

# *SOCIAL COHESION: A POLICY AND INDICATOR FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING IMMIGRANT AND HOST OUTCOMES*

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## **Abstract**

Social cohesion as a social policy goal has recently appeared in policy statements in relation to outcomes associated with immigrant settlement. This paper explores some of the literature on social cohesion, and how the concept might operate in a New Zealand policy context. The latter part of the paper focuses on a proposed indicator framework as a way of measuring settlement outcomes for both immigrant and host, and providing an indication of whether social cohesion is being achieved.

## INTRODUCTION

As immigrant-related diversity has grown in New Zealand since the change to immigration policy in the late 1980s, the question of ensuring positive outcomes for immigrants has become increasingly important. However, this is not simply an issue of outcomes for immigrants; there are important issues for the host society and for the

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- 2 Manukau City Council New Settlers' Policy (2003), Wellington Region Settlement Strategy (2003), National Immigration Settlement Strategy (2003), Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy (under development).

relationships between host and immigrant. "Settlement Strategies" have been developed in New Zealand, at both the regional and national levels,<sup>2</sup> that emphasise the need for evidence that settlement policies are effective in ensuring that both migrant and host communities are experiencing positive outcomes. The New Zealand Government needs better information to monitor the impact of settlement policy on outcomes for migrants, refugees, their families, and the wider community.

Settlement policies that contribute to a cohesive society require a focus on both the immigrants and the hosts. Although there are significant and ongoing debates about social cohesion and inclusion and the relationships between immigrant and host communities, the focus here is on identifying an initial framework as a contribution to these debates. On the one hand, government has an interest in policies that enable new settlers to develop a sense of belonging to the wider community, participate in all aspects of social, cultural and economic life, and be confident that they are coming into a country that is able to accept their difference and value their contribution. On the other hand, there is a policy interest in the responsiveness of immigrant groups to the institutions, organisations and people who have already made their lives in New Zealand, and who need to have confidence that their ways of life will not be compromised or jeopardised by the arrival of new settlers.

The national Immigration Settlement Strategy (New Zealand Immigration Service 2004) identifies six goals for migrants and refugees, including that they are able to:

- obtain employment appropriate to their qualifications and skills
- be confident using English in a New Zealand setting or can access appropriate language support to bridge the gap
- access appropriate information and responsive services that are available to the wider community (for example, housing, education and services for children)
- form supportive social networks and establish a sustainable community identity
- feel safe expressing their ethnic identity and are accepted by, and are part of, the wider host community
- participate in civic, community and social activities.

The New Zealand National Immigration Settlement Strategy, because it is focused on migrants, refugees and their families, implicitly identifies an inclusive and cohesive society as one which accommodates new migrants and recognises the contributions that migrants make. Other high-level government goals also seek to reinforce public confidence amongst migrants and host communities alike that New Zealand is a diverse, tolerant, creative and supportive place to live. Regardless of the conceptual debates, measuring either or both of these facets of cohesion and inclusion from a government perspective is complex. This paper summarises the key conceptual debates as they relate to New Zealand, and also (briefly) proposes a framework that identifies the factors and issues that need to be addressed by indicators and measures.

## SOCIAL COHESION: A NEW AGENDA

The challenges associated with incorporating immigrants from other cultures have been recognised by the classic immigration-receiving societies of Canada, Australia and the United States, and by more recent immigrant-receiving societies, in the European Union. The challenges have been summarised as:

- How to reconcile the recognition of diversity with building common feelings of membership and solidarity?
- How to understand the links between economic disadvantage and cultural exclusion, since many minority groups suffer from both?
- How to promote genuine mutual understanding rather than simply a tokenistic appreciation of diversity?
- How to enable greater public participation, yet also ensure that participation is conducted responsibly, with a spirit of openness and fairness, and is not simply a way of asserting dogmatic claims or scapegoating unpopular groups? (Kymlicka 2003:3)

There has been growing interest in how best to articulate and achieve social policy goals that address the multiple issues that accompany immigration, the settlement process and immigrant–host relations. Concepts such as social cohesion, social inclusion/exclusion, and social capital have become prominent in immigration-related work carried out in Canada (Jeanotte 2002, 2003) and the European Union (European Commission 2003, Parekh 2000). The changing demographic structure and economic needs of many of these societies have underlined the importance of immigrant selection and settlement. Immigrants face challenges as they seek to obtain housing, education, employment and health care at the very moment they have left many of their existing networks behind, while the host community often struggles to understand and accept immigrants (Policy Research Initiative 2003).

These issues have been recognised in New Zealand (New Zealand Immigration Service 2004) and the question of positive settlement outcomes for migrants, refugees and their families, as well as enhancing host society institutions and outcomes, has emerged as an important policy objective. Social cohesion is implicit in government's key goals including:

- strengthening national identity and upholding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- growing an inclusive innovative economy for the benefit of all
- maintaining trust in government and providing strong social services
- improving New Zealanders' skills
- reducing inequalities in health, education, employment and housing.

Government can, and does, influence social cohesion in a number of ways, including human rights legislation, investment in social development and shaping immigration policy. From a New Zealand government perspective, there is a need for greater understanding and monitoring of the impact of settlement policy on outcomes for migrants and their families, and the wider community. At present, there are significant gaps in available outcome indicators of social cohesion, and there are few "impact" indicators to measure the effects of settlement policies on social cohesion or other high-level social outcomes. The Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report*, and other sources, provides high-level indicators of social wellbeing across a range of domains, and information on various social outcomes and changes in those outcomes over time. However, they do not identify the causes of those outcomes or changes. There is also a lack of quality and detail in administrative information about the situation of various immigrant groups. For example, migrants and refugees are often recorded as "other" instead of being recorded by their respective ethnic group, country of origin and residence status.

