Dupont, P-L., Sealy, T., & Modood, T. (2023). The relation between multiculturalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism in UK diversity politics. *Identities*, 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2023.2186622

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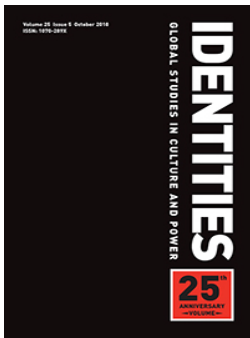
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The relation between multiculturalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism in UK diversity politics

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ABSTRACT
This article assesses whether multiculturalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism find themselves in tension or, rather, coexist in UK politics. This is done through the analysis of recent policy and civil society documents, complemented with semi-structured interviews with race equality organizations. Results suggest a complementary relationship between these normative perspectives, with interculturalism and multiculturalism jointly shaping the central government's policy as well as the discourse of civil society organizations. As for cosmopolitanism, it manifests itself primarily in civil society's support for a more humane system for asylum seekers, as well as in the endorsement of EU intervention in the governance of cultural diversity.

1. Introduction

Over the last couple of decades, the political philosophy of multiculturalism has come under fire from proponents of interculturalist and cosmopolitan alternatives. At its core, multiculturalism stipulates that equality of rights or dignity among citizens should be complemented with the recognition, accommodation or respect of racial, ethnic and religious difference (Taylor 1994; Modood 2007). This recognition of difference is seen to be an implication of equal citizenship and requiring not just laws, policies and institutional changes, such as the elimination of institutional racism and the accommodation of religious minority needs, but also an inclusive remaking of national identities, through leadership at state and civil society levels, so as to make

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This article has been corrected with minor changes. These changes do not impact the academic content of the article.

them inclusive of the whole citizenry and its differences (CMEB 2000). Interculturalism, often called 'community cohesion' in Britain, on the other hand, emphasizes inter-group contact and mixing as a way of reducing prejudices and enhancing cohesion. It also gives a prominent role to local authorities, who are closest to citizens' daily lives, when it comes to finding ways of catalysing this process (Zapata-Barrero 2016, 2017; Cantle 2012). Finally, cosmopolitans insist on the protection of migrant rights (Carens 2013; Shabani 2007; Benhabib 2004, 3) and the supervision of national authorities by supra-national human rights institutions (Caney 2005; Beitz 2009).

From the perspective of interculturalists, multiculturalism is guilty of having promoted separation as a means of avoiding contact and conflict (Cantle 2012, 53ff) as well as other sins, such as being too focused on race and ethnicity at the expense of other dimensions of individual difference (Cantle 2012, 77ff); encouraging a focus on difference rather than similarities; perpetuating the idea of the nation state as a territorial container; and treating ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities (Zapata-Barrero 2016). To this, multiculturalists reply that interculturalist criticisms rely on a caricature of multiculturalism, which has always emphasized macro-level dialogue (Sealy 2018). They also add that the notion of groups is essential to the social sciences and egalitarian politics (Modood 2017b). Another counter-criticism is that, by focusing exclusively on the local level of governance, interculturalists neglect the framework of citizenship rights which provide the basic equality needed for positive interactions to take place (Boucher and Maclure 2018).

Some cosmopolitans, like interculturalists, accuse multiculturalists of falling prey to an essentialising nationalist epistemology and of assuming clearly demarcated groups whose rules are binding on individual members (Beck 2006, 66–68). In addition they contend that multiculturalism flirts with cultural relativism and can serve to support despotism (Beck 2006); that it upholds a problematic distinction between natives and non-natives; that it does not sufficiently address institutional discrimination and everyday racism; and that it is limited to national policies and dialogue, rather than the global kind which is required (Delanty 2009, 132). Multiculturalists have powerfully rebutted the charge of essentialism, by arguing that the ontological status of ethnicity should be thought of as comparable to other collective social formations such as gender and class; and countered the accusation of cultural relativism, by insisting that recognition should not violate fundamental rights of individuals or otherwise cause harm (Modood 2007). They have also offered principled defences of borders, seen as necessary for the preservation of national communities which are a source of economic opportunities, solidarity, individual freedom, democracy and a form of belonging important

to many (Kymlicka 2001) as well as to prevent the exacerbation of racist sentiments through uncontrolled migration (Modood 2017a).

As this brief overview suggests, the relationship between multiculturalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism has been a vexed one in political theory. But is this cleavage reflected in politics, or do policymakers and activists rather pursue a combination of multiculturalist, interculturalist and cosmopolitan aims? In other words, is support for these normative perspectives a zero-sum game or is it mutually compatible? While Australian evidence points in the direction of complementarity between multiculturalism and interculturalism (Mansouri and Modood 2021), no existing study seems to have explored this topic in other contexts and in relation to cosmopolitanism. This article addresses the gap by analysing recent policy documents and civil society statements produced in the UK, as well as interviews with leaders of UK-based organizations active in the field of cultural diversity and anti-discrimination.

