



Transatlantic Perspectives on Improving Community Relations

Discussion Paper

Transatlantic Learning Community

Migration Workgroup

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I. Introduction

Community tensions in Europe and North America involve clashes between native and migrant groups. In the United States, community tensions primarily take place within urban centers that host large concentrations of immigrants and native-born minority residents. In Europe, in contrast, community tensions take place between a large native majority and a small immigrant minority. In addition, conflicts in Europe are often associated with xenophobic activity by right-wing political groups. Despite these differences, however, community tensions in Europe and North America share a number of important characteristics, including cross-cultural misunderstandings, problematic police-community relations, neighborhood and school violence, and allegations of media bias.

Some tensions arise because of inter-group misunderstandings concerning cultural, social, and economic practices, which are often viewed as offensive or upsetting by natives. For example, from the perspective of established residents, the presence of large, extended families in immigrant households resembles urban overcrowding. In some cases, immigrant social and cultural practices—such as child abuse, domestic violence, underage marriages, and female genital mutilation—are in violation of the laws of the host country.

Discrimination of migrant groups exacerbates tensions between newcomers and natives. Countries have documented substantial bias against migrant groups seeking employment, housing, and education. In some areas, immigrants suffer a form of discrimination that denies them fair treatment as customers or even entry into restaurants and other public establishments.

This report examines community tensions and discrimination involving migrant groups in comparative perspective. First, it outlines the form and scale of native-immigrant conflict in Europe and the United States, as well as the various types of discrimination immigrants endure on both sides of the Atlantic. Second, it establishes a set of effective models for dispelling and preventing community tensions and anti-immigrant discrimination by presenting a number of best practices undertaken in countries on both sides of the Atlantic.

A successful approach to reducing community tensions should account for the following: *promoting tolerance* within and between ethnic and racial communities, *empowering migrants* for participation in the civic process and other aspects of social and economic life, *orienting new immigrants* to the social mores, laws, and legal systems in their new countries, *mediating conflict* in emergency situations, *prosecuting offenses* when and if conflict takes place, *establishing trust* between law enforcement agencies and the

communities they serve, and *reducing discrimination* affecting ethnic and racial communities. These strategies often lead to and are strengthened by the development of *multilateral initiatives*.

II. Form and Scale of Community Tensions

1. The United States

Community tensions in the United States primarily involve flare-ups among minority groups, both native and foreign-born. Conflicts arise when one racial or ethnic group is seen by others as having an excess of economic, political, or police power.¹ In 1992, for instance, the civil unrest in South Central Los Angeles that destroyed over 1,000 buildings and damaged \$1.1 billion worth of property, resulted from resentment over the acquittal of four Los Angeles police officers accused of excessively beating a black suspect.² The violence involved three large minority communities—blacks, Hispanics, and Koreans—in conflict with one another and with the white community. The preponderance of urban poor among the victims and perpetrators of inter-ethnic hostility in the U.S. led one Los Angeles community leader to remark, “The situation here is we have victims pitted against victims.”³

Tensions among minority groups can also result when immigrant businesses prosper within destitute, inner-city communities, provoking resentment among less fortunate natives. The City of Los Angeles witnessed a string of violent incidents during the 1980s and early 1990s, as Korean store owners opened shop in predominantly black neighborhoods. During the 1992 Los Angeles riots, no fewer than 2,500 Korean-owned businesses were destroyed.⁴ At around the same time, in New York, black community leaders protested the preponderance of Korean-owned grocery stores, alleging that the government was helping immigrants move ahead of blacks in American society.⁵

Some of the most recent U.S. conflicts between customers and store-owners of different ethnicity have involved Arab migrants. In Detroit, a city that hosts one of the largest ethnic Arab enclaves outside the Middle East, police arrested two Arab-American store clerks, immigrants from Yemen, for the brutal murder of Calvin Porter, a 34-year-old black customer, in May 1999.⁶ The murder provoked considerable protest from both the Arab- and African-American communities, with several black residents calling for a boycott of local Arab-owned businesses. Detroit NAACP President Wendell Anthony lamented that the death, “is a tragic example of festering problems of ill-will and ill feelings between African-Americans and some Arab-Chaldean store owners.”⁷ Similar incidents had plagued Cleveland during the early 1990s, resulting in the deaths of several Arab-American clerks and at least one black customer.⁸

U.S. schools have served as a breeding ground for community tensions involving native and migrant minority groups. In 1995, Cooke Elementary School in the Adams-Morgan section of Washington, D.C. received a \$1 million federal grant to develop a completely bilingual (English-Spanish) curriculum, provoking dispute between the neighborhood's settled African-American and burgeoning Latino communities. Although Latino parents were divided on the issue, black parents and teachers vehemently opposed the measure.⁹ Schools in metropolitan Detroit have witnessed increasing tensions between native and foreign-born students since the city's 10,000 Iraqi refugees began moving to local suburbs. In 1997, a fight broke out between Arab and non-Arab students at Edsel Ford High in Dearborn. In March 1999, a similar confrontation occurred in western Detroit's Chadsey High School after a female student was violently attacked for wearing a traditional Muslim headscarf. At a subsequent meeting of Arab-American community groups in nearby Dearborn, parents blamed repeated incidents of anti-Arab violence on the school's lax administration, which, they insisted, had caused Arab student enrollment to drop by 100 percent over a one-year period.¹⁰

Public housing has provided another arena for violent flashpoints. In 1994, black residents attacked Vietnamese immigrants in San Francisco's Alice Griffith housing complex. Victims brought a class action lawsuit against the city, accusing administrators of "wanton disregard for the safety of Asian American residents in the projects."¹¹ After the city's housing authority experimented with ineffectual initiatives, including changes to its eviction policy, however, violence escalated in May 1997. This time victims charged local police with "official indifference" to their plight.¹² City officials countered this criticism, insisting that the housing authority provides the San Francisco Police Department with \$1 million per year for extra patrols, hires private security guards in particular housing projects, and collaborates with TURF, an organization of local residents trained in conflict prevention.¹³ Moreover, police pointed out that extensive violence takes place because public housing residents are unwilling to cooperate with police for fear of retaliation by militant groups.¹⁴

Not all conflicts involving migrants in the U.S. consist of inter-minority clashes. During the 1980s, a number of paramilitary, white supremacist groups emerged on the fringes of American society, threatening black, Hispanic, and Asian communities alike. White, xenophobic gangs have since propagated hate crimes¹ against immigrant communities, including the vandalization of Asian