Two tasks emerge from this situation. The first is to develop a robust and pragmatic rendering of social cohesion as a social policy goal, and the second is to develop an appropriate indicator framework that would provide the evidence base for understanding the post-arrival pathways and outcomes for both immigrant and host.

### DEFINING SOCIAL COHESION

There is no commonly accepted definition of social cohesion in the international literature but Canadian social theorist, Jane Jenson, has usefully described a "socially cohesive society" as one where all groups have a sense of "belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy" (Jenson 1998). Jenson also suggests that these positive attributes of cohesion are often complemented by reference to negative variables such as isolation, exclusion, non-involvement, rejection and illegitimacy as examples and perceptions of the absence of cohesion (Jenson 1998). Beauvais and Jenson (2002) combine an interest in social cohesion with social capital and underline the interactive elements of:

- common values and a civic culture
- social order and social control
- social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities
- social networks and social capital
- territorial belonging and identity.

Social cohesion is not unidirectional but interactive. Policy implications and the measurement of cohesion depend on how the concept is defined. As Beauvais and Jenson (2002) point out, each of these elements could be linked or they could be freestanding, with each having different implications. If common values and civic

culture are the lens through which cohesion is understood, then attempts will be made to measure the fragmentation and weakening of values and a policy intervention may entail a strategy that promotes common values. If social order and social control is the focus, then the concern may be with the consequences of exclusion and the perceived legitimacy of the system. Economic concerns and issues of redistribution would dominate the policy and measurement focus of the third element, whereas networks and embeddedness would dominate the fourth. The fifth element is concerned with the connections to a place and its institutions in a broad sense. Throughout, there are “definitional choices [which] have significant consequences for what is analysed, what is measured, and what policy action is recommended” (Beauvais and Jenson 2002:6).

## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

In those constituencies that have engaged in a policy-related debate about the links between social cohesion and immigration (Canada, the European Union, the OECD, and the United Kingdom in particular) there are some interesting – and significant – international differences. In Canada, social cohesion was identified as a central policy issue with regard to immigration in the mid-1990s, and significant resources were directed to developing an adequate policy response (see Jeanotte 2002, Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology 1999). By the late 1990s social cohesion was defined as:

...an ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians. (see Canadian Council on Social Development 2000:34)

By 2002, the language had changed significantly. Social cohesion was aligned with discussion about social capital and with shared citizenship. By 2004, social cohesion still had government resources attached to the project of defining what it meant and how it might be measured, but it was no longer a key policy lens, except as a high level policy ambition. The language of social cohesion had been replaced by the goal of shared citizenship and an interest in social capital (Policy Research Initiative 2003).

The European Union, Council of Europe and OECD have also invested a considerable amount of resource in the notion of social cohesion and how it might be measured. Jeanotte notes:

The OECD had the narrowest implicit definition of social cohesion, focusing almost exclusively on the economic and material aspects of the concept. The Council of Europe, on the other hand, had an extremely broad definition of cohesion – so broad, in fact, that it had separated cohesion into three interrelated categories – democratic cohesion, social cohesion and cultural

cohesion. The European Union has characterised its approach to social cohesion as being consistent with "the European model of society", founded on a notion of solidarity which is embodied in universal systems of social protection, regulation to correct market failure and systems of dialogue. (Jeanotte 2000:2)<sup>3</sup>

In Europe, in contrast to the Canadian shared citizenship focus, the political investments in the concept lead to an emphasis on cohesion in the face of economic and social threats – especially in relation to exclusion – and a "rights deficit" approach. Jeanotte identifies four characteristic perspectives that include:

- lack of a sense of European citizenship, political disenchantment, rights deficit
- unemployment, poverty and income inequality, rural deprivation/regional disparities, urban distress
- deterioration of the environment and quality of life, social exclusion from the Information Society
- cultural diversity and demographic change, changing values regarding work and society, influence of American culture and shift from "culture of collective security" to "culture of individual opportunity" (Jeanotte 2000:213).

In parallel with the Canadian perspective, however, there has been a tendency to use social capital as either equivalent to, or as a subset of, social cohesion. As the European System of Social Indicators argues:

Social cohesion is based on social capital ... which is also created by social relations and ties established, maintained and experienced by individuals. (Berger-Schmitt 2000:7)

Another European view establishes a link between cohesion and inclusion and observes that:

Inclusion is a two way process of adaptation and adjustment on the part of immigrants and minorities and the larger society, thus requiring the active involvement of all stakeholders. (Council of Europe 2000:13)

The Council of Europe reinforces this perspective by defining cohesion as a mixture of political, social and economic forms of cohesion that reflect concerns about exclusion and inclusion. The Council's list of defining characteristics of cohesion includes:

- shared loyalties and solidarity
- strength of social relations and shared values

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3 In the EU, the concept of cohesion has a very different history from its use elsewhere. The European concept of "cohesion" first and foremost refers to the political forces that hold the Union together. It is closely coupled with equally specific notions of subsidiary and solidarity. The political meaning inflects the European discussion about social and economic cohesion.

- feelings of a common identity and sense of belonging to the same community
- trust among members
- reduction of disparities, inequalities and social exclusion.

In the United Kingdom, the debate concerning social cohesion and immigrants has been recently defined by the work of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (Parekh 2000). Cohesion was defined in relation to "...a community of communities and a community of citizens..." where:

Cohesion in such a community derives from a widespread commitment to certain core values, both between communities and within them; equality and fairness; dialogue and consultation; tolerance, compromise, and accommodation; recognition and respect for diversity; and – by no means least – determination to confront and eliminate racism and xenophobia. (Parekh 2000:56)

The Parekh definition fits with the earlier Canadian interpretation with a strong emphasis on a sense of belonging. It reflects the view that social cohesion refers to "the mutuality of claims and obligations, mutual concerns and a shared loyalty to the well-being of the community" (Southall Report 2002:7 online).

