

Address: APPG on Social Integration, c/o Chuka Umunna MP
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APPG on Social Integration Minutes for Meeting on Monday, 17 October, 3:00 – 4:20pm, in Committee Room 6, Westminster Palace

Minutes taken by: Anna Kere, The Challenge

Present (Parliamentarians):

- Chuka Umunna MP, Chair (Labour)
- Holly Lynch MP (Labour)
- Jon Cruddas MP (Labour)
- Lord Lennie (Labour)

Present (Others):

- Justin Meadows (Chuka Umunna's Office)
- Stuart Macnaughtan (Chuka Umunna's Office)
- Richard Bell, The Challenge (Secretariat)
- Anna Kere, The Challenge (Secretariat/minutes)
- Nicholas Plumb, The Challenge (Secretariat/Twitter)
- Dr Rachel Marangozov, Institute for Employment Studies (Advisor to the APPG inquiry into immigration and integration)

Apologies of absence:

- Suella Fernandes MP (Conservative)
- Lord Adebawale (Crossbench)
- Debbie Abrahams MP (Labour)
- James Berry MP, Vice Chair (Conservative) – representative present
- The Rt. Rev the Lord Bishop of Oxford – representative present
- Jim McMahon MP (Labour)

Meeting in private, 3:00 – 3:15pm

1. Approval of minutes

- 1.1. The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 5 September, were provided to the members prior to the meeting. Hearing no changes, let the record reflect that the prior minutes stand as approved.

2. Division of questions

- 2.1. The Chair divided the questions for the proceedings among the APPG members present.
- 2.2. The Chair then spoke to Jon Cruddas MP about a potential APPG community visit to his constituency in Dagenham. He mentioned that the Boston and Halifax visits went very well and he would like to further expand the APPG evidence base.

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Public meeting, 3:15 – 4:20pm

External speakers:

- *Phoebe Griffith*, Associate Director for Migration, Integration and Communities at IPPR and research fellow at Coventry University.
- *David Goodhart*, Head of Integration Hub and Demography, Immigration, Integration Unit at Policy Exchange.
- *Professor Anthony Francis Heath*, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, Centre for Social Investigation, Nuffield College, Oxford.
- *Lindsay Richards*, Postdoctoral Researcher, Centre for Social Investigation, Nuffield College, Oxford.
- *Don Flynn*, Director of the Migrants Rights Network.

Q&A session with the panel

- 1.1. Mr Umunna commenced the session by saying that the immigration debate has recently been concentrated on Brexit and has quite often been negative in tone. The APPG would therefore like to focus on how a post-Brexit immigration system could be shaped to focus more on integration.
- 1.2. The Chair welcomed the panel and invited them to introduce themselves.
- 1.3. Don Flynn said that as the Director of the Migrants' Rights Network (MRN) he has always tended to focus on immigration in a local context and tried to identify what the positives are. As a result, MRN often works with local community leaders and migrants themselves.
- 1.4. David Goodhart said he got interested in the issues of immigration and integration a few years ago and had written a book on it. He then set up an Integration Hub at Demos, and has since moved to Policy Exchange to explore similar issues. He has recently written a paper on immigration and integration post-Brexit. His central argument was that British citizenship needed to be divided into full and temporary forms.
- 1.5. Phoebe Griffith leads the Institute's for Public Policy Research (IPPR) team on immigration and integration. Their current focus is on the immigration system post-Brexit. IPPR are advocating thinking more carefully about the integration of existing and future EU migrants.
- 1.6. Prof Heath is the Director for the Centre for Social Investigation (CSI). The CSI analyses data and evidence and tries to use it to help decision and policy making. Prof Heath emphasised that different groups and different migrant groups especially face very different problems and challenges. For example, young people who arrive to the country late in their school life tend to struggle to integrate. On the issue of post-Brexit immigration system, CSI has a cross-European team looking at the perceptions of

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immigration across the EU. One of the most important aspects of the future system is that it needs to have public assent.