¹The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) defines a *hate crime* as "a criminal offense committed against a person, property, or society which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against an individual's or a group's race, religion, ethnic/national origin, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation"

neighborhoods in California and the firebombing of Korean-owned businesses in Washington, D.C.¹⁵ In 1996, the U.S. Department of Justice reported a total of 10,706 hate crimes, more than 10% of which (1,163) were attributable to ethnicity and national origins bias.¹⁶

Misunderstandings between native and migrant groups concerning newcomers' cultural, social, and economic behavior has touched off a variety of inter-community conflicts. During the 1980s, allegations that undocumented migrants depressed wages by accepting substandard pay launched a series of union-sponsored campaigns that sought to keep certain migrant groups out of the U.S. workforce.¹⁷ Allegations of immigrant wage depression have continued in more recent years, dividing otherwise close-knit immigrant and native communities, such as native-born and West Indian blacks.¹⁸

Police behavior often sparks conflict between minority communities and inspires hate crimes. Police officers in areas with a high concentration of immigrants have been known to use racial or ethnic slurs, conduct unreasonable searches, and demand immigration papers without cause from foreign-born suspects.¹⁹ In the 1980s a string of violent outbreaks in Miami, which pitted native blacks against a growing Cuban majority, began with allegations of police brutality. Likewise, in Washington, D.C. in 1991, tensions between the district's black majority and Central American minority climaxed when a black policewoman shot and killed a Salvadoran suspect.²⁰ After the 1992 Los Angeles riots, an independent commission studying the police department revealed that officers deployed canine units and used Oleoresin Capsicum (pepper spray) overwhelmingly against black and Hispanic suspects.²¹ In April 1996, the videotaped beating of two Mexican nationals suspected of illegal entry into the U.S. by police in Riverside County, CA provoked hostility among the Hispanic community in nearby Los Angeles. The beating occurred amidst increased complaints alleging harsh treatment of Latino and other immigrant groups by area police.²²

A potential albeit unconventional source of tensions stems from news and entertainment media. Coverage of migrant issues often concentrates solely on situations of conflict between natives and newcomers.²³ Most recently, a March 1999 report prepared for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights charged that Muslim groups in the United States enjoy considerable religious freedom

(Houston Police Department, "Houston Police Hate Crimes Program," *Houston Police Online*, Available: http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/departme/police/hat_crimes.htm, 26 July 1999). Consequently, crimes against immigrants often represent a substantial category of hate crimes but do not account for all such offenses.

but suffer from widespread “Islamophobia,” influenced by news coverage during the 1990 Gulf War and 1993 World Trade Center bombing and by negative portrayals of Muslims in Hollywood films such as “The Siege,” “Executive Decision,” and “True Lies.”²⁴ The Washington, D.C.-based Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) blamed anti-Arab prejudice for the 22 hate crimes, 55 incidents of workplace discrimination, and 22 cases of government discrimination perpetrated against U.S. Muslim residents between 1996 and 1997.²⁵

Discrimination against and between racial and ethnic minorities fuels community tensions in the United States. Migrant groups experience substantial disadvantage in the areas of employment, working conditions, health care, housing, and education. Victims of discrimination often resent neighbors whom they perceive to be more fortunate, touching off inter-group hostilities. Recent demographic shifts, which have concentrated racial and ethnic communities in particular geographic areas, highlight the income and power disparities between winners and losers by placing groups in different and unequal positions.²⁶

One of the reasons underlying the prevalence of inter-minority conflicts in the U.S. is widespread residential segregation and corresponding racial and ethnic agglomeration. Six urban centers in six states host the greatest concentration of immigrants in the country.²⁷ At the same time, more prosperous natives have taken flight from metropolitan areas in increasing numbers. This “white flight” from urban areas has left behind a “minority-majority” that includes poor blacks, Latinos, and Asian immigrants.²⁸

Even within this urban core, native and immigrant minority groups maintain substantial residential and institutional distance from one another. In many cases, ethnic and racial communities are only able to coexist by maintaining distance from each other.²⁹ By limiting interactions between groups, ethnic and racial communities might therefore, for a time, avoid confrontations. Nonetheless, when groups live in polarized separation, the few and unavoidable opportunities for mutual interaction are more likely to become dangerous occasions for conflict. This is particularly the case in neighborhood schools and other public places.³⁰

Housing discrimination has exacerbated the problems associated with recent demographic change. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which receives and processes allegations of housing discrimination, received 5,000 complaints in 1988. By the middle of the present decade, as immigration to the U.S. reached record levels, the number of annual fair housing complaints had roughly doubled to 10,000.³¹ In a 1991 study, HUD revealed that more than half of all

Hispanic customers seeking homes and apartments experienced some form of discrimination in encounters with sales and rental agents. Hispanics were often misled by landlords who identified their accents during phone conversations, directing them to segregated or less desirable units.³² These abuses have no doubt contributed to the contemporary, skewed pattern of home-ownership in the United States: while 72 percent of native white families own their own homes, corresponding figures for Latino and new immigrant households were just 44 and 36 percent respectively.³³

Some of the focus on discrimination has dealt not with disadvantaged immigrants, but rather with disadvantaged blacks upstaged by newcomers in search of jobs. The Chicago Urban Poverty and Family Life Study produced a report comparing employment of poor Mexican and black city residents. The report concluded that employers generally preferred hiring Mexican workers, primarily because of the informal job networks they possessed, which, employers insisted, enhance productivity and reliability.³⁴ A 1997 editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* lamented that “[m]any immigrant entrepreneurs are unwilling to hire black employees,” citing particular discrimination on the part of the city’s Asian-American businesses and organizations.³⁵ Consequently, several analysts insist that immigrants are displacing blacks in the manufacturing and construction sectors and fear that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will only exacerbate this trend.³⁶ In addition, immigrant groups have been charged with discriminating against other ethnic minorities. In 1997, Peter Eng, an official of the Oakland chapter of the Organization of Chinese Americans encouraged Chinese immigrants to “distance ourselves from other ethnic immigrant groups” and insisted that immigration of Latinos was a burden to society.³⁷

Finally, the behavior of some U.S. politicians has fueled community tensions. One particular example was California Governor Pete Wilson’s campaign to deny illegal and undocumented immigrant any and all public benefits—including education—enshrined in the popular referendum, Proposition 187. One result of anti-immigrant rhetoric and action on the part of public officials has been the adoption of legislation that many immigrants consider to be inherently discriminatory, particularly against certain racial and ethnic communities. The 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, for instance, allows for the deportation of foreign nationals suspected of having links to terrorist organizations on the basis of “secret evidence.” The Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee estimates that approximately 25 aliens are currently in a state of detention pending removal proceedings on the basis of such evidence, all of whom are Muslim men from the Arab world.³⁸ In addition, in February 1999, the Supreme Court, in the case *ADC v. Reno*, upheld the deportation of seven Palestinians and one Kenyan

suspected of having ties to a leftist Palestinian organization. In the words of one ADC representative, “What [the ruling] says to immigrants is, ‘Don’t express your political rights in this country.’”³⁹

2. Europe

Community tensions in Europe generally involve hostility between immigrant minorities and members of the dominant, national majority. Although foreigners are not always passive protagonists, most racial and ethnic conflict in Europe focuses on crimes perpetrated by natives, in many cases the adherents of xenophobic, extreme-right political movements. In 1998, five European Union member states—France, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, and Italy—had xenophobic parties of the far right that enjoyed more than five percent of the popular vote.⁴⁰ In addition, social and cultural misunderstandings often provoke hostility and violence against foreigners in Europe. A particularly poignant example has been the debate over Islamic headscarves in both Germany and France.