In the United Kingdom, as in Canada and the European Union, specific organisations have been either established to distil and disseminate understanding about social cohesion or have taken on this role. In the United Kingdom, the Home Office Community Cohesion Unit and Cohesion Advisory Panel and the Social Exclusion Unit have been established. In Canada, the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN) acts as a main conduit for the debate as does the Council of Europe's Directorate General (III) of Social Cohesion in the European Union.

The international literature (Vertovec 1999, Beauvais and Jenson 2002, Jenson 1998, Maxwell 1996, Papillon 2002 and van der Leun 2003) raises some key issues about building social cohesion in the context of expanding cultural and ethnic diversity. In particular, there are questions around:

- assuming a consensus about social cohesion as a desirable end-state
- the extent to which there are patterns of cooperative social interaction and shared core values
- what the common values consist of and how they are cultivated and maintained
- the extent to which the interest in social cohesion is a product of recent changes in economic policy and the greater labour market insecurity/flexibility and political restructuring.

There is also discussion in the international literature about social cohesion as a policy goal for governments. A number of themes emerge from this literature that describe the various policy dimensions of social cohesion, including shared values and participation, systemic and individual barriers, spatial separation and exclusion, social capital and integration.

### Shared Values, Participation and Inclusion

Shared values and interaction (particularly economic interactions) are seen as critical to building cohesion, as are opportunities to engage in the core institutions of society. These provide avenues through which migrants can gain access to resources and the positive outcomes that they provide.

Social cohesion involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community. (Maxwell 1996:13)

The policy implications of this perspective on cohesion relate to the quality of civic participation (and the potential for civic unrest where collective civic goals are not generally supported), the accessibility of infrastructure and services to all, and the demand for welfare services where participation and inclusion are not equitably available. It also emphasises the importance of labour markets and economic engagement as a route to cohesion through economic participation.

### Systemic and Individual Barriers

The systemic and individual barriers faced by immigrants or new settlers include particular forms of indifference and discrimination. Lack of recognition of foreign credentials and qualifications, racial or ethnic discrimination, prejudice in the work environment, lack of access to affordable housing, and lack of suitable language training "contribute to the social exclusion of more vulnerable newcomers" (Papillon 2002:iii).

There are different ways in which new settlers come to feel part of a community after arrival. There is an expressional or subjective dimension of being part of a community or society, which relates to the acceptance of identity and individuality. There is also a functional dimension of incorporation in which the labour market and other public domain activities are often central (van der Leun 2003:23). The wellbeing of immigrants and their families depends on the contribution of both the expressional and functional aspects. This sense of belonging and acceptance is an important part of both an immigrant's sense of settlement success as well as acceptance by host communities.



In policy terms, formal recognition of migrant skills and qualifications not only ensures better employment outcomes and work-related integration for migrants but also increases migrant perception of the legitimacy of the social institutions in the host country. Confidence in institutional arrangements in the host country in turn contributes to greater participation and inclusion.

### Spatial Separation and Exclusion

Immigrants frequently congregate in particular cities, or specific areas of a city, in response to knowledge and family or community ties that are established by earlier migrant streams as well as a product of various policies and behaviours by host communities and gatekeepers. The reasons for immigrant's congregating or dispersing are complex (Johnson et al. 2002), as are the beliefs and reactions to such behaviour. Local urban management, employment and housing policies in particular, may seek to address issues of spatial separation and exclusion for migrant groups.

The spatial concentration of immigrants may not necessarily be a problem: it may contribute to the creation of social networks and facilitate access to employment; but it may also, when combined with poverty, become an explosive mix, leading directly to the social exclusion of future generations. (Papillon 2002:iii)

The management of urban spaces is an essential dimension of sustainable diversity: urban policies conducive to social sustainability must build bridges among people of diverse origins and create the conditions for the full inclusion of immigrants into neighbourhood life, the labour market, and the cultural life of the city. (Papillon 2002:26)

The policy implications relate to perceptions of migrant populations concentrated in specific areas that are deemed problematic by either the host or the migrant community. They also relate to the distribution of services and what happens to migrants who live in areas other than where most new settlers are living.

### Social Capital

Social capital is arguably a prerequisite to social cohesion because social cohesion requires high levels of cooperative social interaction amongst citizens, groups and institutions, based on trust and respect. The OECD (2001) defines social capital as: "Networks together with shared norms, values and understandings which facilitate cooperation amongst groups". In the European Union, OECD and Canada, social capital has recently been defined as a critical factor in contributing to social cohesion.

Social capital indicators contribute to understanding social cohesion and migrant settlement through their focus on:

- the existence of social relations in the form of personal relations and organisational membership
- social contacts and support within private networks
- civic engagement in public realms
- the subjective quality of social relations
- the perceived quality of societal institutions.

In the United Kingdom, government intervention to promote social capital is justified by arguments about equity and efficiency.

Interventions to promote social capital (directly or indirectly) may help reduce negative externalities (i.e. exclusion of certain groups) associated with the accumulation of certain forms of social capital and facilitate investments in more beneficial kinds of social capital. Social capital may also contribute to improving information flows, therefore reducing transaction costs. Governments can also promote a fair distribution in such a way that access to high-quality social capital (i.e. social networks with access to broad information channels and linkages to structures of power) is achievable by all. Reduced access to certain forms of social capital by certain groups may negatively affect social mobility and reinforce social inequities. (Policy Research Initiative 2003:54)

In the New Zealand policy context, useful distinctions are made between:

... attitudes and values that support positive interactions with others, patterns of participation in formal and informal social networks that may generate beneficial forms of social capital, and outcomes of social capital in the forms of civic behaviours that reflect individual's willingness to co-operate with others for the common good. (Ministry of Social Development 2004a)

The government role in building social capital is broadly conceived in terms of:

- maintaining high quality public governance
- safeguarding civil, political and property rights
- protecting public safety
- reducing poverty and unemployment
- producing healthy and well educated citizens
- addressing community disadvantage
- strengthening families (Ministry of Social Development 2004a).