- 1.7. Ms Richards said it was crucial to note the causal link between successful integration initiatives and positive public perceptions. In places where integration is done well the public perception tends to be a lot more positive. Economic deprivation, on the other hand, tends to generate anxiety and hostility to immigrants.
- 1.8. The Chair started the questioning by asking whether the UK had adopted a too 'laissez-faire' approach to immigration and integration.
- 1.9. Prof Heath noted that integration outcomes of migrants in the UK are not much different from the integration outcomes of migrants in other countries. Most of the time, the perceived success of integration in countries like Canada is actually due to the kind of migrants it admits as opposed to the integration policies as such.
- 1.10. Mr Goodhart agreed that integration outcomes do differ between migrant groups in the UK but emphasised that the rhetoric around integration has moved from being quite colonial to actively entrenching differences.
- 1.11. The Chair directed his next question to Don Flynn, asking him to comment on the laissez-faire suggestion and on the effect of labour market policies on integration.
- 1.12. Mr Flynn said that the attitude of the state in the UK has been more passive than in other European countries. One of the advantages the UK had in the 1950s is that people arriving to the country then already had a pre-conception of what it meant to be a British citizen. There was an awareness of participation in public life and there was an existing civil society to integrate into.
- 1.13. The Chair asked whether the civil society and the community spirit of the 1970s was a reaction to government policy or state inaction.
- 1.14. Mr Flynn responded that, at that time, integration was about pushing back on racism.
- 1.15. Jon Cruddas inquired as what responsibility the government had for fostering positive attitude to its own immigration system.
- 1.16. Ms Griffith said that better integration might improve attitudes but generally there are three principles which underpin successful immigration systems: 1) stringent selection, as is the case in Canada 2) the promotion of citizenship and an active role for local authorities 3) conceptualising integration in terms that are not punitive.
- 1.17. Mr Cruddas said that the government often avoids discussing the issue of immigration in detail and tends to instead talk exclusively about net immigration totals.
- 1.18. Mr Flynn said he remembered having conversations with Ministers in 1997 in which he tried to convince them to offer the public a narrative on immigration. There

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are bound to be issues with local schools and doctors' surgeries but they do not need to turn into barriers – government needs to be prepared and it needs to inform its citizens appropriately.

- 1.19. Mr Umunna pointed out that the kind of migrants who came to the UK in the early 2000s were different from the migrants that came before them. For example, before the arrival of Eastern European migrants, migration has been closely associated with ethnic minorities. He asked the panel whether it was therefore essential to have a different approach to the integration of these 'new' migrants.
- 1.20. Mr Flynn responded that the distinction he would make would be about the *character* of immigration as opposed to the migrants themselves. People who came here in the 2000s did not have a pre-existing knowledge or experience of the Commonwealth. But it is the government's failure to tackle the changes and challenges we are currently facing, e.g. – the move from industrial to service economy – that has inhibited integration, not the migrants themselves.
- 1.21. Ms Lynch brought the conversation back to the responsibility for integration by asking whether it is realistic to hold anyone accountable for something that is so hard to measure.
- 1.22. Prof Heath responded that he was not aware of any single universal measure of integration but one could identify particular issues that affect particular groups at particular stages in their life cycle. Britain has a superb record of anti-discrimination legislation, for example, and it is consequential for other aspects of immigration, so this should be maintained as a responsibility of central government. Recognition of qualifications could be another aspect to be controlled by central government. Meanwhile, issues like language provision should probably be devolved to local authorities.
- 1.23. Holly Lynch asked whether the devolution agenda presented new opportunities in terms of managing immigration and creating a better focus on integration.
- 1.24. David Goodhart said that it was difficult to pin down what integration was exactly, it means different things to different people. For him, it is about preventing the long-term divergence of different groups in society. Mr Goodhart expressed hope that the upcoming Casey Review would impose a duty on local authorities to collect data on residential segregation and promote social mixing.
- 1.25. Mr Umunna asked the panellists whether a lack of integration resulted in a lack of trust between different groups.
- 1.26. Prof Heath responded that detailed academic work had demonstrated that it was deprivation which is the factor that most negatively affects integration and cohesion. Social cohesion is important but it is not the only aspect of integration. Issues like deprivation, employment, and lack of access to services are crucial too. Prof Heath admitted that he subscribed to John Stuart Mill's liberal view that if you give people the opportunity to do so they will naturally form a cohesive society.

