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ACCEPT PLURALISM

APPLYING TOLERANCE INDICATORS:

POLITICAL TOLERANCE FOR NATIVE MINORITIES

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POLITICAL TOLERANCE FOR NATIVE MINORITIES

INTRODUCTION

Western European states have dealt with their native minorities --ethnic, national, linguistic, or religious minorities—in very different ways. Management of ethno-cultural diversity in Western Europe has largely followed the ways in which minority claims have been formulated and the way they have been perceived by the respective states.

Will Kymlicka and Magda Opalski (2002) have argued that modern states may either perceive minority claims as a challenge for national security, or as a quest for justice and fairness. They have noted that in the West and in most democratic states, native minorities' claims are assessed primarily in terms of justice and of accommodating majority-minority relations on the basis of fairness. Thus, it is generally accepted that justice involves some form of self-government for minorities.

On the contrary, in former Eastern and Central Europe minority claims have been assessed in terms of security. Claims for self-government have been associated with the perception of threat to the existence, or territorial integrity of the state. In effect, minorities were often believed to be collaborating with the neighbouring countries (e.g. Serbians in Bosnia are believed to be collaborating with Serbia; Kosovar Albanians with Albania; Silesians in Poland with Germany; Hungarians in Romania with Hungary; Turks in Bulgaria with Turkey).

We therefore find two very different discourses: justice and fairness on the one side, and loyalty and security on the other.

If indeed, we agree with the framework proposed by Kymlicka and Opalski (2002) that the former is preferable to the latter, then efforts should focus on desecuritizing the discourse of minority rights where necessary in order to enable a shift towards justice and tolerance. Naturally, putting this change to practice is a rather difficult task.

In this report, we examine six different case studies to understand the ways in which different European states perceive and treat their native minorities. We look at **Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania, Sweden** and **Turkey** and they ways in which native minority claims have been perceived and tolerated by the respective states, i.e. either as security challenges, or as a quest for justice and fairness.

Each research team of the ACCEPT PLURALISM project collected data with regard to the political and cultural claims of specific minorities and the ways in which the respective states responded to these claims. Thus, more specifically we look at: the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, the Muslim minority in Greece, the

Silesian minority claims in Poland, the Hungarian minority claims in Romania, Sámi minority claims in Sweden, and Circassian diasporic claims in Turkey.

ACCEPT PLURALISM is funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Program. It investigates the responses to diversity and the role of tolerance in 15 European states.

In each country, we explored the meaning and scope of 'acceptance' in education and political life. By looking at the struggles of native minorities for political autonomy and/or recognition, our research has highlighted the barriers to equal political participation and representation.

This report is based on the comparative policy brief and the six national case study reports. Each case study undertook a textual discourse analysis of various policy documents, public statements, newspaper articles, NGO reports, academic works, blogs and websites regarding native minority claims in their respective countries. In addition, each team interviewed members of minority groups, state actors, local politicians, scholars, journalists, and bureaucrats between December 2011 and April 2012.

These interviews were analyzed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method. CDA is a method of discourse analysis focusing on the investigation of the relations between discourse and social/cultural developments in everyday life. It views discursive practices as an important form of social practice contributing to the constitution of the social and cultural world including social identities and relations.

For more information about each national case study please refer to the individual reports listed in the Annex to this Cluster Report.

PART 1. THE INDICATORS

Our Tolerance in Politics indicators are organised in reference to the various aspects of political life and seek to take into account the dilemmas, claims and contested issues that arise in the sphere of politics in Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania, Sweden and Turkey.

