995, and out of its ranks

came the one MP of Capeverdean origin, elected for the Socialist Party, and one MP to the Capeverdean Parliament for the migrants in Europe, who also has a leading role in the immigrants' department of one of the Portuguese trade union federations (UGT). Furthermore, it participates at the supra-national level in the European Forum for immigrants communities, where our interviewees claim to be 'learning the trade' from the older, stronger and more politicised immigrants' associations.

Although this association thus seems to be placed at the national and international levels, without much bearing upon the local issues, the story it tells points to a process of activation carried on across different institutional levels. From 1980, the Capeverdean Association co-ordinated an eight-year community intervention project (JUNTAMON) financed by the UN and the World Health Organisation. The activities in that project led to a spawning of local associations; according to some of the interviewees, the Association, through this project, was a 'nursery' of local organisations, including those in Oeiras. Thus, the activation process in this case seems to have run from an international organisation (UN) to a national level immigrants' association, who in turn activated local level associations for close work with the communities. Symptomatically, it is said that the frictions between the national and the local level associations begun almost immediately, the latter accusing the former of not being in touch with the communities and of leading a far-away elite existence. It was then that the Capeverdean Association withdrew from the local level to seek its own terrain mainly as a pressure group, thereby dropping (for the time being) its possible role of a representative mediator across institutional spheres and political levels.

It is precisely on the grounds of presence in the local communities and hands-on work that another younger Capeverdean association claims a greater share of representative legitimacy at the national and international levels. Its own name states it to be an immigrant specific association with local implant (ECC-CO stands for Space of the Capeverdean Community – Oeiras Municipality) and it is supported by the Town Hall with housing facilities, but its aims are expressed at the national and international levels. ECC-CO was founded in 1996, and enjoys a privileged link to the political party currently in office in Cape Verde (MPD), ideologically closer than its main opponent to the governing party holding Oeiras Town Hall. The Capeverdean government thus seems to try and create an alternative mediator for its relations with Portuguese institutions and immigrant electors to compete with the Capeverdean association, linked to the former government party (PAICV). In fact, the creation of ECC-CO was almost concomitant with the elections that put MPD in office in Cape Verde in 1991.

One of ECC-CO's leaders was chosen by the HCIEM as a consultant. The HCIEM thus

moves towards recognising ECC-CO as an important interlocutor, even though the formal representative of the Capeverdean community in the Consultative Council is the Capeverdean Association. ECC-CO aims at influencing the relations between Portuguese government and the IOM concerning the return of immigrants, it intends to develop an international relations department to form a link between Portuguese and Capeverdean NGOs, and to promote transnational economic investments by Capeverdean immigrants established as building subcontractors. It speaks of influencing Portuguese bilateral relations with Cape Verde in the context of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), in order to extend further citizenship rights to Capeverdean immigrants. It thus seems to be both mobilising Capeverdean elites to intervene at national and supra national levels, and aiming to serve as a channel of activation to unify disperse immigrant initiatives into transnational institutions. Nonetheless, it still seeks to derive its legitimacy from local roots and closeness to the populations' problems (a claim that is not consensual among the neighbourhood associations, as we shall see below), as opposed to the historical Capeverdean Association, and is promoting associations' meetings in what seems to be a strategy of forming an 'umbrella' coalition, not just for Capeverdeans but for Africans in general.

In both cases, we can see that there are important relationships that don't find a place in the MPMC bipolar continuum: those between actors placed at different levels of institutional arenas. It is also evident that at neither level do the institutional policies clearly promote a monopolisation of mediating positions by any single association, much as they may favour one or other of the organisations in play. These points can be further developed by taking a closer look at the dynamics of local associations.

