Analysing Diversity Policy in Toronto

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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
Thank you!

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