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- 1.27. Lord Lennie asked what were the current measurements used by the government to assess integration and how useful they have been.
- 1.28. Ms Richards said that according to the research CSI recently undertook for DCLG there was a myriad of factors, including employment rates, inter-marriage rates, diversity of friendships, etc. The indicators also differ depending on whether we look at economic or social integration.
- 1.29. Mr Goodhart mentioned the Index of Dissimilarity which is used by geographers to determine how segregated certain areas are based on how dispersed or clustered certain ethnic groups are within them.
- 1.30. Mr Umunna enquired about the importance of social contact in the measurement of integration. He emphasised the importance of social connections and stated that this is an under-explored area of the integration debate.
- 1.31. Ms Richards responded that social contact is hard to measure, with the most obvious indicator being the levels of intermarriage. It is also hard to control who people meet and who they are friends with. Economic factors are a lot more important - work and school is where people meet each other and where opportunities for norm convergence emerge.
- 1.32. The Chair pointed out that politicians often like to focus on data and statistics when talking about immigration. He asked the panel whether such an approach to the issue ignored people's concerns about the cultural and societal aspects of immigration.
- 1.33. Mr Goodhart responded that ethnic and cultural differences are definitely at the centre of this debate but we feel uncomfortable talking about this so we try and wrap the issue in economics.
- 1.34. Prof Heath spoke about national identity and young people. Young people from different ethnic backgrounds tend to go through a period of transition but eventually end up identifying with the host country. The more socially integrated people feel the stronger their sense of attachment to Britain is. Interestingly, even White British people who feel somehow mistreated or alienated tend to identify less with Britain and more with their local community.
- 1.35. Lord Lennie asked what policymakers might practically do to advance social mixing.
- 1.36. Ms Griffith responded that the reason we don't tend to talk about cultural integration in the UK is that the government doesn't actually do very much to promote it. The only efforts made by the government tend to be "toothless duties" imposed on public bodies. It is important to have a broad and inclusive vision of what it means to be "one of us", one that does not marginalise minority communities.
- 1.37. Mr Goodhart argued that introducing a duty to promote mixing would not be a toothless measure. The Newham model promoted by Robin Wales, for example, works

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well. Mr Goodhart stated that he would be in favour of moving to a model where schools reflect the demographic make-up of their areas. Universities do well this but only half of the population actually attends them.

- 1.38. The Chair directed his next question to Ms Griffith asking how we could “force” people to integrate. Mr Umunna noted that seeking to integrate through the process of naturalisation and citizenship is like going after a horse once it’s bolted and asked whether we should maybe start that process much earlier.
- 1.39. Ms Griffith said that she was supportive of the idea of providing migrants with guidance and legal advice as long as those who choose not to pursue it are not penalised for their choice.
- 1.40. The Chair mentioned that one of the issues raised during the APPG’s visit to Boston was the difference needs of short and long-term migrants. He wondered whether it was wise to invest in advice services for those who may not be planning to stay in the country for that long.
- 1.41. Ms Griffith stressed that policies that disincentivise settlement also disincentivise integration. You can’t expect students to come to the UK if they know they will struggle to gain permission to stay in the country afterwards.
- 1.42. Mr Cruddas asked about the gaps in our knowledge of how integrated people really are. For example, to what extent can we understand what’s happening in the country if the census is only carried out once each decade?
- 1.43. Prof Heath noted that it was unfortunate that the Citizenship Survey had been cancelled. A lot of countries, e.g. Germany, have a micro-census carried out on a local level. The UK does not seem to have an equivalent of that and even the Citizenship Survey and the Census are not big enough to give an accurate picture of change over time.
- 1.44. Mr Flynn brought up the example of MIPEX (a unique tool which measures policies to integrate migrants in all EU Member States). Some of these indicators can be addressed at a local level. Regional government needs to plan not just in response to the current migration patterns but also for what will happen in the next five or ten years.

2. Any other business

- 1.1. No other business.

2. Date of next meeting

- 2.1. The date of the next APPG meeting is Monday 5 December 2016.

MEETING ENDED AT 4:20pm