The paper proceeds as follows. The section on methodology briefly describes our conceptual premises, data sources and analytical strategy. Section 3 calls into question the announced death of multiculturalism by demonstrating the persistence of multicultural measures alongside intercultural ones in the UK Government's latest integration strategy. Section 4 turns to the views of four civil society organizations which also display a simultaneous endorsement of multiculturalism and interculturalism. Sections 5 and 6 reveal aspects of (multiculturalist) cosmopolitanism in civil society discourses around asylum seekers and the involvement of the EU in the protection of the rights of Muslims. The conclusion calls for a rethinking of some theoretical principles in light of political practice.

2. Methodology

This study seeks to make connections between three relatively abstract normative perspectives, developed mainly in academia, and the stance on cultural diversity taken by the UK government and a number of civil society organizations, understood as voluntary and not-for-profit associations, autonomous from the state, springing from the lives and activities of communities of interest (Young 2000, 158). Of course, each normative perspective has been endorsed by a number of authors whose problematizations and prescriptions vary to some extent. In order to reduce complexity and make the three -isms amenable to empirical analysis, we chose to draw on a succinct comparative account recently offered by some of their main exponents (Fossum et al. 2020). Largely based on this account, we distilled the main aspects of each normative perspective as set out in Table 1.[1] It should be noted that our original empirical work included a fourth perspective, namely transnationalism, which we do not address here.

Table 1. Key tenets of the three normative perspectives.

Multiculturalism	Interculturalism	Cosmopolitanism
It is legitimate for people to maintain ethno-cultural identities alongside national ones	Cross-cultural interactions should be fostered	Human rights should be upheld
There should be targeted policies accommodating ethno-cultural communities	Policies should focus on commonalities rather than differences between groups	International mobility should be eased
Public discourse should be inclusive of minorities	Cultural diversity as a source of creativity and innovation	Supra-national organizations should shape diversity policies
National governments should lead diversity policies	Local governments should lead diversity policies	
Racial, religious and cultural minorities should be protected from discrimination		

Having unpacked the main tenets of each normative perspective, including one that is shared by all three perspectives, we set out to explore whether they were echoed in a selection of official and civil society documents. This was done by attending to how such documents defined social problems and the underlying aims of the measures they criticized or endorsed. For the purpose of this article we retained two national documents, namely the *Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper* (HM Government 2018), the most comprehensive statement on integration produced by the government to date, and the report *Integration not demonization* (All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration 2017), which has informed this statement. We also analysed a position paper on Brexit issued by Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND 2016), one of the few documents addressing the supra-national governance of cultural diversity. In addition we relied on secondary literature and websites where necessary to clarify or contextualize the content of these documents.

In a second stage, we developed an interview schedule containing four questions intended to tap cosmopolitan views and five questions designed to assess support for multiculturalism and interculturalism (see Appendix 1). The questions did not mention the normative perspectives by name, as we assumed that respondents either would not be familiar with the concepts or might interpret them in a variety of ways. Most of the questions were explicitly normative in nature, prompting respondents to take a stance on social and political issues.

A sample of civil society organizations representing racial, cultural or religious minorities, or working in the field of integration or anti-discrimination, was drawn up. The sample included a mix of organizations working at the national level and locally in London and Bristol (see Table 2). Recruitment for the interviews took place by email and over the phone, between May and September 2021. As our interest lay in organizations' overall strategies and the ideas they drew on in the course of their advocacy, we requested to speak with chairpersons, directors or other senior officers.

Table 2. Civil society organizations interviewed.