In Germany, community tensions are largely attributed to anti-foreign hostility harbored by native residents. Violent attacks against non-Germans reached a dramatic climax during the early 1990s, when natives firebombed housing facilities for asylum seekers in the towns of Hoyerswerda and Rostock and brutally murdered a Turkish family in the town of Sollingen. The Federal Office for Constitutional Protection estimated that right-wing violence rose 10 percent between 1996 and 1997. More than half of the 669 recorded attacks were directed against foreign residents.⁴¹

Anti-foreigner violence has been especially troublesome in eastern Germany, where natives confront an unemployment level more than twice the rate in the more prosperous west. In 1996 and 1997, attacks against foreigners in eastern Germany resulted in the deaths of 10 non-Germans. Much of the violence in the region takes place in villages, where, as a result of communal and family ties to the perpetrators, police are often unwilling to intervene.⁴² In 1998, the national news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, reported that 65 percent of eastern Germans believed there were too many foreigners living in Germany. Forty-eight percent resented foreigners for allegedly taking jobs from native Germans, and 14 percent insisted that a dictatorship could better solve the region’s problems than the democratic government in Bonn.⁴³ In March 1999, Federal Interior Minister Otto Schily declared that nearly half of all right-wing extremists prone to violence live in the eastern part of the country, underscoring the link between unemployment and xenophobia.⁴⁴

Although anti-foreigner hostility in Germany represents a special case given the country's racist and xenophobic past, such attacks have also been frequent in other parts of Europe. In France in 1995, a member of a skinhead gang caused the drowning death of a Moroccan immigrant during a rally of the National Front, the country's xenophobic, far-right political party.⁴⁵ During that same year, a member of the National Front brutally murdered a French teenager of African origin. In 1998, a court sentenced the assailant to 15 years in prison.⁴⁶ In December 1997, North African immigrants in southern Spain suffered an onslaught of racially motivated attacks.⁴⁷

A large degree of anti-foreign hostility in European countries is propagated by so-called "Skinhead bands," underground music groups that produce songs fraught with xenophobic lyrics. In Germany, the Federal Office for Constitutional Protection counted approximately 100 active Skinhead bands in 1998, up from 70 the previous year. The bands performed 128 concerts in 1998 and 106 in 1997, mostly for small audiences of 200 or fewer fans. German skinhead bands often produce and manufacture compact discs abroad (including in the United States), which are later smuggled illegally into the Federal Republic.⁴⁸

Xenophobic music groups have also been active in Nordic countries under the banner of so-called "white power" music. White power bands emerged from hypernationalist "Viking music," which debuted earlier in the decade. Many white power groups collaborate with racist periodicals that offer mail-order services for the bands' products. In Sweden, one such periodical, titled *Nordland*, distributes as many as 15,000 copies per monthly edition. The magazine has also established links with racist enterprises in other regions, including *Resistance*, a white power publication in the United States.⁴⁹ White power music no doubt played a role in the 100 incidents of ethnic violence in Sweden in 1995.⁵⁰

As in the United States, European media are often blamed for encouraging hostility between natives and ethnic minorities. In Norway, tabloid editorials focus increasingly on "immigrant crime," a recently-coined phrase in Scandinavian countries that often provokes resentment among law-abiding native Norwegians.⁵¹ In Finland, the Somali League, a recently-formed immigrant-advocacy group, blamed popular newspapers for exaggerated, xenophobic articles that allegedly encourage anti-foreigner groups to attack Somali nationals.⁵²

Like community tensions in the United States, ethnic and racial conflicts in European countries often result from police misbehavior. In the United Kingdom, London officials recently ordered an inquiry into the 1993 slaying of Stephen Lawrence, an 18-year old black teenager of West-Indian descent, allegedly murdered by a gang of five native white youths. The report denounced the City of

London Police as “fundamentally racist,” since the force failed to properly investigate the crime and bring the suspects to justice. The government immediately announced that it would toughen existing anti-discrimination laws and mandate sweeping changes in policing methods.⁵³

Police brutality has also been blamed for causing ethnic and racial conflicts in Europe. In May 1995, Amnesty International publicized a report exposing incidents of police brutality of foreigners in Germany. The report indicated that, between January 1992 and March 1995, there were more than 70 incidents of cruel treatment of foreigners by German police, more than half of which took place in Berlin.⁵⁴ In April 1996, Amnesty International likewise accused French police of cruelty to foreign residents.⁵⁵

As in the United States, some European countries have experienced conflicts between natives and foreigners in schools. In recent years, German schools in both rural and urban areas have witnessed a surge in xenophobic violence, including bombings and drive-by shootings. In 1995, a 30-member gang sabotaged a high-school graduation in the town of Eppingen, beating students and teachers and shouting xenophobic slogans.⁵⁶

Finally, Europe has experienced patterns of anti-immigrant discrimination, in some cases of an extreme nature. Such incidents have helped fan the flames of inter-community hostility. In the Nordic countries, immigrants face a form of discrimination akin to the kind of *de facto* racial segregation that plagued the southern United States earlier in this century. In Norway, for instance, “restaurant racism” systematically denies non-white customers access to public facilities.⁵⁷ According to a study commissioned by the City of Helsinki in 1997, roughly one-third of the city’s immigrants had experienced discrimination. One-fifth of all minority residents had received some form of discriminatory treatment as customers.⁵⁸ Restaurant racism has extended to other parts of Europe. In the Almeria area of Spain, for instance, local taverns charge immigrants exorbitant prices, in order to avoid having to serve them.⁵⁹

Although the United Kingdom has had anti-discrimination laws since the 1970s, incidents of inequality do occur. In 1998, the Household Division, the military guard that escorts Queen Elizabeth II, came under fire for engaging in employment discrimination against members of ethnic and racial minorities. The government subsequently ordered the unit to diversify its enrollment. In addition, British Home Secretary Jack Straw demanded that police forces throughout the U.K. hire more Asian and black officers to better serve the country’s growing non-white population.⁶⁰