We have selected four indicators concerning special arrangements made for the representation of native minorities:

Indicator 6.1 Ethnic and religious tolerance

Indicator 6.3 Existence of provisions for minority candidates at the party level

Indicator 6.5 Minority mobilization and claims-making

Indicator 6.6 Representation of minority politicians in parliament

Each of these indicators was assessed in all six countries presented here and was attributed a score of Low, Medium or High

The subject of native minorities is a sensitive topic, and is consequently often approached in a highly ideological/political way. The proposed Political Tolerance Indicators for Native Minorities encourage a more results-oriented approach to the integration of minority groups. Grounded in a conceptual framework, the proposed Political Tolerance Indicators for Native Minorities are policy relevant as well as measurable and, as far as possible, comparable. They measure whether members of minority groups have access to political rights, but also if this is granted on an equal footing with other citizens (national majorities). They consider thus not only the neutrality of the policies and legislation in place but also the existence of positive actions. In fact, equal access to a certain right does not necessarily amount to equal opportunity. The latter may require positive action.

The data resulting from the application of the proposed Political Tolerance Indicators for Native Minorities will contribute to shedding light on the areas in which legal measures and policy responses should be adopted by the political and legislative bodies in order to counteract discrimination and forms of exclusion. In this way, the indicators are useful for providing a much needed link between research and policy making.

Moreover, the proposed Political Tolerance Indicators for Native Minorities may serve as an instrument in the hands of minority communities and their members to press for and underpin their rights. They are also a helpful mechanism for national and international monitoring bodies. For example, at the regional level they can be used in the country-by-country monitoring work of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (whose task is to review Council of Europe member states' legislation, policies and other measures to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance, and their effectiveness from the perspective of the protection of human rights) and the Advisory Committee under the Framework

Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in their assessment of the states' compliance with the Convention's guarantees of effective equality in the area of political life between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority (Articles 4, 7, 15).

By identifying successful practices or contrarily tensions involving national minority issues in the political field, the proposed Political Tolerance Indicators for Native Minorities may also prove to be a valuable instrument in the conflict prevention activity of the office of the High Commissioner for National Minorities and may serve as a complimentary, measurement tool to the Lund Recommendations on effective participation of national minorities in public life.

What the indicators can and cannot show

Country scores on individual indicators should be interpreted as very condensed statements on the situation in a particular country (for a given time period) on this aspect. Scores represent contextual judgments by experts based on an interpretation of qualitative research and the available knowledge about the respective society in this respect. The "scores" cannot be understood and should not be presented without the explanations provided by the researchers.

Scores cannot be aggregated. Scores on individual indicators may help to analyze the situation in different countries from a comparative perspective. However, the fact that countries score higher or lower across a number of indicators does not imply *ipso facto* that a particular country as a whole is "more or less tolerant".

Scores on individual indicators are not necessarily comparable, because different factors and reasons may have resulted in a particular score for a specific country (e.g. it may be that the score in one country only refers to a particular region). This means that scores cannot necessarily be compared and they can only be interpreted in a comparative way in relation to the explanations and reasons provided.

For the Toolkit of the ACCEPT PLURALISM Tolerance Indicators please see here: www.accept-pluralism.eu

INDICATOR 6.1 EXISTENCE OF OFFICIAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF NATIVE ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

LOW – non tolerance	There are no such official institutions for the representation of native ethnic or religious minority groups.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	There are such official institutions but are only of a consultative character. They have no real administrative or political power.
HIGH – acceptance	There are such official institutions and they have real administrative and political power. They form part of the national political system under special arrangements to account for their special status (e.g. territorial concentration, representing people with particular living and working conditions (e.g. nomadic), numerical size very small and would otherwise not be represented in national bodies).

Table 1. Applying 6.1 Existence of official institutions for the representation of native ethnic or religious minorities to six European countries

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	**Medium**	National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues, and Regional and Municipal Councils for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues.
Greece	**Low**	Lausanne Treaty of 1923: The only officially recognised minority of Greece is a religious one: the Muslims of western Thrace (in the north-western border with Turkey), who are protected by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923.
Poland	**Medium**	In the aftermath of the Communist rule (1989), minorities started to establish their own social-cultural associations, which is their main form of representation in the public sphere.
Romania	**Medium**	The Romanian government established a Department for Interethnic Relations in 2005.
Sweden	**High**	In 1977, Sweden recognised the Sámi people as an indigenous people, and the Sámis established their Parliament in 1993.
Turkey	**Low**	There is no official institution representing minorities at the national level.