Organization	Description	Location	Interviewee	Role
Nilaari	Minority-led charity with over 20 years of experience delivering social care support, talking therapies and training to adults and young people across Bristol.	Bristol	Shelagh Hetreed	Training Coordinator and Business Officer
St Paul's Carnival	Established in 1968, St Paul's Carnival currently brings the African Caribbean history and heritage of Carnival to communities all year round.	Bristol	LaToyah McAllister Jones	Executive Director
British Future	Centre left think tank specialising on public attitudes toward immigration, integration, race and identity, which offers policy solutions and finds common ground to bring people together.	National	Sunder Katwala	Director
Muslim Council of Britain	Umbrella body for British Muslim organizations founded in 1997 and comprising some 500 member organizations including mosques, schools, charitable associations and professional networks.	National	Zara Mohammed	Secretary General
Bristol Muslim Cultural Society	Charity established in 1986 to offer local authorities and public bodies an insight into the needs and issues of the Bristol Muslim Community.	Bristol	Ismaeel Akram	Director of Operations
Black South West Network	Black-led racial justice charity supporting the development of dynamic, independent and strong Black and minoritized communities while challenging systemic barriers.	Bristol	Sado Jirde	Director
Stand Against Racism and Inequality	Service user/community-oriented agency, established in 1988, that provides support and advice to victims of hate, and promotes equality and good relations between people with protected characteristics as defined by law.	Bristol	Alex Raikes	Director
100 Black Men of London	Community-based charity led by Black men and established in 2001 to deliver mentoring, education, economic and empowerment, and health & wellness programmes.	London	Jonathan Aghimien	Member
Race Equality Foundation	Charity established in 1995 to promote race equality in social support and public services.	National	Jabeer Butt	Chief Executive
Somali Advice and Forum of Information	Community-based organization founded in Brent and led by British-Somali mothers to help each other and their children for positive integration.	London	Rhoda Ibrahim	Chief Executive Officer
Runnymede Trust	Race equality think tank that generates intelligence to challenge race inequality in Britain through research, network building, debates and policy engagement.	National	Halima Begum	Chief Executive
Voice4Change	National advocate for the BAME voluntary and community sector.	National	Kunle Olulode	Director

When we received a positive reply we followed up with a consent form which gave participants the opportunity to indicate whether they wished to remain anonymous. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated social distancing all interviews took place over Zoom. After the interviews, audio recordings were sent to a professional transcription service where they were integrally transcribed. Transcripts were then uploaded to NVivo for qualitative analysis, using the same coding criteria applied to the documents.

3. Integration and community cohesion: a multicultural backlash?

In 2017, in the context of a call for the British government to offer greater integration support to recent immigrants, *Integration not demonization* announced that the 'traditional, laissez-faire British model of multiculturalism has too often encouraged communities to live separate lives – reinforcing distinct cultural identities to the detriment of efforts to draw attention to what we have in common – and is defunct'. Of course this report was not the first in pronouncing the death of multiculturalism, as many authors have heralded the arrival of a post-multicultural era. What is striking is that the quote was reproduced verbatim in *Integrated Communities*, published the following year, which also adopted a strong stance in favour of social interaction and mixing.

If we define multiculturalism as a set of policies designed to recognize and accommodate minority ethnic identities, however, the approach seems to have put down deep roots in the UK since the 1980s. Looking at the Multiculturalism Policy Index compiled by Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka at Queen's University in Canada, we find a trend towards an increasing degree of multiculturalism covering the whole period between 1980 and 2020. Even more significantly, none of the multicultural policies under study has been cut back at any point during this period. As a result, the UK scores relatively highly on the Index despite the fact that multiculturalism is not proclaimed as an official policy goal.[2]

What seems to have happened, then, is a layering of integration, community cohesion or interculturalist policies on top of pre-existing multiculturalist ones (Mathieu 2018). This is similar to the pattern that was found over a decade ago in relation to 'civic integration' policies such as the imposition of language and culture tests to candidates for permanent residency or citizenship. According to authors such as Meer and Modood (2009) and Banting and Kymlicka (2013), these civic integration policies did not represent a move away from multiculturalism but had rather, historically speaking, been a basic feature of multiculturalism in Canada and other countries. From a normative point of view, they were also compatible with multiculturalism as long as they did not significantly interfere with the naturalization process

or attempt to assimilate newcomers into a homogenous national culture. A similar point could be made about integration, which need not conflict with multiculturalism as long as the drive for mixing complements and does not override individuals' right to preserve and cultivate their specific cultural heritage and their desire to have a sense of being British (Modood 2012). The *Integration not demonization* report shows some sensitivity to this issue by stating, immediately after the assertion of a 'defunct' multiculturalism, that policymakers should steer clear of 'the assimilationist politics of the French Burkini ban through imposing a state-sponsored identity and culture onto Britons of all backgrounds'. The way forward, therefore, would be a 'middle way emphasizing both the right of minority groups to uphold their own identities and cultural inheritances and the need for people of all walks of life not only to conform to certain shared norms and values, but to lead shared lives'.[3]

The fundamental compatibility between multiculturalism and interculturalism can also be inferred from *Integrated Communities*. As stated earlier, the document manifests a strong focus on inter-group contact and mixing, which is pursued through a variety of state-sponsored measures. For instance, the Cohesion and Integration/Belong Network offers 'academic research, consultancy, training, networking, thought leadership and events' with the aim of supporting and developing 'all those who are delivering cohesion, integration and intercultural work'.[4] The National Citizen Service gives young people from all backgrounds the opportunity to participate in social intervention projects, make friends and acquire life skills.[5] The Linking Network brings children from different schools together to discuss and learn about identity, diversity, equality and community. Its underlying premise is that 'high levels of meaningful contact between people from different backgrounds can reduce prejudice, increase trust and understanding between groups and lead to a greater sense of togetherness'.[6] The Church Urban Fund's Near Neighbours programme supports local projects aiming to bring about improvements in divided communities, promote honest conversations on diversity-related topics and train young people to become effective leaders in a multi-faith and multi-ethnic society (Near Neighbours 2021).