One important reason for incorporating social capital into social cohesion policy frameworks is to acknowledge the network and relational issues that accompany the

selection and incorporation of immigrants who have been chosen largely on skill and economic investment grounds.

The narrowly defined *Homo economicus* has proven to be unable to account for many aspects of the network-driven and network-generating processes of international migration... (van der Leun 2003:21)

These network generating processes may be *structural/functional* and relate to the integration of immigrants into the wider society, especially through the labour market. They may also be *relational/perceptual* and relate to the establishment of relationships with groups and communities outside the immigrant community. Social capital is seen to be most often applied to the latter (Portes 1995, van der Leun 2003.)

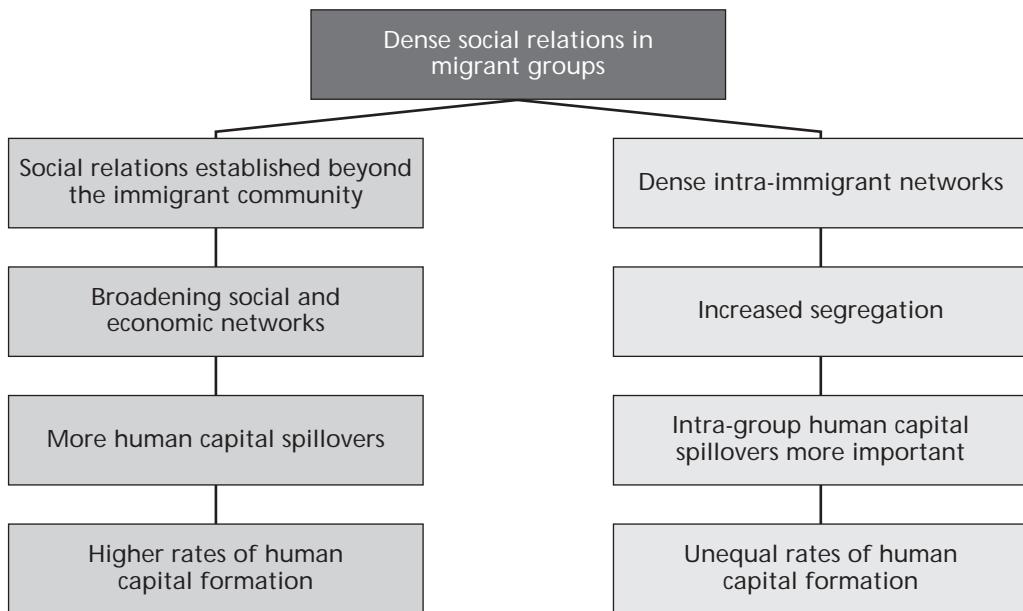
An expression of social capital is provided by civic participation, which encompasses political involvement, giving, volunteering, and engagement in work-related organisations (unions, professional associations), sports and recreational organisations, religious organisations, community or school-related groups, cultural, educational and hobby-related groups, or service clubs and fraternal organisations (Schugurensky 2003:10). Civic participation results in a variety of personal and social benefits, including individual wellbeing, important democratic capacities, lower crime and educational achievement (Schugurensky 2003:11-12).

Caution needs to be voiced in relation to the (sometimes) ambiguous outcomes of some forms of social capital and some measures of social cohesion. Where a migrant community comprises an inwardly focused “small world” network, there is a potential for the host community to react negatively to the sense that migrant communities keep themselves separate and “segregated” from the dominant group (Friessen 2003:187-191). There is a perception that the dense forms of social relations and local trust that exist within the migrant community may build relational embeddedness and local social capital for the migrant group but not necessarily be seen to contribute to social cohesion in a wider context. Functional embeddedness – facilitated through participation in the labour market in particular – is often approved by the host community because it appears more likely to enhance social cohesion through the widening of social and economic networks between host and migrant groups.

The capacity of migrant communities to develop dense social relations can be seen to lead to segregation as much as to social cohesion. In models that describe these alternative outcomes in migrant communities, the onus of social capital building is often seen to fall on the migrant community rather than on the complex interplay between host and migrant community interactions. There is an implicit presumption that dense intra-migrant social capital building produces unequal rates of human

capital formation and therefore may be less desirable than inter-group networking that produces higher rates of human capital spillovers (Friessen 2003). In a polarised typology like this, the complex relationships between host and migrant community are likely to be overlooked or simplified as stereotypes that do not represent the nuanced social dynamics that take place between the two forms of community interaction. Figure 1 suggests this unidirectional understanding of social capital.

Figure 1 Alternative Social Capital Outcomes



Source: adapted from Friessen 2003:187-191

### Integration

The final theme in the international literature is integration, which can be seen in some ways as an older variant of a social cohesion focus. Integration has been interpreted in different ways according to both historical period and location and, in its broadest form, includes assimilation, notions of a melting pot and various forms of cultural pluralism. In current usage, integration is seen to be distinct from the older discourses of assimilation or pluralism. The term reflects the recognition that heterogeneity is a permanent phenomenon in societies. It assumes that different social groups influence each other reciprocally and that together they create the national space in which all participants are citizens with equal rights and civic unity is promoted but not at the expense of ethnic diversity. This has become a notion that has gained currency in countries of immigrant settlement but it takes a variety of forms and varies from “soft”

through to “hard” versions, especially in countries such as Canada which have had multiculturalism as an official policy since the 1970s.