While anti-immigrant discrimination in northern European countries generally involves denying migrants access to employment, housing, and services, discrimination in Southern Europe consists of worker exploitation. In fact, employers in southern European countries often prefer hiring immigrants, whom they view as an expendable and cheap source of labor. Consequently, ethnic and racial minorities experience “positive discrimination” in hiring but “negative discrimination” with regard to working conditions.⁶¹

Anti-immigrant discrimination in Europe has also taken the form of unfair benefits and advantages to native whites. French conservatives, for instance, have adopted a set of discriminatory policies under the heading “national preference.” For example, in 1998, the City of Vitrolles, controlled by a National-Front-led administration, offered married couples of ethnic French and West European heritage a welfare bonus of FF 5000 (\$820) for each newly born child.⁶²

III. Policy initiatives and best practices

As the previous section demonstrated, community tensions in Europe and North America often assume differing forms and magnitudes. Nonetheless, some broad similarities do exist: cross-cultural misunderstandings, problematic police-community relations, troubled schools, and anti-immigrant discrimination to name but a few. Consequently, there seems to be an element of growing, transatlantic learning and/or consensus on how to deal with these challenges.

There have been several theoretical attempts to capture the range of possible strategies undertaken to reduce community tensions. The Council of Europe’s Migration Policy Group, for instance, divides approaches into three distinct strategies: *ethnic minorities*, *citizens’ rights*, and *accommodationist state* approaches. Although originally envisioned to describe the social and economic integration of migrant groups in Europe, these categories can be applied to all methods of reducing community tensions on both sides of the Atlantic. Policies fashioned along the *ethnic minorities approach* assume that visible ethnic minorities require strong measures to reverse the extreme disadvantages they face within the host society. In contrast, the *citizens’ rights* abhors any special treatment of ethnic or racial communities, seeking to establish complete equality of all residents before the law. The *accommodationist state* approach consists of long-term measures that seek to facilitate *rapprochement* between citizens and permanently resident immigrants.⁶³ When applied to strategies of reducing community tensions, this framework can explain whether policies are emergency or proactive in character, whether they seek to

protect or empower ethnic and racial communities, and whether they are intended to punish wrongdoing or facilitate understanding.

As the following sections demonstrate, North American and in European countries have developed a number of successful strategies for reducing community tensions, which fall into the following broad categories: promoting tolerance through educational programs, empowering migrants to participate in civic affairs, orienting new immigrants to the communities in which they live, mediating conflicts, prosecuting offenses against racial and ethnic communities, establishing trust between migrant groups and law enforcement agencies, and reducing anti-immigrant discrimination. In addition, international organizations have bolstered measures at the national and subnational levels, often highlighting and coordinating the most successful policies. Each type of response corresponds with one or more of the theoretical approaches outlined above. Consequently, these models should form the core of any successful policy designed to reduce community tensions.

1. **Promoting Tolerance**

Governments in both Europe and North America have implemented a number of policy initiatives to reduce community tensions both before and after they occur. One particular set of responses, which has gained tremendous ground in European countries, has been the promotion of public education projects designed to foster tolerance and reciprocal understanding, while inoculating ethnic and racial communities against mutual hostility.

Educational efforts in the United States have sought to mobilize the entire nation for the establishment of constructive inter-community dialogue. In 1997, the Los Angeles City Attorney's office, with the support of the nationwide Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR), developed a pilot program titled "National Days of Dialogue on Race Relations."⁶⁴ Its goal is a degree of *rapprochement* between distinctive communities within America's multi-racial and multi-ethnic society. In particular, the initiative brings community leaders, government officials, and ordinary citizens together for a series of constructive discussion fora. The program has expanded since its inception, enjoying support from prominent members of Congress and immigrant advocacy groups such as the Organization of Chinese Americans.⁶⁵

Inspired by the example set in Los Angeles, President Clinton in 1998 launched a year-long program called the "President's Initiative on Race," in order to surmount racial disparities in areas such as education, economic opportunity, housing, health care, and the administration of justice. The

President Clinton created an advisory board of seven distinguished public figures to make policy recommendations to all cabinet agencies. In addition, during the first week of April, high-level Clinton administration officials engaged students at select U.S. universities in discussions on race and tolerance, while 500 schools across the country sponsored town hall meetings. The initiative's crowning achievement was the President's *Report to the American People*, derived from the program's year of research and dialogue and intended as a blueprint for improving race relations in the 21st century.⁶⁶ Completed on September 18, 1998, the report includes a set of appeals titled "Ten Things Every American Should Do to Promote Racial Reconciliation," which encourages ordinary citizens to learn about ethnic and racial groups, to interact with people of different backgrounds, and to support institutions and community projects that promote racial inclusion.⁶⁷

European governments have undertaken a variety of educational initiatives to dispel intolerance of migrant communities. In 1993, the German federal and state interior ministries established a nationwide media campaign titled "FAIRSTÄNDNIS" (a play on the German term for "understanding"), which educates native Germans about the sources and manifestations of right-wing extremism, anti-foreign hostility, and violence. The campaign has produced guidebooks, computer games, and posters for individual and classroom use. Since its inception, FAIRSTÄNDNIS has utilized more than DM 13 billion in state and federal funds.⁶⁸

Germany views anti-foreign hostility as a threat to democratic rights and principles. Accordingly, the federal government has delegated a substantial degree of educational work to the Office for Constitutional Protection. The office publicizes information concerning crimes perpetrated against foreign residents through frequent brochures and in its annual *Report on Constitutional Protection*. In addition, the BfV sponsors mobile exhibits on right-wing extremism and political extremist activity on the internet.⁶⁹

Germany also utilizes an extensive network of Commissioners for Foreigners Affairs to promote tolerance for migrant communities. This institutional infrastructure ranges from the federal government's Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs to public servants in small towns and villages. Commissioners represent the interests of foreign residents, provide advice to both Germans and non-Germans, and conduct educational campaigns to foster understanding between natives and foreigners. In the city-state of Berlin, which in absolute terms hosts more foreign residents than any other community in Germany, the Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs develops brochures on issues such as naturalization, vocational training, residence regulations, and foreign cultures, music and history for the

benefit of both German and non-German readers.⁷⁰ In the nearby state of Brandenburg, from December 1998 to June 1999, the Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs in sponsored a web-site design competition as part of the state-wide “Tolerant Brandenburg” campaign. School classes and individuals under age 25 were encouraged to submit entries covering themes such as the origins of violence, fear of foreigners, and multiculturalism.⁷¹