The forms taken by local mobilisation seem in this case to depend heavily on the channels laid by the Town Hall for participation and access to resources. In fact, the municipal structure of opportunities for participation is in great measure shaped by the local government policies. The official position has been until very recently to refuse to see immigrants and ethnic minorities as distinct collectives, and therefore to ignore any form of collective body claiming to represent immigrants and ethnic minorities interests. Immigrants and ethnic minorities are seen as plain citizens like any others, and their claims are addressed as individual claims to individual problems: the first and foremost task for local authorities, it is said, is to integrate these populations in the mainstream, not to promote their closure.

Since no legitimacy is recognised by the Town Hall to claims-making through corporate minority groups, immigrant or ethnic particularist associations have scarce political ground to stand on at the local level. Even in the ECC-CO case presented above, notwithstanding the support

granted by the Town Hall, there is no sign of encouragement for it to take over representative or mediating functions between the city government and local associations or immigrant communities.

Such targeted initiatives as are taken are either of an integrative nature, such as funding Portuguese language training for Creole-speaking people of African descent, or are restricted to the cultural and sports domain. Acording to Lord Mayor of Oeiras, in fact, the municipality's cultural policies should cater for municipal citizens' preferences, whichever their specific groups may be. Therefore, cultural events or organisations – such as folklore groups, music festivals, sports meetings or journeys in Portugal or abroad – are supported by the Town Hall irrespective of their ethnic contents. Social policies, however, address the problems of the citizens as such, not as ethnic groups' problems. Housing policy, for instance, has been pursued in order to lodge slum residents in municipal housing neighbourhoods irrespective of their origins. Inasmuch as many of these people are of African origin or descent, they form a major part of the target population, but are addressed on equal terms with families of Portuguese origin under similar circumstances, without any specific group entitlement to either of them. In this case, indeed, the Town Hall went as far as to turn a blind eye on the juridical status of foreign residents. All slum residents are entitled to municipal housing, whether or not they hold residence permits, since the control of the juridical status of foreigners is said to be a strictly national government concern.

Given the kinds of initiatives the Town Hall is willing to support, we mostly meet in Oeiras with associations that take the form of ethnically non-particularist civil society organisations (sports, culture and recreational clubs), although informally presenting themselves as providing for specific immigrants' needs and defending their interests, due to their associates' composition. Thus, two very important local sports and culture clubs (Associação Desportiva da Pedreira dos Húngaros – ADPH – and Assomada) speak of their teams as Capeverdean. ADPH clearly sets them apart from Portuguese and Angolan teams, and competed in tournaments held in Cape Verde with substantial support from the Town Hall. In fact, cultural and sports initiatives are currently held by association leaders as attempts to counteract specific second-generation youth problems. On the other hand, they generally claim to be open to participation by all, independent of national or ethnic affiliation. This duplicity makes it hard to differentiate between ethnic or immigrants' organisations as such and organisations of the civil society at large, subsuming both categories under a local public sphere and somewhat subverting the hierarchical assumptions of the model.

Despite the associative fragmentation, we met with a very important phenomenon in the making, as it were: that of the forced change of scope of local associations which were founded in slums from a neighbourhood to a municipal level, because of the scattering of former slum

populations throughout several municipal re-housing projects. Their associates and leaders became dispersed across the municipal space and this, apart from accrued transport and communication costs, led to serious consequences. Several associations that until then had held their specific neighbourhood turf were brought into competition for municipal resources in a wider municipal space, not only with each other but also with ECC-CO, whose roots into the neighbourhoods were scarce or nil. Allegations of unfair distribution of resources by the Town Hall, of malevolent scheming and even the word 'war' came up in one of the interviews (that of Assomada), whereas the above mentioned ADPH seems to have come to a coalition with ECC-CO. This means that one should differentiate between neighbourhood and municipal levels and specify their relationships, as well as the implications of moving from one to the other.

On the other hand, one striking point is that these local associations each entertained direct relations, not only with the Town Hall but also with the HCIEM and the Capeverdean Government, apparently dispensing with any institutional mediators across different spheres and levels. Again the rivalries expressed by Assomada against ECC-CO in the competition for resources and influence transcended the local levels: the HCIEM and the Government of Cape Verde were also mentioned as direct sources of support that were being biased by unfair scheming by ECC-CO. This shows that national and international level institutions are out to directly activate local level associations, and these mobilised to get that support, although things may now be evolving towards some kind of influence brokerage by national associations.