From a British perspective, Adrian Favell (2001:116) notes that “integration” has become something of an all-purpose rubric: “a vague yet technical sounding term that encompasses a range of positions from more assimilatory policies through to more openly multicultural ones.” While integration conceives and conceptualises practical steps in a long process of migration settlement, it does so by projecting both social change and continuity between the past and some idealised end-point. “Integration” measures cover an exhaustive list, including: basic legal and social protection, formal naturalisation rights, anti-discrimination laws, the redistribution of resources, policies on public housing, law and order, tolerance, language and multicultural education. Ultimately, integration aims for “the extremely difficult and improbable...construction of a successful, well-functioning, multi-cultural or multi-racial society” (Favell 2001:118).

From a Canadian perspective, Peter Li (2003) critiques the discourse of integration, arguing that its subtext, which is effectively “becoming similar to Canadians”, is more akin to assimilation. Thus, immigrants are “integrated” when they earn as much as native-born Canadians, adopt the English or French languages, move away from ethnically concentrated immigrant enclaves, and participate in social and political activities of mainstream society. The discourse nominally endorses cultural diversity but views specific cultural differences as a threat. He argues that the integration discourse upholds notions of conformity and compliance as yardsticks in evaluating immigrants. The integration discourse, he notes, has a tendency to reify specific cultural and racial differences and see them as a threat to Canada’s core values. Cultural, political and other ties to the sending country and urban concentration in Canada are seen as incompatible with integration. Moreover:

Despite the policy objective of defining integration as a two-way street that requires accommodation on the part of both immigrants and Canadian society, the integration discourse suggests that it is immigrants and not Canadian society and its institutions that are required to change. (Li 2003:10)

In Australia, which adopted official policies of multiculturalism along with Canada in the 1970s, commentators have been critical of cultural pluralism because of a reluctance to accept immigrants and their culture in the public domain. In this form of cultural pluralism, migrants are encouraged to maintain their cultural and ethnic difference “at home” (cooking their own food, talking their own language, observing their own religious practices), but they are actively discouraged from any visible public observances (local dress forms are discouraged in schools and work places, “non-standard” language is not tolerated at school or work).

Despite the obvious attraction of cultural pluralism as a means of generating greater tolerance and acceptance of "difference", the difficulties surrounding cultural pluralism were recognized from the outset by social-policy analysts and policy-makers alike. Its inherent contradictions and tensions, are chiefly two-fold: the first surrounds the characterization of the notions of culture, ethnicity and identity; the second concerns the degree of particularist differentiation (structural pluralism) that is permissible without damaging social cohesion, or the integrity and moral order of society. This model as a policy regime, while giving legitimacy to the strivings of these new groups for equality of status, and of respect, was also attractive and functional for the dominant groups by containing the strivings of members of ethnic groups to the private rather than the public domain. (Jayasuriya 1996:210-212)

In both Australia and Canada, and in the literature generally, "integration" is more often understood as a state (less frequently as a process), which may be viewed as a corollary to social exclusion. However, "integration" raises the question of integrating into or with what? Even if it implies reciprocity, the mistake is to assume only two diametrically opposed "cultures" are involved where the host society and "immigrants" (Asian, Pacific peoples) are somehow homogenous. "In short, integrating 'into something' then, implies some stable form of society where hegemonic cultures are not contested by the political, economic, social and cultural participation of 'ethnic minorities' themselves" (Samers 1998:129).

#### SOCIAL COHESION: A NEW ZEALAND DEFINITION

Interest in social cohesion as an appropriate policy response to immigration settlement is a relatively recent development in New Zealand. The Immigration Settlement Strategy provides the following definition of social cohesion as an outcome statement:

New Zealand becomes an increasingly socially cohesive society with a climate of collaboration because all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy. (New Zealand Immigration Service 2004)

This constitutes a high-level outcome with five intermediate outcomes. The elements of social cohesion, in the context of a Settlement Strategy, apply to both individuals and groups. Policies and services for migrants, refugees and their families can be assessed in terms of their contribution to these elements.

- Belonging involves a sense of being part of the wider community, trust in other people, and common respect for the rule of law and for civil and human rights . New Zealand is home to many peoples, and is built on the bicultural foundation of the Treaty of Waitangi. New Zealand's ethnic and cultural diversity should be recognised, celebrated and valued.

- Inclusion involves equity of opportunities and of outcomes, with regard to labour market participation, income, education, health and housing. The contribution of good settlement outcomes to social cohesion should be recognised and valued.
- Participation includes involvement in social activities, in community groups and organisations, and in political and civic life (voting or standing for election on a school board of trustees). All people should be able to participate in all aspects of New Zealand life.
- Recognition involves valuing diversity and respecting differences by all groups, including the host country, protection from discrimination and harassment, and a sense of safety. Diversity of opinions and values amongst the many cultures that make up New Zealand today should be accepted and respected.
- Legitimacy includes confidence in public institutions that act to protect rights and interests and to mediate conflicts, and institutional responsiveness. Public institutions must foster social cohesion, engender trust and be responsive to the needs of all communities.

This extended definition provides a national platform for social cohesion in the New Zealand context. It identifies some key touchstones that require elaboration for them to provide guidance at a practical and operational level, and for the various elements to be integrated into a coherent policy framework. Further work is required from the key policy agencies (Immigration Service, Department of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Social Development) to anchor these high-level statements to programmes and more specific outcomes. Given the concentration of immigrants in urban locations, most notably Auckland, these nationally driven policy interests need to be accompanied by local initiatives.

At a local level, the Auckland Regional Settlement Strategy, which is part of the Sustainable Cities initiative in the Sustainable Development Programme of Action, identifies what is described as a “plan to achieve sustainable settlement outcomes which contribute to social cohesion in the Auckland Region” (Stone 2004). A number of “output” and “process” objectives are specified, along with positives (e.g. high political and public profile, committed NGOs) and risks and challenges, including a “lack of agreed national outcomes for settlement” and “uneven access to resources between agencies”. This initiative is still evolving and the engagement of various communities and agencies is stressed in the documentation and process. Social cohesion is not considered at any length but it is implicit in a number of the objectives. The document highlights the interesting commonalities – and differences – as social cohesion makes an appearance at both the national and local level.