In the Nordic countries, cultural ministers recently developed a traveling educational exhibit that seeks to inoculate youth against the lure of xenophobia, particularly in the form of “white power” music. The project, titled “Vitt ljud—nordiskt mörker” (White noise—Nordic darkness), exposes students to music with racist undertones, encouraging them to engage in self-reflection concerning their own susceptibility to the music’s overt and hidden messages.⁷² In addition, Nordic governments helped develop a Stockholm-based network of European schools, titled RINKR, which seeks to educate students and teachers about immigrants, racism, and European identity. Participants include schools in Sweden, Finland, Spain, and Great Britain.⁷³ Non-governmental and community-based organizations on both sides of the Atlantic have worked to promote tolerance. In the United States, several groups have worked to promote information exchange and to foster dialogue between racial and ethnic groups. In September 1996, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. sponsored an interactive satellite teleconference, titled “Building a Hospitable Community for Immigrants,” which involved local groups from Hawaii to Florida.⁷⁴ In response to the May 1999 beating in Detroit, Arab store owners, the NAACP, and other local community and religious groups convened a peace summit to stop inner-city violence.⁷⁵

Non-profit and community-based organizations have also been active in European countries. Since the 1970s, churches, trade unions, civil rights organizations, and state and local governments throughout the Federal Republic of Germany have participated in an annual event, called the “Week of Foreign Fellow Citizens” (*Woche des ausländischen Mitbürgers*), which includes discussions, displays, films, and other cultural events that inform Germans about foreigners living in their midst. In 1992 and 1993, in response to internationally publicized arson attacks against Germany’s foreign population, citizens’ groups in several localities sponsored candlelight marches to protest the violence and to demonstrate support for the victims. In Berlin, which hosts the country’s largest non-German population, the Regional Organization for Assistance to Foreigners organizes inter-cultural education programs and neighborhood activities to promote understanding between natives and foreigners.⁷⁶ In the United Kingdom, the Searchlight organization has responded to anti-foreigner violence on university and

college campuses. The group recently established a program titled “Campus Watch,” which enables students to effectively monitor and report racist, nazi, and extremist activities.⁷⁷

In Finland, public figures have combined entertainment and education to promote tolerance. A popular Helsinki theater recently produced a play consisting of a monologue by a Vietnamese immigrant who had come to Finland as a boat refugee. The poignant story allows native audiences to identify with the protagonist without enduring condemnations of racism in Finnish society. The play has been performed more than 100 times for schools, organizations, festivals, and seminars throughout the country. It has also appeared in other Nordic countries, as well as Austria, Switzerland, Lithuania, and Russia.⁷⁸

Some countries have established partnerships between governmental and non-governmental organizations to promote tolerance. In March 1998, federal officials in Germany created a “Forum Against Racism” to continue inter-sectoral dialogue established during the European Union’s (EU) “European Year Against Racism.” During the first half of 1999, the German EU-Presidency convened an international conference titled “Religion–Ethnicity–State” to discuss the forum’s plan of action at the European level.⁷⁹ In Portugal, the government and private organizations jointly fund a program to train Roma/Gypsy mediators. These mediators act as a link between the country’s Roma/Gypsy minority and agencies in both the public and private sectors, in order to facilitate the provision of services in the areas of employment, education, and housing.⁸⁰

2. **Empowering Migrants**

In addition to teaching tolerance, officials in Europe and North America have attempted to empower migrants, in order to boost their standing as members of local communities. Empowerment often takes the form of civic participation—including the formation and operation of representative bodies—or acquisition of the host society’s language.⁸¹ It can also mean informing immigrants of their respective rights and benefits.

In the United States, government advisory councils provide a range of services that enhance immigrants’ ability to participate in American social, political, and economic life. At the state level, for instance, the Maryland Office of New Americans (MONA), a program in the state’s Department of Human Resources (DHR), offers English-language training, citizenship courses, and employment services to facilitate newcomers’ transition to permanent residence and eventual citizenship. Specific

programs include U.S. Citizenship Workshops, in which immigrants receive help in applying for naturalization, the creation of a list of local citizenship service providers throughout Maryland, and the establishment of state-wide English-language and citizenship testing centers. MONA also coordinates the efforts of local organizations that provide similar services and serves as an information resource and advisory body to the governor and the state legislature on immigrant and refugee policies.⁸²

Some state-level advisory councils have concentrated on the empowerment of particular migrant groups. Several states, for example, have established advisory groups to represent the interests of Latino communities. In 1998, North Carolina set up the Governor's Advisory Council on Hispanic/Latino Affairs, a board of 25 members drawn primarily from various departments throughout the state government. The Council hosts discussion fora on issues of interest to the Latino community and advises the governor on how best to meet the needs and concerns of Latino residents.⁸³ The North Carolina Governor's Office also houses an Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, which acts as a liaison between the state government and Latino leaders and community organizations.⁸⁴

U.S. non-governmental organizations have also focused on immigrant empowerment. Established in 1988, the Immigrant Rights Program of the nationwide American Friends Service Committee seeks to inform immigrants about their rights and entitlements under U.S. law. The organization also works to increase immigrant access to legal services, and to enhance leadership capacity in racial and ethnic communities.⁸⁵ On a more regional level, the New York Association of New Americans (NYANA) focuses primarily on placing migrants in new jobs. NYANA trains and re-trains thousands of immigrants, later matching the skills they acquire with appropriate jobs. In particular, the organization's Customized Staffing Systems unit, a group of experienced human resources professionals, provides a direct interface between NYANA's training programs and prospective employers.⁸⁶

In 1989, the City Council of Frankfurt, the city with the highest percentage of foreigners in the country, established the Department for Multicultural Affairs, also known as the "Frankfurt Model." The body of 16 representatives—eight German and eight non-German—has actively promoted foreigners' interests, both politically and administratively, within the city government. The first of its kind in Germany, the Frankfurt Model symbolizes "recognition of the legitimate right of foreigners, as tax-payers and resident citizens, to have their problems acknowledged and dealt with by civil authorities."⁸⁷

Austrian officials have in part followed the Frankfurt Model, adding some innovations to empowering foreigners. The Municipal Council of the City of Graz recently established a Foreigner Council to promote tolerance for and integration of resident immigrants. The body is composed exclusively of representatives of the city's immigrant community and serves as an advisory board to municipal authorities. The Foreigner Council delivers proposals and opinions and assists public servants in all matters concerning foreigners affairs. Representatives must be at least 19 years of age and must reside in Austria for at least six months. All immigrants above the age of 18, who have lived in Austria for at least three months and are registered in Graz, may participate in council elections.⁸⁸