INDICATOR 6.3 EXISTENCE OF PROVISIONS FOR MINORITY CANDIDATES AT THE PARTY LEVEL

LOW – non tolerance	There are no special provisions by political parties (e.g. in terms of selecting candidates in specific electoral districts or at national level) for ensuring that some ethnic or religious minority candidates will be elected and participate in government.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	The practice of providing for the selection of ethnic or religious minority candidates in specific districts is standard for political parties, but there is no institutional provision for such a practice.
HIGH – acceptance	There are ethnic and/or religious quotas in political parties (e.g. in terms of supporting a minority candidate in specific districts and/or at the national level to ensure that minority voices are represented in governance and politics).

Table 2. Applying Indicator 6.3 Existence of provisions for minority candidates at the party level to six European countries

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	**Medium**	No legal provision. Some of the so-called national parties place minority candidates on their lists in municipalities, where most of the population is of minority origin.
Greece	**Medium**	No legal provision. All major parties nominate candidates from the Muslim minority (which is the only recognised minority group in the country) in their national election lists.
Poland	**Medium**	Contemporary Parliamentary Election Law contains preferences for registered electoral committees of national and ethnic minorities recognized by the state - 'ethnic' organisations' candidates do not have to meet the requirement of crossing a 5% threshold of votes nationwide in order to be elected to the parliament.
Romania	**Low**	No regulation as such.
Sweden	**Low**	No regulation as such.
Turkey	**Low**	No regulation as such. But at the local level, political parties are eager to include members of the minority groups as candidates.

INDICATOR 6.5 MINORITY MOBILIZATION AND CLAIMS-MAKING

LOW – non tolerance	Minority mobilizations or claims-making are generally considered illegitimate and/or formally disqualified. There is no place in political life for positions or grievances that are articulated on the basis of minority identities or concerns.
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	There are no formal mechanisms to exclude a minority presence in politics, but an atmosphere that discourages activist from emphasizing concerns and grievances that specifically pertain to their minority position.
HIGH – acceptance	Political claims and grievances that are put forward by minority/immigrant groups are considered to be as valid as any other political position. Minority groups are free to take part in political life and to mobilize/associate on the basis of the political identities they choose.

Table 3. Applying Indicator 6.5 Minority mobilization and claims-making to six European countries

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	**Low**	The Bulgarian Constitution outlaws the establishment of political parties on ethnic, racial or religious lines as well as the parties which seek the violent seizure of state power.
Greece	**Medium**	There are no formal mechanisms to exclude minority mobilization and claims making, but legal provisions and an *a priori* unreceptive atmosphere impede equal political participation.
Poland	**Medium**	Silesians are politically active, they have their organisations and leaders, and they are (relatively) present in local and national public discourses.
Romania	**Medium**	Romania has established the formal mechanisms allowing member of minority groups to participate in politics and to formulate policies of interest to them.
Sweden	**High**	The Sámi people have a long history of ethno-political mobilisation.
Turkey	**Medium**	Kurdish political claims have reached their climax in the last few years in parallel with their active mobilization in local and national politics. The 10 % threshold still exists in national elections for all political parties, but the Kurds try to find other ways to get into the National Parliament such as running in the elections as independent candidates. Independent parliamentarians have the right to set up their political groups once they reach a critical number such as 20.

INDICATOR 6.6 REPRESENTATION OF MINORITY POLITICIANS IN PARLIAMENT

LOW – non tolerance	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are not represented or severely underrepresented in parliament (the proportion of representatives in parliament is less than one third of the overall proportion of ethnic or native minority groups in society).
MEDIUM – minimal tolerance	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are present, but underrepresented in parliament (proportion of representatives in parliament is between one third and two thirds).
HIGH – acceptance	Politicians of migrant or native minority background are fully or almost fully represented in parliament (more than two thirds).