## DEVELOPING AN INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

The purpose of indicators is to facilitate an understanding of change over time. A baseline is established and subsequent consistent monitoring measures the extent to which a situation deteriorates or improves from one period to the next. Monitoring the social impacts of settlement policies requires a complex framework that captures information about the impact of settlement policy on outcomes for migrants, refugees, their families, and the wider community. Any monitoring of the impacts of settlement policies needs to capture both the impact of settlement in New Zealand on new settlers, and the impact of the settlement of new immigrants on the communities in which they live and the wider society.

### International Indicator Framework Debates

The rationale for systematic monitoring and measurement of social cohesion indicators related to immigrants contributes to the diagnostic tools of government and its agencies. In particular, systematic tracking of programme impacts and outcomes provides an assessment of whether policy objectives are being achieved across the government sector and amongst other actors such as community groups and non-government agencies. It also provides an opportunity to develop more refined measurement tools (Policy Research Initiative 2003).

The literature on the key social indicators associated with social cohesion and immigration has been criticised for the tendency to be reliant on highly quantitative material. There is a tendency to research social inclusion/exclusion in a positivist manner, without understanding some of the qualitative elements at local or national levels. Samers (1998), for example, notes that while social exclusion has eclipsed other terms such as "poverty" or "deprivation" in academic and social policy analyses, the need for it to be sustainable requires information on relational issues (e.g. the level of social participation, local networks or lack of power) and these are not easily derived from statistical counts.

In addition to concerns of an overly empiricist focus, there are two further issues to consider in the process of establishing a social cohesion indicator framework. The first is clarity about what is to be measured (Council of Europe 2000), which, in turn, requires "the involvement of all stakeholders, including immigrants and minorities" in defining policy targets. Indicators need to be sensitive to diverse populations. The labels "host" and "immigrant" collapse important differences within such communities, while ethnic labels need to reflect social usage and evolving identities. Second, it is important to establish stakeholders' agreement on the methods of measurement, and to utilise a range of quantitative and qualitative methods (Council of Europe 2000:98). A third and further qualification concerns high level aggregate data



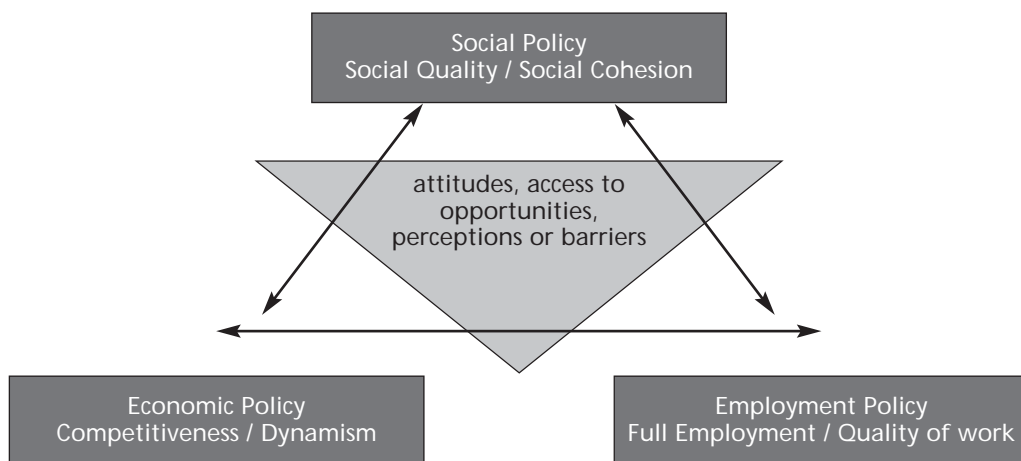
compared with micro-level information. If social cohesion is context-dependent, then the reliability of measures and its impact are greater at the local or micro-level. It is possible to obtain consistent meaning at both micro- and macro-levels (Policy Research Initiative 2003).

The literature on social cohesion and inclusion/exclusion tends to place economic indicators as central in any policy assessment framework.

The economic analysis emphasises income and consumption (measured by quantitative variables), and focuses upon labour markets and entrepreneurial activity (usually small-scale, possibly informal) as a policy response. The social analysis takes the absolute condition of poverty as read and focuses upon causation through relationships, using concepts such as: deprivation, vulnerability, marginalisation and, more recently, exclusion. It is therefore particularly concerned with the conditions of access to labour markets, economic opportunities, social sector services, and the benefits of full community and civil society (i.e. different levels) membership. The level of security and the ability to exercise choice are two principal qualitative variables used in this analysis. (Wood 2000:4)

An alternative model (Figure 2) would give more or less equal weight to all three aspects of social, economic and employment related data and include recognition of personal and structural factors such as attitudes and access to opportunities and perceptions of barriers.

Figure 2 Model of Factors Influencing Social Cohesion for Migrant Groups



Such a model continues to give weight to economic factors but may provide a useful basis for assessing the centrality of economic analysis in international models.

In establishing an indicator framework for measuring the impacts and outcomes of policy, it is important to recognise that:

- social cohesion is both a consequence and a cause
- relationships are bi-directional (see OECD 2001, Beauvais and Jenson 2002)
- there are no simple conclusions about causation (see Beauvais and Jenson 2002)
- economic indicators do not provide the full story (see Wood 2000).