Alongside this endorsement of intercultural policies sits an official support for anti-discrimination measures which may fit as well in a multiculturalist framework as in an intercultural one. For instance the Strategy underscores the potential of the Public Sector Equality Duty created by the Equality Act 2010. As the Strategy (2018, 18) states, the Duty 'requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with different characteristics when designing policies and delivering services'. One of the ways in which the duty could be fulfilled would be by incorporating a specific objective to promote integration as a way of fostering good relations

between people of different races, religions or ethnicities. The Strategy also takes a strong stance against hate crime, which is described as a pernicious attack on the values of acceptance and respect for others which underpin British society. The policy framework to tackle hate crime is set out in the 2012 and 2016 Hate Crime Action Plans, which focus on prevention, reporting and support for victims. As part of its hate crime policy the British government funds Tell MAMA, a service to record incidents of anti-Muslim hatred as well as support victims. Another mechanism set up to address anti-Muslim bias is the Cross-Government Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred, run by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which was set up in 2012 and brings together government and civil society representatives to find ways of tackling anti-Muslim hatred. However the working group has been criticized for its lack of activity. For example, the Government has yet to put forward a definition of Islamophobia following its rejection of the one proposed in 2018 by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims (APPGBM 2018).[7]

The Race Disparity Unit is another example of difference-sensitive policy, aiming at collecting, analysing and publishing data on the experiences of people from different ethnic backgrounds. The data is published on the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website under topics such as crime, education, health and population, and assists departments in monitoring policies to reduce inequalities.[8] Strengthening Faith Institutions is a programme launched in 2016 and led by Faiths Forum for London. According to the HM Government (2018, 61), the programme offers training to faith institutions 'to improve their governance and resilience, including charity registration, safe-guarding, and their community engagement, and to increase the diversity of their boards'. In the same vein, the Government committed in the Strategy to identifying the barriers to Islamic theological institutes (*Dar ul Ulooms*) obtaining 'higher education accreditation of the qualifications they offer', on the grounds that the best institutes offer rigorous theological studies and that their students should have their work recognized including on the labour market.

If we look beyond national policy and pay closer attention to the multiple equality initiatives taken in an ad hoc, decentralized manner since the murder of George Floyd and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, multi-culturalism appears in an even better shape. As several commentators have noted, there are important continuities between Black Lives Matter and multiculturalism, especially as reflected in the report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, the leading multiculturalist statement, published in 2000 (Meer 2020; Uberoi 2020; Sealy 2020a). Perhaps the most noteworthy one is a commitment to account for the legacy of colonialism and slavery in the making of Britishness and the perpetuation of racial and ethnic inequalities up to this day. With this aim in mind, some universities have been

looking for ways of 'decolonizing' their curriculum so as to promote the inclusion and achievement of their Black student and staff,[9] even if a survey conducted in 2020 suggests these initiatives remain limited to a minority of British establishments (Batty 2020). In the same vein, the Sewell report released in 2021 recommended rethinking the 'British story' taught in compulsory education to include the Commonwealth and former colonies such as the West Indies, India and Pakistan, though it placed much more emphasis on highlighting the positive achievements of ethnic minorities than on denouncing the suffering and profiteering that derived from slavery (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities 2021, 89–93).[10] Beyond education, building names and statues honouring those who had prospered through the slave trade have also been challenged, removed or replaced (Morris 2020; Siddique and Skopeliti 2020). Yet unlike multiculturalism, which seeks the multi-way integration of all minorities and a reconceptualization of racism that pays due regard to the significance of cultural and religious stigma, Black Lives Matter mainly remains focused on the experience of Black communities and the phenotypical racism that has shaped it (Sealy 2020b).

4. The complementarity of multiculturalism and interculturalism in civil society discourses

Civil society is another space where multiculturalist and interculturalist approaches primarily seem to complement each other rather than come into conflict as they do in political theory, even if there are also areas of tension. This can be illustrated through the views of four organizations interviewed whose discourse mainly foregrounds aspects of multiculturalism and interculturalism, namely the Muslim Council of Britain, St Paul's Carnival, British Future and Stand Against Racism and Inequality (see Table 2).

