



This project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Framework Programme

Analysing Diversity Policy in Toronto

Toronto Presentation
Social Planning Toronto
4 April 2014

Donya Ahmadi

TU Delft, Department OTB

PhD Candidate and DIVERCITIES Researcher

d.ahmadi@tudelft.nl

Contents

1. Methods
2. Research Questions
3. Governance of diversity (WP4)
4. Community Involvement (WP5)
5. Success and failure factors



Research Methods

- 23 semi-structured interviews, conducted during October-November 2013 (governmental, private, non-profit, community-based organizations)
- Data analyzed through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis



WP4 Main Questions

- What is the **dominant national policy discourse** and agenda in relation to in-migration, citizenship (integration/assimilation) and diversity?
- How has this **changed over the past years** (i.e. is there evidence of an anti-migrant stance in national policy frameworks/discourses?).



Governance approaches to diversity

- *Pluralist/all-inclusive* approach to diversity
- Policy instruments ‘to address individual uniqueness’
- Toronto uses an *instrumental/asset-based approach* towards governing its diversity.
 - Diversity may serve as a ‘marketable asset’
- Governance of diversity represents a *comprehensive* structure.
- Despite increasing fragmentation and decentralisation tendencies in the current governance system, there is a certain ‘*interconnectedness*’ between different layers of governance.
- The *interconnectedness, embeddedness* of diversity discourses across city level policies, and *service provision approach to integration* contribute to the comprehensive governance structure.



Dominant policy discourses

- ❖ ***Equal access*** for everyone
- ❖ ***Accessible and flexible community spaces*** for everyone
- ❖ ***Increasing opportunities*** for everyone
- ❖ Creating ***inclusive spaces***.



WP5 > Community Involvement

❖ Involved initiatives

1. Black Creek Community Farm
2. Youth Enterprise Network
3. Black Creek SNAP (TRCA)
4. The Learning Enrichment Foundation
5. Women Moving Forward (JFCFC)
6. The Spot (JFCFC)
7. Jane/Finch Action Against Poverty
8. Specialized Housing (COSTI)
9. Aging at home, Unity in diversity (JFCFC)
10. PEACH



WP5 > Research questions

1. How is diversity conceptualised within the governance arrangement?
2. Can we identify new ideas for innovative policies and governance concepts?
3. Which are the main factors influencing success or failure of the governance arrangement?



WP5 > Preliminary findings

- *Embeddedness* of diversity across community programs
- Interconnectedness: Collaboration is a key factor contributing to the success of community programs
- Integrated approach in addressing different characteristics and needs of participants is evident across many programs, reflecting *hyperdiversity*.
- Limited funding and space are key challenges identified by many programs
- General understanding of diversity is positive, however negative issues surrounding it are also highlighted by many initiative (racial discrimination, structural barriers to accessing services, employment and civic participation, etc.)



Success factors

- Importance of personally developed and maintained **collaborative networks**
- **Attachment** to the community
- **Bottom-up identification** of needs
- Internal **bonding** and sense of **attachment** within the initiative
- Inclusiveness and accessibility of the space
- **Quality** and sensitivity of the space towards specific **needs of the community**
- **Passion** and **commitment** to the community
- **Diversity** in staff composition (languages, etc)
- Attention to **provision of services to meet basic needs** (food, TTC fare, transport, child care, etc)
- Effort and ability to look at **potentials and positive contributions**
- Focus on **community capacity building** and **long term goals**



Barriers and challenges

- **Systematic barriers** and **structural inequalities (stigmatization)**
- Limited **permanent and long term funding, budget cuts,** and **organizational support** to get funding (uncertainty)
- **Reactive** as oppose to **pro-active funding**
- **Competitiveness between** different programs to acquire funding and support
- **Organizational and administrative** support
- Limited **space** and **capacity**
- Lack of **social infrastructure** within the community
- **Limited connection between** different services and service providers (umbrella organisation)
- **Silod mentality** within official bodies
- **Compoundedness of individual problems**
- **Spatial quality and organization of the area** (Jane&Finch)
- **Territorial conflicts (gangs)** limiting access to services
- **Accessibility and mobility** issues





This project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Framework Programme

Thank you!

www.urbandivercities.eu

D.Ahmadi@tudelft.nl



twitter.com/divercities_eu



facebook.com/urbandivercities



linkedin.com/company/divercities