### International Indicator Sets

The question of how both social cohesion and/or social capital may be measured has been the subject of some very large monitoring and research programmes, with the most impressive being that of the Council for Europe (see Council of Europe, [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)), which looked at 600 possible indicators. In most projects of the Council for Europe and the European Union, the key indicators are:

- demography
- inclusion in the labour market
- employment/training
- social benefits
- housing
- education
- participation in social, cultural and political life.

These are often accompanied by indicators of racism and discrimination, reflecting the European concern with extreme and institutionalised forms of racism and discrimination, typically the following:

- data on racism and discriminatory acts
- data on racially violent crimes and harassment
- number of complaints of discrimination and convictions
- data on patterns of discrimination in government
- data on direct and indirect discrimination.

### A Conceptual Framework for a New Zealand Model

Conceptually, the five intermediate outcomes identified are divided in the framework into two categories:

- elements of socially cohesive behaviour
- elements that comprise conditions for a socially cohesive society.

## Elements of Socially Cohesive Behaviour: Belonging and Participation

A sense of belonging derives from being part of the wider community, trusting in other people, and having a common respect for the rule of law and for civil and human rights – New Zealand is home to many peoples, and is built on the bicultural foundation of the Treaty of Waitangi.

- Ethnically and culturally diverse communities and individuals experience a sense of belonging and their contribution is recognised, celebrated and valued.

Participation includes involvement in economic and social (cultural, religious, leisure) activities, in the work place, family and community settings, in groups and organisations, and in political and civic life (such as voting or standing for election on a school board of trustees).

- All people in New Zealand are able to participate in all aspects of New Zealand life.

## Conditions for a Socially Cohesive Society: Inclusion, Recognition and Legitimacy

Inclusion involves equity of opportunities and outcomes, with regard to labour market participation and income, and access to education and training, social benefits, health services and housing.

- All people in New Zealand share access to equitable opportunities and services and contribute to good settlement outcomes in ways that are recognised and valued.

Recognition involves all groups, including the host country, valuing diversity and respecting differences, protection from discrimination and harassment, and a sense of safety.

- Diversity of opinions and values amongst the many cultures that make up New Zealand today are accepted and respected and people are protected from the adverse effects of discrimination.

Legitimacy, includes confidence in public institutions that act to protect rights and interests, the mediation of conflicts, and institutional responsiveness.

- Public institutions foster social cohesion, engender trust and are responsive to the needs of all communities.

## Building the Framework

There are two ways of building the components for a New Zealand indicator framework. The first approach involves building a direct comparison of immigrant population statistics compared with statistics for the general population and measuring the distance between the two relative to the size of the two populations. In other words, measuring migrant participation in the labour market and comparing it with everyone else's participation in the labour market would provide an indication of how well or badly migrants were being integrated into the labour market.

This disparities approach has the advantage of being able to use some well established data sources (such as the Census) and being able to report against existing indicators such as those collected in The Social Report. Apart from data limitations, this approach does not capture aspects of the host community's response to the migrant population, especially in relation to the diversity of that host community or in terms of their different roles towards, and interaction with, immigrants. Nor does it readily capture the reality that individual migrants move from their own baseline positions – sometimes very rapidly – when they find appropriate employment for example. An understanding of the observed differences between migrant and host needs to be informed by an analysis which is theoretically informed and able to consider the significance of various intra and inter-group characteristics and covariates (e.g., age composition, family and household structures).

A second approach, therefore, would focus on the host community responses rather than the norms of the host society. This approach does not preclude using all the directly comparable data that would be used in the first approach but, in addition, seeks to measure what is happening at the interface of the two communities. In other words, it would seek to measure the impact of programmes and policies designed to provide services to new migrant populations at local, regional and national levels and measure the attitudes and responses of the host communities towards migrant groups.

The draft framework (Figure 3) predominantly captures the first approach but includes some elements from the second approach, which explains the lack of direct correspondence between the two halves (migrant and host) of the table. The demographic characteristics identified at the bottom of the table are to establish context and a profile of the communities concerned. In and of themselves, they do not provide information on the degree to which New Zealand is a socially cohesive society, but in combination (the qualifications of migrants alongside employment rates or civic engagement), an indication of what influences particular outcomes is provided.

Figure 3 Draft Indicator Framework for Measuring the Impact of Settlement Policies on Social Cohesion

<b>High-level outcome</b>	New Zealand becomes an increasingly socially cohesive society with a climate of collaboration because all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy.
<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>	Individuals and groups exhibit elements of socially cohesive behaviour: belonging and participation. Conditions for a socially cohesive society are demonstrated through inclusion, recognition and legitimacy.

Migrant/refugee community	Host communities
<b>Elements of socially cohesive behaviour</b>	
<p><b>Belonging</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sense of belonging</li> <li>• frequency of intimate/family friend contact/networks</li> <li>• social involvement index</li> <li>• membership of groups</li> <li>• telephone and internet access</li> <li>• unpaid work outside the home</li> </ul> <p><b>Participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participation in tertiary and adult education</li> <li>• participation in preschool education</li> <li>• participation in arts and cultural activities</li> <li>• involvement in sports teams and leisure</li> <li>• percentage of immigrants voting</li> <li>• civic engagement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Belonging</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sense of belonging</li> <li>• frequency of contact in intimate networks</li> <li>• social involvement index</li> <li>• membership of groups</li> <li>• telephone and internet access</li> <li>• unpaid work outside the home</li> </ul> <p><b>Participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participation in tertiary and adult education</li> <li>• participation in preschool education</li> <li>• participation in arts and cultural activities</li> <li>• involvement in sports teams and leisure</li> <li>• percentage of individuals voting</li> <li>• civic engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Conditions for a socially cohesive society</b>	
<p><b>Inclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market income per person</li> <li>• paid employment rate</li> <li>• labour market participation rates</li> <li>• English literacy skills</li> <li>• unemployment rates</li> <li>• education and qualification recognition</li> <li>• welfare receipt</li> <li>• occupational distribution</li> <li>• home ownership</li> </ul> <p><b>Recognition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• racism and discrimination</li> <li>• representation in local/national government</li> <li>• own language media</li> <li>• own language use</li> </ul> <p><b>Legitimacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confidence in key societal institutions</li> <li>• perceptions of safety</li> <li>• service delivery to refugee and migrant groups</li> <li>• health levels and access to health services</li> <li>• appropriate representation in the mass media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Inclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market income per person</li> <li>• paid employment rate</li> <li>• unemployment rates</li> <li>• welfare receipt</li> <li>• occupational distribution</li> <li>• home ownership</li> <li>• education and qualifications</li> <li>• numbers of support programmes</li> </ul> <p><b>Recognition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• racism and discrimination</li> <li>• resourcing for media</li> </ul> <p><b>Legitimacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• surveys on racism and discrimination</li> <li>• confidence in key societal institutions</li> <li>• credential and qualification verification</li> <li>• position in relation to New Zealand's bicultural commitments</li> </ul>