   The Muslim Council of Britain's predominantly multiculturalist vision is one with strong interculturalist influences. Some views seem consistent with both multiculturalism and interculturalism, like the one according to which identities are multiple, enrich us and should not be hidden ('I think it's about the individuals themselves being able to really live their identities and not feel that they've got to hide one because other people are uncomfortable'); the view that the workplace is a key space where to hold intercultural dialogues and build intercultural understanding; or the focus on disadvantage linked to institutional racism and poverty. Other views are more clearly multiculturalist, such as those that emphasize the importance of an inclusive national discourse, the freedom to wear the headscarf, culturally appropriate public services and the increasing assertiveness of young Muslims with a strong British identity who want to belong in Britain:

> I do think that now there is almost, I wouldn't say an impatience but definitely a reluctance for young British Muslims or young ethnic minorities to accept the status quo anymore. [...] Those young people now have a really strong British identity, they've got a real kind of complex identity and I do think that they're not going to be willing to accept the policies and society telling them that they've got to get in line. Because ultimately people want to achieve a better way of living, they want to achieve new things.

Others still fall straight into the interculturalist camp, such as the opinion that all of society has a responsibility to be welcoming to everybody, that people should be brought together across differences, that targeted policies can be stigmatizing and that cultural diversity enhances creativity and innovation:

> In university, the Malaysians were always the most calm, the most introspective and reflective, then we had some of the Arabs who were very hot-headed, I mean we played to all of our stereotypes, hot-headed, you know. But it would be wonderful because you just had such a nice mix of people and you'd come up with some really great ideas and projects and you learn about one another and that's what I think a globalised society is really about; it's the best of all of it, not you know ... otherwise we never would've got salts and spices, right?

St Paul's Carnival and British Future exemplify a pattern of mixed multi-culturalist and interculturalist views. St Paul's Carnival is critical of overarching national policies in matters of cultural diversity, which are 'too blunt a tool to be effective', and comes down in favour of local-level authorities and organizations steering national support rather than the other way around (interculturalism). However it is also of the opinion that the state is necessary to ensure accountability for diversity policies, suggesting a limited multiculturalist inclination towards the national. When describing its own purpose, the Carnival frames it as using the arts to build social cohesion, empathy, understanding, equality and equity, evoking a mix of interculturalist and multiculturalist rationales for artistic intervention.

Another example of mixed multiculturalism and interculturalism is British Future, but in this case multiculturalist ideas come with strong nationalist overtones. According to British Future integration is about equal citizenship in and belonging to the nation state, and it is important for this state to invest in the building of inclusive, civic national identities. In other words, the state should focus on promoting the national identity but work hard at preventing barriers to belonging due to faith or national origin. Reflecting a nationalist inclination is the opinion that the citizen/migrant distinction in the attribution of rights is a legitimate one:

> I don't have a problem in principle with the idea that there are citizens and there are migrants that don't have the same rights as citizens, that would be the choice of some migrants. If you're a migrant from a country with a prohibition on dual nationality. So, I think it would be an absolutist position that said 'every

society must open voting in national elections to any resident of the country'. So, it's reasonable for there to be some things that are bounded by citizenship.

However British Future qualifies that there is a need for a government approach to people with legal status who are not citizens as well as for people without legal status. An interculturalist strand transpires in the view that the government should create the conditions for voluntary contact as 'there is less than we would want', especially in specific regions (Cornwall, Devon) and among the older generations.

Stand Against Racism and Inequality is yet another respondent who sees multiculturalism as having a necessary role to play but holds strong inter-culturalist views on mixing. On the one hand, the organization takes the view that people should be able to be 'out and proud' about all their identities, that equality monitoring makes people feel like they count, that a 'good culture' must celebrate differences and that the public sector must become much more inclusive to be attractive to ethnic minorities (multiculturalism):

> I mean would you want to join the Met with the news at the moment? You know, seriously. Would you want to join the Met? You've got to be willing to say, oh I'm going to totally not think about all those awful stories of what's happened to Black officers, men and women, White police officers laughing about dead sisters, dead Black sisters. [. . .] Every single day there are negative news stories for Black people and Asian people about being in the police, being in local government, being in public sector, being a doctor, being a nurse – even that, there's bad press. So I think we need to change, the whole kind of image needs to change really.

On the other hand, Stand Against Racism and Inequality defines integration as taking part in activities together positively, which amounts to an interculturalist critique of segregation. It also acknowledges a lack of mixing which it mainly attributes to the self-segregation of White people: ' 'One good example for me is you just go into Cabot Circus or go into Cribbs Causeway, our two biggest shopping centres. All the staff, most of the staff are White. You can go into so many restaurants in Bristol and they're nearly all White people. And what is that about really? So I think that we've got a long way to go.'