Table 4. Applying Indicator 6.6 Representation of minority politicians in parliament to six European countries

Country	Score	Notes
Bulgaria	High / Low	Politicians from the Turkish minority are fully represented in the parliament. However, other minorities are not represented, or are severely underrepresented.
Greece	High	Politicians of the only recognised native minority in Greece, the Muslims of Western Thrace, are fully represented in parliament.
Poland	Low	Despite the existing electoral preference (minority candidates do not have to meet the requirement of crossing a 5% threshold of votes nationwide in order to be elected), only the German minority was able to achieve a symbolic representation in the Polish Parliament.
Romania	High	A Decree of 1990 provided that minority groups, whose organizations cannot obtain the necessary votes to secure a seat in the Parliament, will have the right to one mandate in the Chamber of Deputies.
Sweden	Low	Politicians of Sámi background are not represented or are severely underrepresented in parliament.
Turkey	Low	No representation as such because Turkey is a difference-blind republican country. The Turkish Constitution outlaws the establishment of political parties based on ethno-cultural and religious premises.

Table 6. Comparative country overview

	6.1. Existence of official institutions	6.3 Provisions for minority candidates at the party level	6.5 Minority mobilization	6.6 Representation of minority politicians
Bulgaria	Medium	Medium	Low	High/Low
Greece	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Poland	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Romania	Medium	Low	Medium	High
Sweden	High	Low	High	Low
Turkey	Low	Low	Medium	Low

In this section we present a comparative assessment of the political tolerance indicators of native minorities in six European countries. Each score is displayed with a brief summary of the main justifications to make the tables more reader-friendly.

Bulgaria

There exists a significant discrepancy between the official political and public discourse on perception and application of democratic norms and values, which are characteristic for the majority of EU countries, and the real situation in the country. While public speech endorses notions of tolerance and acceptance, everyday practices testify that entrenched intolerance can easily be mobilised in critical moments of political, social and economic crisis. The most notable challenge is finding a way to transfer the functioning everyday tolerance from the local level to the national context, which continues to be dominated by intolerant stereotypes and prejudices. As a result, despite a long history of diverse ethnic and religious structures and traditional mechanisms of coexistence, there are still a number of difficulties in accepting, tolerating and recognizing the Turkish minority claims in Bulgaria. This is above all valid for political mobilization. However, despite the formal interdiction of mobilization on the basis of ethnic or religious affiliation, minorities are in practice able to express their specific interests, and are represented both in central and local politics.

Greece

For this pilot study we assessed the relevant indicators with respect to Greece's recognised native minority, the Muslims of western Thrace who actually assert an ethnic identification as ethnic Turks. Officially, they are categorized as a religious minority only. The Greek state continues to have difficulties in treating the claims of its Muslim minority at the group level as a quest for justice and fairness while in the last 20 years it has been more receptive of this claim for equality before the law at the level of individual citizens who are minority members.

Poland

In contrast to most other European countries, national and ethnic minorities in Poland are numerically insignificant; the result of the 2002 Census showed that Silesians were by far the largest declared minority (173.000), followed by Germans (153.000). Migrant communities are small and practically absent in political life. However, the Silesians, Poland's largest declared minority group is not recognised by the state neither as a national, nor as an ethnic minority. Silesians are politically active, they have their organisations and leaders, and are present in public discourses. Despite their presence in the public space, they face substantial difficulties in having their claims being recognized by the state.

Romania

Romania has a governmental Department for Interethnic Relations established in 2005 with the mission of protecting ethnic minorities and supporting a multicultural society. However, this institution has not had a significant impact upon policies in the field. The country does not have specific legislation establishing mandatory quotas for ethnic minorities within political parties. However, Romania has established quotas for ethnic minorities within the lower chamber of the Parliament; nonetheless, this has had a limited impact on empowering those groups to formulate policies of interest to them.