Figure 3 (cont.)

Broad-based demographic knowledge about migrant and refugee communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• numbers of overseas immigrants</li> <li>• numbers of returning migrants</li> <li>• migration status (business, family reunification, refugee, returning resident)</li> <li>• length of time in New Zealand</li> <li>• first time or return</li> <li>• previous knowledge of country</li> <li>• existing links to family or friends</li> <li>• education level</li> <li>• qualifications</li> <li>• health status</li> <li>• languages spoken</li> <li>• religious beliefs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• occupation</li> <li>• labour force participation</li> <li>• industries worked in</li> <li>• personal income</li> <li>• population distribution</li> <li>• location in New Zealand on arrival</li> <li>• mobility within New Zealand over the first five years</li> <li>• home ownership</li> <li>• household size</li> <li>• household composition</li> <li>• telecommunications</li> <li>• vehicle ownership</li> </ul>

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND ISSUES

Any decision to pursue the development of a comprehensive indicator framework for New Zealand will require substantial commitment. The costs of developing new data sources or even extending existing data sources to incorporate relevant data are very high. Mapping the current range of services and service delivery agencies, both public and private, to create a baseline for assessing policy barriers and more efficient service delivery would also be costly and time consuming.

More broadly, it is important to align the indicator work on settlement outcomes and social cohesion with that currently underway elsewhere in the government sector, specifically the Child and Youth Indicators, Living Standards Indicators, Wellbeing Indicators, the *Social Report 2004* (Ministry of Social Development 2004b) and Sustainable Development. Much of the data collected on ethnicity, and/or people born overseas, is either not reflected in these initiatives or is captured at such a high level of generality that it provides no information on new settlers or social cohesion.

Indicators are more likely to register improvement over time if a range of other initiatives is undertaken at the same time to establish a baseline from which to measure and understand change. Moreover, simply recording such changes (deteriorating or improving) is insufficient. An analysis framework that makes sense of such changes is required, especially given the complex nature of immigration impacts and community processes.

Other activities that help clarify indicator development could include refining and gaining agreement for a workable definition of social cohesion with appropriate public and private service agencies, and immigrant communities and their representatives, as

the basis for social cohesion as an agreed social policy goal. Further clarification of the concept of social cohesion could include:

- addressing the tension between factors that contribute to a sense of “belonging” and factors that contribute to increased “recognition” (policies to facilitate “belonging” are potentially antithetical to policies to facilitate “recognition”)
- clarifying the status of tangata whenua in relation to their interface with immigrant populations
- recognising the extent to which refugees are similar to, and different from, other categories of immigrants.

Exploration of approaches and mechanisms to ensure greater co-ordination of services to immigrants and refugees. These would provide whole-of-government and private-public partnership options for the efficient and effective use of resources in achieving positive outcomes. A range of Canadian initiatives provide useful models for the kinds of things that could be achieved in New Zealand. For example:

- A specific focus on key areas of difficulty, such as foreign credential recognition, which has been addressed in recent work by CAETO (2004)
- British Columbia’s *International Qualifications Program* initiative, which provides leadership and support to regulatory bodies, professional and trade associations, employers, unions, post-secondary institutions, and community service agencies through three core service activities: capacity building, information services and networking.

Finally, there are important resourcing and impact trade-offs to be considered. An indicator such as “own language media” which appears as an element of “recognition” needs to be balanced with the need for “English Literacy Skills” under “inclusion”. These respective dimensions need not necessarily compete but in the absence of a comprehensive language policy framework (for example), initiatives which address these respective issues might reflect ad hoc and highly specific processes and policies. Aggregate or a summary assessment of the social cohesion achieved as measured by an indicator framework is misleading, but equally, so is a focus on particular dimensions if there is not some way of considering the complex interaction that occurs.

## CONCLUSION

Social cohesion provides one approach in conceptualising and measuring the outcomes of immigration for both those migrating and the host community(ies). On one level, it provides a high level policy goal that crystallises an agreed ambition to achieve positive outcomes for migrants and host. At another level, it can be used as the basis for an indicator framework that measures various outcomes as a check on policy intentions and service delivery. However, while social cohesion has appeared in some policy documents, there has been little public discussion and certainly no consensus

that such a concept should be the key policy focus. Moreover, that discussion needs to include key organisations and communities, both immigrant and host. In relation to the suggested indicator framework, we would acknowledge that further refinement is required but there are also significant information gaps. If nothing else, the exercise of considering what is required has highlighted the paucity of data in key areas. It is difficult, if not impossible, to draw any conclusions on the settlement outcomes for immigration or host society. This paper has made a case for adopting social cohesion as a suitable policy focus and for the need to develop a comprehensive indicator framework as a means of measuring outcomes.

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