5. The weak cosmopolitan claims of civil society: the case of asylum seekers and 'forced migration'

If civil society simultaneously endorses multiculturalism and interculturalism, what is its position regarding cosmopolitanism? Despite the fact that intervie-wees mainly work in the field of cultural diversity and anti-discrimination, they display a strong sensitivity to the claims of asylum seekers. In other words, there does not seem to be any perceived conflict between supporting the appreciation of cultural differences and being in favour of a more welcoming asylum policy.

This is in line with the findings of Roos and Laube (2015), whose research on the role of cosmopolitan norms in the discourse of Austrian and Finnish civil society actors found widespread endorsement of a right to 'protection' for those subject to political persecution. For example, Bristol Muslim Cultural Society disapproves of the housing of asylum seekers in derelict barracks and Stand Against Racism and Inequality points out that the system for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is inhumane: 'It's ridiculous that the majority are coming into Kent and there is no proper policy, law and requirement to make sure that the country shares the care for those children and young people when they arrive. It sets up an awful situation for when those young people arrive'. Voice4Change notes how the ability of asylum seekers and migrants to work is circumscribed by their legal status, and that the practice of distributing vouchers to asylum seekers 'singles them out in social settings as different'. According to Nilaari one way of showing solidarity is by making sure that those who come from war-torn countries, who 'have trauma as part of their CV and didn't have a choice about leaving their country', effectively receive all the benefits they are entitled to. For those people, according to St Paul's Carnival, the state's role is to protect their human rights on a par with citizens: 'From an equity perspective, refugees arrive with far less capacity and resilience and the state should be mindful of that'. The Runnymede Trust stresses that the British way is to support those in need, those who are vulnerable, and to be a safe haven for people who 'feel persecuted, who need refuge, who seek solace'. Mobilizing the authority of international law, the organization adds that every country should comply with the United Nations-recognized rights of refugees, 'because if we can't uphold international standards of migrants' rights, then I think we would have failed as a country'. Not to allow freedom of movement for asylum seekers is tantamount to losing one's humanity, according to 100 Black Men of London:

> The more unwelcoming and uncomfortable you make it for people, just like the Greeks are doing by throwing boats back in and sending them back out to sea, the more you do that we're losing our humanity in doing that in my perspective. How do you even live with yourself knowing that you are constantly putting up blockers to make it as difficult as possible so that these people can't move freely?

At the end of the day there needs to be an understanding that if there are migrant issues it is because people are in really dire need: 'Nobody throws their child into the sea unless the land isn't safe anymore. You'd rather be in your own country if there is prosperity and all the rest of it' (Muslim Council of Britain). Somali Advice and Forum of Information flags that there are not many services for traumatized refugees:

> When someone comes from a war, you can't ask them to look for work the next day. They don't have language, they have all sorts of trauma, and they are a group the government has neglected. When I returned here with two small children after working for the UN, I was shocked to see the situation at the

school. 40% of students were from a refugee background but there weren't even translators for the mums, and that is why SAAFI was set up, to respond to the need that there was in that small school.

The Race Equality Foundation denounces a situation where capital can operate freely across the world (the successful settlement of Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich in Britain and then Israel is a case in point) yet people in genuine need and in fear of their lives 'are seen as being people who we think cause us harm'.

Bristol Muslim Cultural Society claims that asylum seekers as a group have not been treated appropriately as they do not get adequate housing, cannot apply for benefits and their right to work is very limited:

> The government provides the minimum but these individuals cannot, as people who have escaped from terrible situations and have been oppressed and abused, progress and move from there. They are in a stagnant position in society and all they can do is survive, rather than thrive.

However the respondent acknowledges that there are great government schemes which support refugees, housing and educating them in Bristol.

Asylum seekers are viewed as insiders not only due to the UK's international obligation to provide protection to those in need but also by virtue of the fact that the UK is seen as indirectly responsible for the conflicts leading to refugee flows. This view aligns with the 'weak cosmopolitanism' propounded by David Miller (2015), according to which those who qualify for refugee status but also have a reparative claim against a particular state should be admitted into that state as a matter of priority. The reasoning is that refugees have a strong claim to receive protection in some state but it is not always clear which state in particular should be held responsible, whereas those who have a reparative claim should receive favourable treatment from a particular state but this special treatment should not necessarily take the form of immigration.

For the Muslim Council of Britain people come to the UK because of the history of British colonialism and all the invasions, the wars and the destruction:

> I was watching a documentary on Iraq, and I thought, what, we just destroyed a country and then said okay well sort yourself out, just left it to waste and now it's got loads of problems and that's it, we just walked away.