Sweden

Sámis have so far gained a full-fledged right to political representation at both the national and local levels. However, they are still far from experiencing an egalitarian treatment by the state, the media and society as a whole. They remain stereotypically represented as backwards, irresponsible and too attached to their traditions. Public discourse presents Sámis as in need of 'parental authority'. They are portrayed as a community dependant on 'benevolent tolerance' by the Swedish state in order to participate in Swedish politics. In general, they are considered as culturally 'unfit' for Swedish political life.

Turkey

Cultural and folkloric forms of representations demonstrated by ethno-cultural minorities are tolerated by the Turkish state institutions. However, state actors are not yet tolerant towards the politicization of minority claims as in the case of the Circassians, who have been subject to political isolation since the establishment of the Republic. The same is true for the Kurdish political claims. It is interesting to note that state actors as well as the majority society become tolerant *vis-á-vis* minorities in times of prosperity when national pride is stronger than usual, as was the case between 2000 and 2005 when the European integration process was successfully working in Turkey. However, tolerance becomes very minimal in times of crisis, when parochial nationalism, Euroscepticism, and populism is embraced by the majority society.

PART 2. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

There are two main competing forms of managing diversity in Europe: a multiculturalist form, and republicanist form. The former corresponds to the 'unity-in-diversity' approach, which recognizes ethno-cultural, linguistic, national and religious differences of minorities. The latter translates into the 'unity-over-diversity' approach, which is difference-blind and assimilationist. Within the EU there will continue to be competition between these two models, each of which has its own advantages and disadvantages for the minority communities. It is not easy to estimate who the winner of this race will be. However, what is certain is that democratic consolidation in the European space depends on the states' capacity and ability to interpret their minorities' claims as a quest for justice and fairness, not as a challenge against national, societal and cultural security.

Silesians in Poland, Hungarians in Romania, and Circassians in Turkey face similar problems when they raise claims regarding their representation in mainstream political and media discourse. They are commonly portrayed as detained by tradition and unfit for national politics. In addition, Greece, Poland, Romania, and Turkey resist the claims of their respective minorities for cultural autonomy because they feel this is 'dangerous' for the nation. They tend to define the Greek, Polish, Romanian and Turkish nation as culturally and ethnically homogenous. Hence, they refuse to recognise the need for cultural (and to some degree political) autonomy that their minorities are striving for. Rather than perceiving the claims raised by ethno-cultural minorities as a quest for justice and equality, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Romania and Turkey perceive them as a challenge to national unity. This mind-set derives in part from historical encounters between the majority and former neighbouring colonial powers who have cultural affinities with the respective minorities.

Hungarian claims in Romania and Silesian claims in Poland are partly perceived by the state as acts of secessionism and irredentism. They are considered to be the continuation of the historical conflicts between Germany and Poland on the one hand, and Hungary and Romania on the other. Thus, minority claims are characterised as issues of 'national security' and are rejected.

Our research suggests that Silesian and Circassian claims have become more outspoken in line with efforts to integrate Poland and Turkey into Europe. The EU is certainly perceived by these communities as an anchor, helping them articulate their cultural and political claims through democratic forms of participation in politics.

This has also been the case for other segments of Polish and Turkish society, at least in the earlier phases of their European integration process. Eager to invest in their Europeanization, both countries made some effort to come to terms with their illiberal past. In other words, the European integration process has prompted ethno-cultural minorities in both countries to become politically more mobile.

So far, European integration has worked in the interest of minority groups that are repressed by their respective nation-states. The EU is often embraced by such minorities as a political anchor. Hence, it may be expected that the EU will not be able to adequately respond to their needs and expectations nor will

it be able to adequately influence and encourage the member and candidate states towards more reforms and tolerance, when it is in crisis.