These examples illustrate the need we felt to graft in the model a second hierarchical dimension, concerning the levels of insertion and participation. Although the research is expressly aimed at the local (municipal) level, the MPMC framework itself takes into account the inclusion of actors or institutions placed at other levels, when relevant. In order to deal with the data, we felt we have to bring this new dimension explicitly into the model. This in turn leads to add new meaning to the terms 'top', 'bottom', 'activation' and 'mobilisation'. In order to understand even the local dynamics we observed, we think the model must also incorporate mobilisation and activation channels across levels. This opens the possibility that links which within the first dimension would not have a definite sense (e.g., between immigrants' associations) may indeed be perceived as, say, activation paths from national to local level, or mobilisation paths from local to international level.

Drawing this new axis, which we name 'institutional levels', as a scheme, we would have:

11

```
¬ ¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾                                                    ACTIVATION
¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾

   BOTTOM


   Neighbourhood          Municipal          National          Supra-national

¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾                                                    MOBILISATION
¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾¾ ®
```
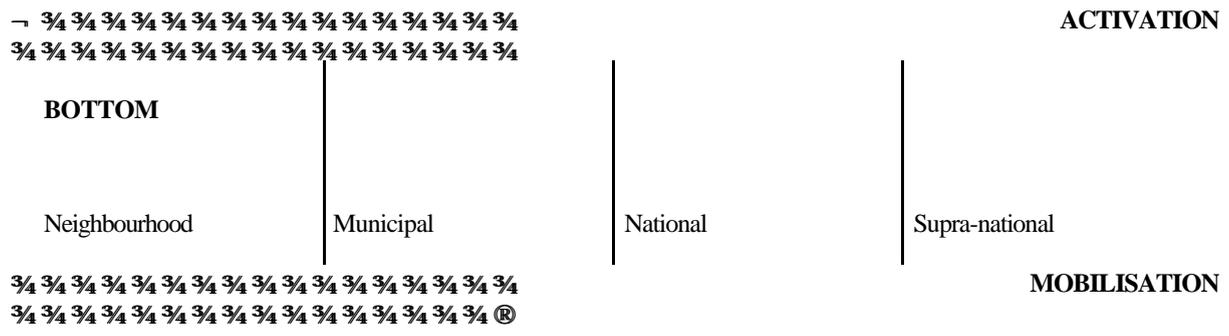
On this axis, one can plot activation processes as, for instance, the development of EU or national government policies promoting or transferring resources to municipal programs of minority integration (such are the case of the Special Re-housing Plan and, in Oeiras, of the URBAN program, an EU funded urban intervention program aimed against social exclusion, managed by a board under the Town Hall; all institutions involved would be considered as 'top' level according to dimension 1); the intervention by national level associations to activate the participation of local level communities and civil society organisations in specific processes (such as the legalisation and the electoral enrolment). Mobilisation processes might include actions by local associations to influence or take over national associations, or lobbying efforts by national level associations onto international institutions in order to obtain political recommendations with national or local impact.

Combining the two axes, we get a two-dimension participation space that may be used to chart the actors or institutions dealt with, as well as the complex web of relationships among them. Dislocations between positions over time or holding positions at different levels at the same time are also conceivable.

		ARENAS			
		Immigrant Groups	**Immigrant Associations**	**Civil Society Organisations**	**Political Institutions**
L E V E L S	**Supra-national**	Diasporas; transnational networks	International Federations	Political parties in sending countries; International religious organisations; International NGOs	UN; EU; Cunsultative bodies (EU Forum); Political institutions in sending countries; CPLP
	National	Immigrant communities and networks	Immigrant associations and federations; Immigrant press; Immigrant entrepreneurial associations; Immigrant-specific religious organisations	Political parties; Human rights, anti-racist, etc. associations; Catholic Church; Entrepreneurial associations; Trade unions; Press	Political institutions; HCIEM Consultative Council
	Municipal	Immigrant communities	Immigrant associations	Voluntary associations; Entrepreneurial associations; School associations (students', parents')	Municipal and parish political institutions; Municipal consultative councils
	Neighbourhood	Immigrant communities	Immigrant associations	Residents' associations; Voluntary associations; School associations (students', parents')	

According to the collected data, there is some disjunction between immigrant associations' actions and legitimacy grounds at local (municipal and neighbourhood) levels, on the one hand, and at national or international levels, on the other. The activation of the national level associations, even those acting at local level, is performed either by actors at the national government level, or by supra-national actors (international institutions, sending countries' governments and political parties). It is from this activation and from the relationships that they establish at those levels, rather than from the mobilisation or suffrage of immigrant communities, that national associations draw their legitimacy. They also seem to hold rather limited capacities to activate the lower levels. Their own mobilisation efforts, in turn, are generally aimed at influencing or participating in national or international level institutions.

Conversely, the legitimacy of local associations stems from their coming from the mobilisation of local groups, or from their ability to activate them and render them services (including

those of mediators to the local political institutions). Their orientation towards mobilising to participate in higher levels, however, is feeble, as is their articulation with national level associations. The most dramatic events involving immigrant populations and local associations – the legalisation processes, the electoral enrolment for local elections and the campaign for voting participation – mostly evidenced activation processes, both from political institutions at the local level, and from international and national level institutions.

If we focus at the local level, it is evident that, for the reasons explained above, the municipal policies do not tend to encourage the autonomous, corporative expression of immigrants' demands, although providing support for a wide range of associative initiatives by immigrants. Immigrants and ethnic minorities don't necessarily think about themselves as communities (according to the discourse conveyed by the large majority of our interviewees), and surely don't organise themselves as such in a formal sense – that is, in local organisations formally identifying themselves as corporate representatives of specific ethnic groups. As we stated above, insofar as these groups mobilise into organisations, these are not statutory ethnic or immigrant group representatives, but rather neighbourhood based sports or cultural associations, or residents' committees. Into this associative mould, however, immigrant-specific problems and identities are cast, namely by addressing so-called second-generation youth problems through sports initiatives and what one might call "cultural rooting", supported, as we said, by local institutions.

As far as we could ascertain, the triangulation between the City Hall, local immigrants' and ethnic minorities' associations, and political actors in the sending countries stands as an important context for framing local authorities' activities. Participation links established by Oeiras local government with foreign cities clearly privilege Portuguese speaking ones (from the former colonies), especially those led by political parties having similar liberal references. Another such context is the interrelationship between local authorities, national political parties, national immigrants' associations and local immigrants' associations, a connection that may gain some impetus from the extension to immigrants of political rights in local elections. Although the only Oeiras municipal MP of African descent represents the Socialist Party in opposition, the only two elected officials of African descent, at the parish level (in the areas of largest concentration of immigrants and ethnic minorities populations), have been elected in the lists of the political party in office (centre-right – PSD). All of them were co-opted from the ranks of local immigrant dominated associations. In this respect, a remark should be made concerning the municipal Urban board and its relations with local associations. Although the former has a limited local presence (1995-1999), and implemented activities that are supposed to be handled, in the near future, by local groups, partnerships were not

easy to find and consolidate, and some accusations of excessive "showing off" and even "unfair competition" were made by local association leaders. This is a clear evidence of dysfunction between activation and mobilisation in local processes.