The Race Equality Foundation emphasizes the drawing of borders and other practices encouraged by Britain, which have 'embedded political strife in many areas. And we're reaping the consequences of that. Yet, we want to shut the borders and say it's not our responsibility. So yes, migrants should be allowed to move and yes, people do have to have the same citizenship rights and it's because we have responsibility'. 100 Black Men of London rhetorically asks, 'Why would someone from Iraq want to jump on a boat and come over here?

I think you would find that we play a big role in that. You've got to somewhat take responsibility as well'.

Openness does not necessarily extend to migrants as a whole, with some respondents explicitly or implicitly supporting some form of border controls. For instance the Muslim Council of Britain stops short of advocating open borders: 'I think you've got to control the process of people getting in understandably for security, for health, whatever'. Similarly Voice4Change claims to be in favour of greater freedom of movement but also of nation states' sovereign capacity to determine their own immigration policy, 'for better or for worse'. In this sense immigration policy should be backed by the people and debated fully, so that it is 'not dictated by the elite in society but embraces the views of a wider range of people'. While issues of social cohesion and economic sustainability should be given due consideration, so should the 'rights in terms of social justice of those migrants that have had their own situation disrupted through no fault of their own and then find themselves in a refugee situation'.

6. Europe and minority rights: a cosmopolitan multiculturalism?

In addition to their support for asylum seekers and refugees, some civil society organizations, most notably Muslim Engagement and Democracy (MEND), a non-profit which seeks to tackle Islamophobia across the UK, raise awareness to British Muslims and encourage them to get involved with the media and politics, endorse what could be called a 'cosmopolitan multiculturalism'. This multicultur-alism views the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights as playing a leading or regulatory role for national equality approaches to ethno-cultural minorities, thus preserving a central role for state institutions but valuing the extra protection provided by international legislative and judicial mechan-isms. In this sense it is consistent with Caney's (2005, 160) model of instrumental cosmopolitanism, according to which 'supra-state political authorities can check the power of states and are more protective of liberty than a purely statist framework [...] in which states can persecute their citizens at will'. It is also consistent with Beitz (2009, 109) model of human rights enforcement, whereby states, including their constitutions, laws and public policies, bear primary responsibility for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights, but where interna-tional institutions may hold states accountable for carrying out this primary responsibility. This may involve either assisting a state to satisfy human rights standards when it lacks the capacity to do so or interfering to 'protect human rights in cases in which a state fails through a lack of will to do so'.

Describing the EU as 'a project of peace based on respect for difference', MEND (2016) outlines six areas where it has had a positive impact on the national-level protection of Muslims. Firstly, it notes that legal protection against discrimination on grounds of religion and belief emerged as a consequence of

the EU Employment Equality Directive, adopted in 2000 and transposed in the UK in 2003. Secondly, it highlights the appointment of a coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred who, since his appointment in 2015, has organized a series of panels, roundtables, workshops and conferences on anti-discrimination and inter-religious dialogue.[11] Thirdly, it emphasizes the role played by the European Fundamental Rights Agency, which has produced a number of research reports addressing Islamophobia and media portrayals of Islam and Muslims, as well as racial profiling and institutional racism. Fourthly, it praises the Colloquium on 'Tolerance and respect: Preventing and combating anti-semitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe' for inviting Muslim groups that are often sidelined in national policymaking. The Colloquium, organized in October 2015, brought together national Ministers, representatives of NGOs and international institutions, members of the European Parliament, academics and philosophers.[12] Fifth, MEND underscores the hundreds of millions of euros invested in the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, designed in part to address racial and religious discrimination. Finally, it applauds the EU's lead in adopting a Code of Conduct to combat online hate speech with IT companies Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft.

The UK, when in the EU, was a leading instigator or supporter of many of these initiatives and has taken anti-discrimination legislation beyond the requirements of the EU and other member states, as in the case of the Equality Act 2010. As MEND highlights, however, the EU provides a benchmark against which the UK is measured, and at times found wanting, as well as an avenue through which to pursue rights. EU intervention on issues such as Islamophobia has not necessarily been pioneering or path-finding; rather, it follows the best practice of some states and tries to get other states to start moving in the requisite direction. With the UK no longer in the EU, it has been questioned whether this means less hope for multi-culturalism in the EU (Modood 2022).