Staking minority claims: The value of official recognition

As officially recognized minorities, the Sámis in Sweden, the Turks in Bulgaria, the Muslims in Greece and the Hungarians in Romania, have local and national parliamentary facilities to present their claims such as the quest for cultural autonomy and linguistic rights. The situation is very different for Silesians in Poland and Circassians in Turkey. Lacking their own political institutions, they organise in civic, cultural and folkloric associations in order to present their claims to the state.

Recognition and mobilization: Three dynamics

Our case studies reveal three dynamics with respect to mobilizing and gaining recognition for minority claims:

1. Where a minority is not tolerated, it mobilizes in search of tolerance and/or acceptance.

The Circassians fit into this category as they are in search of recognition and respect by the state.

2. Where a minority is socially and culturally accepted, it mobilizes in a quest for political recognition and the right to self-determination or incorporation into the mainstream institutions.

The Silesians fit into this category as they are in search of political recognition.

3. Where a minority is already institutionally recognized and respected, it mobilizes with the goal of ending socio-economic discrimination or halting the deterioration of their situation.

The Sámis in Sweden, the Turks in Bulgaria, the Muslims in Greece, and the Hungarians in Romania fit into this category as they are officially recognized but still subject to discrimination and intolerance. It is important to note that a minority's political integration does not necessarily mean that it does not face discrimination in society.

FURTHER READINGS AND COUNTRY REPORTS

Native Minority Claims: The Search for Acceptance
By Ayhan Kaya, Istanbul Bilgi University (2012)
Download your copy from: http://www.accept-pluralism.eu/Dissemination/EuropeanPolicyBriefs.aspx

ACCEPT PLURALISM Tolerance Indicators Toolkit
By Anna Triandafyllidou, European University Institute (2013)
Download your copy from: http://www.accept-pluralism.eu/Research/ProjectReports/ToleranceIndicatorsToolkit/ToleranceIndicators.aspx

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Bulgaria
By Marko Hajdinjak and Maya Kosseva with Antonina Zhelyazkova, IMIR (2012)
Download your copy from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/23257

Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses and Practices in Greece
By Anna Triandafyllidou and Hara Kouki, European University Institute (2012)
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By Hans-Ingvar Roth and Fredrik Hertzberg, Stockholm University (2012)
Download your copy from: http://www.accept-pluralism.eu/Research/ProjectReports/NewKnowledge.aspx

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By Ayhan Kaya, Istanbul Bilgi University (2012)
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About ACCEPT PLURALISM – project identity

Acronym	**ACCEPT PLURALISM**
Title	**Tolerance, Pluralism and Social Cohesion: Responding to the Challenges of the 21st Century in Europe**

Short Description

ACCEPT PLURALISM questions how much cultural diversity can be accommodated within liberal and secular democracies in Europe. The notions of tolerance, acceptance, respect and recognition are central to the project. ACCEPT PLURALISM looks at both native and immigrant minority groups.

Through comparative, theoretical and empirical analysis the project studies individuals, groups or practices for whom tolerance is sought but which we should not tolerate; of which we disapprove but which should be tolerated; and for which we ask to go beyond tolerance and achieve respect and recognition.

In particular, we investigate when, what and who is being not tolerated / tolerated / respected in 15 European countries; why this is happening in each case; the reasons that different social actors put forward for not tolerating / tolerating / respecting specific minority groups/individuals and specific practices. The project analyses practices, policies and institutions, and produces key messages for policy makers with a view to making European societies more respectful towards diversity.

Website	**www.accept-pluralism.eu**
Duration	March 2010-May 2013 (39 months)
Funding Scheme	Small and medium-scale collaborative project
EU contribution	2,600,230 Euro
Consortium	17 partners (15 countries)
Coordinator	European University Institute
	Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Person Responsible	Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou
EC officer	Ms. Louisa Anastopoulou, Project Officer,
	Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission