

Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe (MIME)

A preview of research
results

WP 2 – SOCIETY

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Introduction

Question:

- What do laboratory-like ‘real’ cases tell us about the chances (and risks) of multilingualism?

Sub-questions:

- Which kind of multilingualism is required for confronting the trade-off in productive ways?
- What can politics learn from social practices observable in different micro- and meso-contexts?

Background:

- Particularly heavy impact of trade-off at the *urban level*
- Bottom-up strategies vs. top-down policies: Possible ‘mismatches’ between social practices and institutional approaches
- Role of language for identity-building (at the individual and at the collective level) under conditions of *complex diversity*
- Selection of ‘most complex’ cases (Barcelona, Luxembourg, and Riga; Brussels; Amsterdam as a contrasting case)



Conceptual / theoretical treatment

- 'Simple' diversity (monolingualism) as the normative standard of high modernity
- From simple to *complex* diversity
- Strategies to make trade-off more bearable for individuals and collectives should both offer choices and protect bonds
- Mechanisms and 'best practices' that connect societal realities and institutional approaches



Data and factual information

- Case studies on a sample of systematically selected European cities: 'most similar' in terms of 'most complex'
- Barcelona – Luxembourg – Riga
- Secondary sociolinguistic data; expert interviews; some additional fieldwork



Data and factual information

Table 1: Composition of the city population in terms of citizenship

Barcelona (2016)		Luxembourg-City (2016)		Riga (2016)	
Spanish	83.5%	Luxembourgish	29.2%	Latvian	74.9%
Foreign residents	16.5%	Foreign residents	70.8%	Foreign residents	25.1%
Main nationalities among foreign residents					
Italian	9.7%	French	24.2%	Non-Citizens of Latvia	72.5%
Pakistani	7.3%	Portuguese	16.1%	Other	27.5%
French	5%	Italian	9.7%		
Moroccan	4.7%	Belgian	5.7%		
Bolivian	3.7%	German	4.9%		
Ecuadorian	3.2%	Spanish	4.1%		
Peruvian	3.2%	British	2.8%		
Colombian	3%	Romanian	2.3%		
Other	60.2%	Other	30.2%		



Data and factual information

Table 4: Languages used at home by the city population

Barcelona (2013)		Luxembourg-City (2011)		Riga (2014)	
Only Catalan	23.9%	French	31.8%	Only Russian	45.0%
Only Spanish	39.6%	Luxembourgish	31.6%	Only Latvian	38.2%
More Catalan than Spanish	5.0%	Portuguese	13.1%	More Russian than Latvian	10.9%
Both	10.3%	English	10.5%	More Latvian than Russian	3.8%
More Spanish than Catalan	10.1%	German	9.6%	Other language	1.4%
Other languages and combinations	11.2%	Italian	5.7%		
		Other	13.7%		



Conclusion

- Resurgence of cities as main localities for governing complexity
- Acceptance of emerging 'new' multilingual identity patterns as THE main condition for tackling the trade-off
- High relevance of *context*: 'ethnic' vs. 'civic' approaches to multilingualism; 'civic' facilitates articulation of a common public sphere
- However, and the same time, this common public sphere must function in a way that conceives of inclusion in ways that are diversity-sensitive. When it comes to language, the concept of an 'auto-centered multilingualism' offers a useful point of departure for designing policies that contribute to sustaining such a balance.





Thank you for your
attention



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