Like their counterparts in Germany and Austria, officials in Nordic countries have focused on equality between natives and foreigners and empowerment of migrant groups. In Finland in 1995, the Helsinki City Council approved an immigrant policy memorandum that promotes equality between foreigners and Finns, especially within the "basic structures" of society such as education and social welfare.⁸⁹ The City of Copenhagen, Denmark has sought to incorporate immigrants in its urban renewal project for the Vesterbro district, one of the city's poorest neighborhoods and home to several non-Danish minorities. In particular, the city developed a program titled the "Vesterbro Immigrant Information Project" to overcome communication barriers between public officials and immigrant residents. The project enables migrant groups to voice their needs and concerns through trained bilingual and bicultural mediators recruited among unemployed immigrants. These mediators, in turn, disseminate information on the project through various media, including local television.⁹⁰

3. Orienting New Immigrants

North American and European countries have sought to ease immigrants' integration within the host society through orientation programs. Through brochures, information bureaus, and classes, immigrants learn about accepted patterns of social, cultural, and economic behavior in their new home. In this way, orientation programs, no matter what form they assume, can substantially reduce inter-group misunderstandings that often lead to community tensions.

The U.S. government does not offer orientation materials to new immigrants. It does, however, provide refugees who enter in accordance with the Department of State's (DOS) Overseas Resettlement Program with a considerable amount of integration assistance. The DOS's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration provides refugee entrants with a guidebook on life in the United States before they arrive. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in the Department of Health and Human

Services (HHS) funds select service providers to develop orientation materials for distribution to refugees already in the U.S. There are currently six service providers throughout the country, each of which serves a different ethnic group.⁹¹

State advisory councils also assist with the orientation of immigrants arriving in the United States. The Maryland Office for New Americans provides refugees with English-language and employment training, in addition to health screening and cash and medical assistance. MONA also instructs refugees on basic life skills, including shopping, banking, managing a budget, registering with Selective Service, and reacting to emergency situations.⁹²

Non-governmental organizations have augmented the breadth of information available to immigrants arriving in the United States. In 1998, for instance, the Chicago-based World Relief Corporation developed a 200-page book titled "Immigrants and Refugees: Create Your New Life in America," which provides advice on financial institutions, government agencies, English language, and computer services. The publication, which costs \$14.95 per volume, is available in English, Spanish, Russian, Bosnian, and Lithuanian.⁹³

Like the U.S., European countries provide some information to arriving immigrants. The United Kingdom offers a short leaflet concerning the rights and privileges of migrants remaining in the country for more than six months. Topics include finding employment, access to health care, public benefits, housing, education, and motor vehicle laws. Germany provides new arrivals with a two-page leaflet on German citizenship and naturalization. Much of the orientation of newcomers in Germany is carried out by the country's network of Commissioners for Foreigners Affairs. For example, Berlin's Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs offers an advisory and counseling service for all Berlin residents. Concerned individuals can appeal to the Commissioner for advice on all aspects of integration and foreigners law, including residence status, housing, and assistance in cases of discrimination. Sweden offers substantial information to new immigrants, including a two-page handout during arrival and detailed mailings upon registration as an official resident. Several Swedish localities also have an Immigrant Services Bureau, which like Germany's Commissioners for Foreigners Affairs, provides additional information upon request and helps immigrants establish contact to public authorities.⁹⁴

The most extensive immigrant orientation materials are provided by two of the traditional countries of immigration, Australia and New Zealand. The government of Australia gives all new immigrants a standard Form 994I, which contains a general overview of life in Australian society. The form also contains a "language card," which enables newcomers to inform officials which language they

speak and facilitates the arrangement of interpreter services. Immigrants throughout Australia can also obtain orientation information at one of the country's several Migrant Resource Centers, facilities which are state-funded and run by community organizations. New Zealand offers extensive orientation packets to holders of employee and business-investor visas for a price of \$175. The government uses most of the revenue from these sales for English language services and training. Family and humanitarian migrants can purchase these materials by request for \$19.95. All immigrants can also request an "Immigration Book," which contains information similar to that provided in the orientation packet.⁹⁵

4. **Mediating Conflict**

Much of the effort to reduce community tensions in the United States has concentrated on conflict mediation both before and after inter-group hostilities occur. Under Title X of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Congress established the Community Relations Service (CRS), a specialized "peacemaking" branch of the Department of Justice. Originally conceived as a means of mediating racial conflict, the service's field of activity has expanded over the last three decades to encompass incidents involving Native Americans and immigrant groups. Most requests for CRS intervention originate with governors, mayors, police chiefs, and school superintendents.⁹⁶

The Community Relations Service possesses no law enforcement authority and cannot investigate or prosecute cases, but instead provides a team of highly skilled professional conciliators in 10 regional and 4 field offices throughout the country. Federal mediators are on call 24 hours a day and render services on a voluntary, cost-free basis: all CRS services are funded directly by the federal government. This ensures absolute impartiality in mediation efforts, especially in cases where local officials are themselves party to the conflict. The CRS regularly contacts local officials to monitor the progress of the mediation agreements it negotiates, and maintains an internal reporting system that records the outcome of each particular case.⁹⁷ The CRS also works to empower community leaders and officials. One of its most recent accomplishments has been the development of a series of "best practices" protocols designed to guide community officials in averting tensions.⁹⁸

Mediating conflicts in U.S. schools has become an increasingly important part of reducing community tensions. In 1997, 135 school districts and 75 colleges and universities nationwide called on the CRS for conflict resolution and prevention services. Most requests for assistance cited police brutality as the principal cause of conflict.⁹⁹ In response, the Service established peer mediation

programs that forge communication links between students, local police, and business officials in areas with high concentrations of immigrants and other minorities. The CRS recently combined these efforts to create a program titled SPIRIT, which has developed a set of national guidelines for school-police partnerships.¹⁰⁰

The impetus for school mediation programs has extended from the federal to the local level. In response to the 1992 riots, Los Angeles communities established the Multi-Cultural Collaborative, a non-profit organization that provides mediation services to the city's schools.¹⁰¹ In Dearborn, MI, a suburb of Detroit, school and city officials formed a task force to examine the origins of hostility between Arab and non-Arab students that led to violence in 1997. Its members attended diversity courses given by the League of Women voters, an activity community leaders insist has kept violent incidents isolated.¹⁰²

Like the U.S. Community Relations Service and related local services, German officials mediate disputes between natives and foreigners. Dispute mediation is a principal task of each Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs, from the federal to the local level. In the city-state of Hamburg, for instance, the legislature has specifically empowered the Office of the Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs to intervene in disputes involving natives and foreigners, organizations representing ethnic and racial communities, and public servants.¹⁰³ In addition to providing foreign residents with a voice in the city administration, the Frankfurt Model also provides Germans and non-Germans with mediation services, both in cases of violent conflict and anti-immigrant discrimination.¹⁰⁴

5. **Prosecuting Offenses**

One of the most effective ways of reducing community tensions is undoubtedly punishing anti-foreign and hate crimes to deter future offenses. In both European and North American countries, governments from the national to the municipal level have enacted legislation and established agencies to observe and prosecute the types of serious offenses that accompany community tensions.

Between 1990 and 1996, the U.S. Congress enacted a series of laws in response to the surge of hate crimes during the 1980s. The 1990 Hate Crimes Statistics Act requires the U.S. Department of Justice to assemble and report statistics on the level of hate crimes in the United States. In addition, the law authorized the Attorney General to establish guidelines for determining which offenses constituted hate crimes. In 1992, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act mandated that each state include combating hate crimes in its juvenile justice program. The Hate Crimes Sentencing

Enhancement Act of 1994 augments the federal government's power to prosecute hate crimes (which it derives from existing civil rights laws). The 1994 law requires that judges toughen sentences (by about one-third) for offenses determined to be hate crimes.¹⁰⁵

At the time of writing, Congress is considering legislation that would further increase federal authority to prosecute hate crimes. The bill, titled the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999, would amend the federal criminal code to allow for the prosecution of offenders who—or whose victim—utilizes interstate commerce in connection with the offense. The act would also authorize sentencing enhancements for adult offenders who recruit juveniles in committing hate crimes, and it would increase funding for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies engaged in observing and prosecuting hate crimes.¹⁰⁶

A number of state governments in the U.S. have set up offices to observe and prosecute hate crimes. Massachusetts established the Governor's Task Force on Hate Crimes in 1991 to provide effective implementation of the federal Hate Crimes Statistics Act at the state level. The task force serves as a liaison between state and local government, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations. Two initiatives have grown out of this network: the Statewide Initiative, which strengthens enforcement of state anti-hate-crime laws by facilitating the reporting of crimes by victims, witnesses, and local police; and the Student Civil Rights Project, which provides support and information to students in Massachusetts schools. The latter project has recently expanded to include an Internet site to expedite reporting, particularly for those students most at risk of becoming the victims of hate crimes.¹⁰⁷

In Germany the Federal Office for Constitutional Protection (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, BfV), established by federal law in 1990, gathers intelligence and reports on extremist, right-wing organizations and xenophobic incidents. Each of Germany's 16 constituent states has its own Office for Constitutional Protection, which exchange information and collaborate with the BfV. The state offices are considered equal rather than subordinate to their federal counterpart.¹⁰⁸

In order to more effectively investigate and prosecute anti-foreign crimes, state governments throughout Germany have established special police task forces. For example, the eastern German states of Saxony and Brandenburg, where xenophobic arson attacks took place earlier in the decade, created a Special Commission Against Right-Wing Extremism and a Mobile Intervention Force Against Violence and Anti-Foreign Hostility respectively. These initiatives in part helped to reduce the level of right-wing crimes in Germany, from 11,719 offenses in 1997 to 11,049 in 1998.¹⁰⁹

In the United Kingdom the government has called on non-governmental organizations to assist in prosecuting anti-foreign crimes. In 1993-1994, the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee solicited evidence from Searchlight, an independent, non-sectarian organization that works to end racism and xenophobia, to assist a government inquiry into racial harassment and anti-foreign attacks in Britain. The information submitted was instrumental in drawing government attention to the activities of Combat 18, a xenophobic organization known for inciting racist violence.¹¹⁰

6. **Establishing Trust between Migrants and Law Enforcement**

Given the fact that strained police-community relations often act as a conduit for community tensions, officials in Europe and North America have focused increasingly on forging trust between law enforcement agencies and the neighborhoods they serve. These efforts have concentrated on eliminating police brutality and bias *vis-à-vis* migrant groups, on opening channels of communication between police forces and the communities they serve, and on enabling community residents to take an active part in their own safety.

In the United States, governments at the federal, state, and local levels have been active in addressing community-police relations. Proposed solutions have included community policing programs, cultural awareness and language training, translator services, bilingual recruiting and incentive pay for the acquisition of bilingual and bi-cultural skills, and availability of citizen-complaint forms in several languages.¹¹¹

At the federal level, the CRS has focused on establishing trust and communication between police and local communities. For example, in Omaha, Nebraska, CRS agents developed a set of 11 written recommendations that have enabled police officers to provide better service for the city's black and Latino residents. The CRS also provides police throughout the United States with specialized instructions on identifying and disbanding racist and xenophobic activity in order to restore confidence within the community. This was the focus of the service's recent "Train the Trainers" seminar that involved federal, state, county, and local law enforcement agencies at a meeting in Arizona. Finally, CRS mediators establish civilian-police partnerships, usually in the form of community patrols, to remove suspicion of police brutality within ethnic and racial communities. A citizen-police patrol currently operates in downtown Kansas City, Missouri.¹¹²

Local governments have also developed initiatives to establish trust. Shortly after the Los Angeles riots, the city appointed an independent committee, the Christopher Commission, to “examine any aspect of the law enforcement structure in Los Angeles that might cause or contribute to the problem of excessive force.”¹¹³ The committee received support from Communities United for Police Reform (CUPR), a local coalition representing black, Mexican, and Korean-American organizations.¹¹⁴ Since the Christopher Commission completed its recommendations, the Los Angeles Police Department has established a multi-layered strategy of community involvement in police operations. A Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB) and Community Police Academies in each of the force’s 18 geographic divisions provide citizen oversight of police activity, as well as basic training in law enforcement. In addition, citizens’ committees function as an early warning system for police, alerting officers to potential flareups before they occur. Finally, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office has developed a Cultural Awareness Training Program that has “become a model for departments in the State of California and throughout the country.” It offers police recruits 24 hours of cultural awareness training and established officers 16 to 24 hours depending on rank.¹¹⁵ By 1997, the LAPD enjoyed an approval rating of over 70 percent among city residents, up from just 30 percent after the 1992 unrest.¹¹⁶