The general idea one gets from the observations done so far, however, is that there is a mutual process of shaping up. The harsh selection process brought about by Town Hall support policies, Urban program partnerships and the dispersion of former slum populations through the rehousing process has caused a hecatomb on the myriad of small local associations, but has considerably strengthened the 'survivors'. These are now facing a whole new phase of 'measuring forces' and coalition in order to achieve interests monopolisation (in P. Schmitter's sense)[5], and therefore the recognition as legitimate interlocutors and mediators by local authorities and the population themselves. Another issue, indeed important, is their articulation with the self-proclaimed national level associations. The Town Hall dominant party is in turn interested in securing the votes of these immigrants and ethnic minorities populations (or at least not to let them flee to an opposition party), besides maintaining a privileged attachment to political authorities in the sending countries (an important asset also at the national foreign policy level, given the efforts now being done to 'restore' the Portuguese speaking 'community'). Hence, perhaps, the slight shift in the Town Hall attitude concerning immigrant representation, beginning to accept the principle of a minorities' representative council, although it makes it depend on the mobilisation by local associations, who at present seem to be more interested in exploring the possibilities within the current opportunity structure.

---

[5] Philippe C. Schmitter, *Neo-corporatism and the State*, EUI Working Paper #106, Florence, European Universiry Institute, s.d. [1984].

The MPMC Project

The Multicultural Policies and Modes of Citizenship in European Cities (MPMC) project is an international comparative research programme on the participation of immigrant and minority groups in 17 large European cities: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Athens, Barcelona, Birmingham, Brussels, Cologne, Liege, Marseilles, Milan, Oeiras, Paris, Rome, Stockholm, Tel Aviv and Turin. In 1996 the project was adopted by UNESCOs Management of Social Transformation (MOST) programme for international policy-oriented social science. In the research project social scientists from a variety of disciplines undertake research and comparative analysis within selected urban contexts characterised by a substantial presence and activity of immigrant and ethnic minority groups. Working with policy makers and members of local organisations, their task is to assess the development and interplay of both 'bottom-up' (community led) initiatives and 'top-down' (municipality created) policies aimed at better integrating immigrant and ethnic minorities in public decision making processes. The key-questions to be answered by all research teams can be summarised as follows;

- *how do local authorities activate immigrants and ethnic minorities to participate in political decision making in general and in relation to their position in particular;*
- *how do immigrants and ethnic minority members mobilise to improve their position and to influence policies relating to that position;*
- *how do activation policies of authorities and mobilisation of immigrants and ethnic minorities interact.*

In order to ensure international comparative research each research partner has detailed the socio-economic and the political structures of the city and basic data on the minority groups (composition, socio-economic position etc.) in a city-template.

The MPMC project is co-ordinated by Dr. Marco Martiniello (CEDEM, Liege), Prof. Dr. Rinus Penninx (IMES, University of Amsterdam) and Dr. Steven Vertovec (Oxford University). The secretariat of the MPMC project is founded at the IMES under co-ordination of Mrs. Karen Kraal.

Following documents can be found on the website of the IMES (www.pscw.uva.nl/imes) or UNESCO (www.unesco.org/most):

- ***Working Papers:***

Nr.1   *MPMC-project restatement, December 1997*
Nr.2   *Immigrants' Participation in Civil Society in a Suburban Context*
Nr.3A/3B   *Ethnic associations, political trust and political participation, Creating Networks within the Turkish Community in Amsterdam*
Nr.4   *The MPMC Workshop in Zeist, 2000*
Nr. 5   *Ethnic minorities, Cities and Institutions*

     (Hard copies can be requested at the secretariat)

- ***The city templates of the 17 cities***
- ***The Newsletters of the project***
- ***A flyer of the project***
- ***Reports of the workshops***
- ***Key notes of Prof. Dr. Rinus Penninx***

Further information on the project can be found on the website of Unesco or Imes or obtained from:
Mrs. Karen Kraal or Prof. Dr. Rinus Penninx
Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES)
Rokin 84
1012 KX AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands
Tel: + 31- (0)20-525 3627
Fax: + 31 -(0)20-525 3628
E-mail: Kraal@pscw.uva.nl