7. Conclusion

Prefacing their comparative analysis of multiculturalism, interculturalism, cos-mopolitanism and transnationalism, Fossum et al. (2020) state that 'if there is greater compatibility in practice than what the theories depict, then practice directs us to reconsider theories and their interactions'. The results of this study suggest that such a reconsideration is indeed warranted, at least as far as the first three normative perspectives are concerned. Without denying that differ-ent organizations and policies tend to place greater emphasis on some per-spectives than others, our data suggest that multiculturalism, interculturalism and cosmopolitanism (especially the first two) are not usually seen as conflict-ing with each other but as positions that can be pursued simultaneously. This contrasts sharply with the situation in political theory, where interculturalists

and cosmopolitans in particular tend to present their normative proposals as incompatible with multiculturalism. While the task of theoretical reconciliation lies beyond the scope of this essentially empirical paper, results point to at least two areas that need rethinking: the relationship between the -isms and levels of governance, and the relationship between cultural diversity and international mobility. With respect to the first, we have seen that the politics of multiculturalism are not, or have ceased to be, confined to the national level, and that organizations such as MEND have depicted the European Union as a site where measures with a multiculturalist bent can be developed or promoted. At the same time, the *Integrated Communities* strategy suggests that national governments can sometimes take a strong interculturalist stance, not least by funding community groups to organize activities promoting cross-cultural contact and understanding. Hence contact and cohesion cannot be described as an exclusively, or even mainly, local matter. In addition, our interviews show that civil society organizations whose main mission lies in the realm of cultural diversity and anti-racism also manifest a strong commitment to the rights of asylum seekers. This does not mean that all of them support an opening of borders, but it does imply that they see the interests of their core constituency (namely, ethno-racial or ethno-religious minorities) as linked to those of some migrants. A more sustained dialogue between the theorists of diversity, mainly in the multiculturalist and interculturalist camps, and those of mobility, which tend to lean towards cosmopolitanism, may do much to unpack the nature of this interdependence.[13]

Notes

1. We are grateful to Alexander Gamst Page for contributing to this synthesis.
2. 'Multiculturalism Policy Index'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/immigrant-minorities/resultsbycountry-im/united-kingdom-im.
3. That is not to suggest that the report itself strikes the right balance between individual freedom and social cohesion.
4. Belong, 'Our vision and mission'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://www.belongnetwork.co.uk/about-us/our-vision-and-mission/.
5. National Citizen Service, 'Your questions answered'. Accessed 1 July 2022. https://wearencs.com/faqs.
6. The Linking Network, 'About the Linking Network'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://thelinkingnetwork.org.uk/about/.
7. Indeed, it may have abandoned the exercise (Uddin 2022).
8. Race Disparity Unity, 'About us'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/race-disparity-unit/about.
9. University of Bristol (2020), 'Towards a decolonized university', *YouTube*. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=led1PkBg1AU.
10. Pace multiculturalism, it claimed too little evidence existed for claims of structural/institutional racism.

11. European Commission, 'Combating anti-Muslim hatred'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/items/50085/en.
12. European Union, 'Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights – 'Tolerance and respect: Preventing and combating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe'. Accessed 16 January 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_15_5739.
13. This is one of the key aims of the PLURISPACE project referred to in the Acknowledgements and of which this article is a part.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

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Ethical approval

The fieldwork for this research was approved on 23 February 2021 by the University of Bristol School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies' Ethics Working Group.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Interview schedule

Multiculturalism

Do you think people can/should have hyphenated or multiple identities, such as British-Muslim, British-Asian, Black British, or should everyone just be British? Why or why not?

Do you use race, ethnicity or religion to identify those you work for and, if so, why? If not, why not?

Do you think governments should target some policies to specific ethnic, religious or racial groups? Would this be a form of equal or unequal treatment? Can you provide some good or bad examples?

Should laws and policies actively help people retain their identities and cultures? What are the advantages and risks of doing this? What can it look like in practice?

Should people be protected from having their cultural identities disparaged in the public sphere? If so, how? What (if anything) should the state do to promote positive discourses on minority cultures?

Interculturalism

Do you think cultural diversity is an advantage or a problem and a source of conflict? Can you give me some arguments and examples?

Is there enough contact between people from different national and cultural backgrounds in the public space, such as in parks, streets or markets?

Do you think people from different national or cultural backgrounds are sufficiently present/visible in public sector jobs? If not, is it a problem?

In managing diversity, do you think policies should focus on differences between people or on what is common and shared?

Can you think of policies promoting contact between people from different national and cultural backgrounds? Can you give me two examples of good practice in this sphere?

Cosmopolitanism

Some say that migrants (not just refugees) should be able to move freely between countries and that citizens should not have more rights than migrants. What do you think of this?

Do you think the government treats ethnic minorities as equals? Does this apply to citizens, migrants and refugees alike?

Do you think that integration policies respect basic human rights? Is this true for migrants, refugees and citizens alike?

Are there groups that you consider the government's policy discriminates against? If so, what kinds of discrimination are we talking about?