Canadian officials have also sought to establish trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement officials. In British Columbia’s Tri-City area, police reported that immigrant families, particularly those from Asian countries, were reluctant to report crimes and, as a consequence, were exceedingly vulnerable to crimes such as home invasions. Public officials responded with the establishment of “Neighbors Together,” a program that seeks to inform newcomers about national and provincial law enforcement agencies, the history of law enforcement in British Columbia, and available policing and safety programs. The initiative also gives immigrants the opportunity to voice their needs and concerns. Like the Christopher Commission in Los Angeles, one of the principal outgrowths of “Neighbors Together” has been the establishment of community policing. Volunteers are recruited among both immigrants and Canadian citizens to work in neighborhood crime prevention programs and victims services. “Neighbors Together” enlists the aid of community organizations, including the Society for Community Development, SUCCESS (The United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society), and CCSPC (the Tri-County Community Crime Prevention Services Centre).¹¹⁷

European countries have also begun to address police-community relations. The Belgian Royal Commission for Immigrant Policy currently organizes an information program, titled “Building awareness of immigrant issues,” for officers in the nation’s police and gendarmerie. The 25-hour course

provides training in immigration history, foreign cultures, and conflict resolution. Participants must also spend at least one day performing field work in immigrant communities. In order to facilitate understanding and cooperation, the program enlists the services of “key witnesses,” foreign nationals who educate law enforcement officials about conditions in immigrant neighborhoods. These aides later act as a contact point between police and minority communities.¹¹⁸

7. **Reducing Discrimination**

On both sides of the Atlantic, governments and community organizations have attempted to combat one of the root causes of community tensions: ethnic and racial discrimination in schools, workplaces, clinics and hospitals, and housing markets. In the United States, the federal government has assumed much of the responsibility for reducing discrimination that affects the country’s immigrant population. The federal Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR), an independent, bipartisan agency first established in 1957, monitors all forms of discrimination on the basis of national origin and accepts complaints from impacted individuals. The Commission also scrutinizes federal laws and policies for possible abuses. In order to carry out this extensive analysis, the USCCR utilizes a network of 51 state-level advisory committees. On the basis of this research, the commission submits frequent reports, findings, and recommendations to both the President and Congress and engages in public education concerning issues of discrimination. Although it lacks law enforcement powers, the USCCR can refer complaints and documentation of abuses to federal, state, or local government agencies, as well as to private organizations, in order to provide relief in individual cases.¹¹⁹

Other federal agencies handle allegations of national origins discrimination in particular sectors. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for instance, has been receiving complaints from victims of housing discrimination since 1968, when Congress passed the Civil Rights Act Title VI (the Fair Housing Act). Nowadays, affected individuals can submit complaints electronically via HUD’s Internet site (<http://www.hud.gov/hdiscrim.html>.) HUD oversees two programs to eliminate anti-immigrant abuses in the nation’s housing markets: the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) and the Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP). FHIP endows private, non-profit organizations with grants to develop programs that promise to enhance compliance with federal fair housing laws. FHAP provides assistance to state and local government agencies to handle complaints of discrimination within their respective jurisdictions. In 1999, funding for both programs totaled \$40 million, a 33% increase over the previous year.

In order to eliminate employment-based discrimination, Congress made several adjustments to the Immigration and Nationality Act. For instance, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, which mandated that employers verify workers' employment eligibility as lawful residents, also prohibits them from discriminating against immigrants and foreign-born citizens on the basis of national origin. Employers who engage in unfair hiring practices consequently face penalties between \$275 and \$11,000 per offense. These provisions are enforced by the Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC), an arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. Since 1987, the work of this agency has cost employers more than \$1.8 million in back pay for affected workers and \$1.2 million in civil fines.¹²⁰ Like HUD's fair housing programs, efforts against employment-based discrimination have established partnerships between different levels of government. For example, in 1998, the OSC signed an agreement with the City of Denver's Agency for Human Rights and Community Relations (HR/CR) to fight workplace discrimination on the basis of national origin, citizenship, and/or accent. This collaboration includes joint training seminars for employers and workers in the Denver area.

Canadian officials have undertaken a number of efforts to root out anti-immigrant discrimination. At the local level, the City Government of Winnipeg, Manitoba works to promote tolerance and understanding through its Community and Race Relations Committee. In addition to offering conflict-mediation services, the committee receives and reviews complaints of employment-based and workplace discrimination and provides race relations training programs for employers and employees.¹²¹ Canada has also been active in fighting educational discrimination. The Government of Ontario recently adopted a policy of "zero tolerance" for incidents of harassment and discrimination at the province's universities. This includes an annual appropriation of \$1.5 million to post-secondary schools to develop training mechanisms for teachers, students, and administrators, as well as an external auditing system, which will track the program's progress.¹²²

European countries have confronted similar challenges of anti-immigrant discrimination. In response, governments at multiple levels, as well as non-governmental organizations, have fought to eliminate national origins bias in labor markets, work places, medical facilities, housing markets, and schools.

Some government initiatives in Europe have focused exclusively on employment-based and work-place discrimination. The German Federal Labor Ministry sponsors a number of training programs to prevent anti-foreign discrimination and promote tolerance in the workplace. Examples

have included seminars that teach state and local employment agents, employment counselors, commissioners for foreigners affairs about employment conditions, rules, and regulations in source countries.¹²³ One of the principal tasks of each commissioner for foreigners affairs is to investigate and report incidents of workplace discrimination. The Commissioner for Foreigners Affairs in the Charlottenburg district of Berlin, for instance, collects press articles and disseminates brochures concerning discrimination, and works to establish a network of community-based and non-governmental organizations to promote equal opportunities.¹²⁴ The Netherlands has implemented a similar infrastructure, in the form of local anti-discrimination centers, to avoid workplace and employment-based discrimination.¹²⁵

In 1995-1996, Denmark attempted to rectify the abuses of employment-based discrimination with financial incentives to employers. The government's "Employment Project" enrolls multiple public and private organizations wishing to undertake enterprises they are unable to finance by themselves. In this way, government officials match unemployed members of ethnic minority communities with projects requiring their skills. Project workers receive joint payment from both the government and the participating organizations. Since its inception, the program has enabled 50% of its participants to acquire full-time, permanent employment. The rest have gained marketable skills that enhance their ability to find a job.¹²⁶

Southern European countries have taken a different approach to preventing employment-based and workplace discrimination. Measures have focused not on promoting immigrant employment but on rectifying the exploitation of foreign workers who already have a job. In 1997, Portugal enacted a series of anti-discrimination laws that, among other functions, limits the number of foreigners (not including nationals of EU-member states or former Portuguese colonial possessions) active in a particular enterprise to 10 percent of the company's workforce. This, according to the government, will prevent both workforce discrimination and foreign workers' isolation from the rest of society.¹²⁷

Other government initiatives have taken a broader approach towards simultaneously reducing several forms of anti-immigrant discrimination. In 1993, the Belgian Parliament established the Center for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism (CEOOR), a government organization that provides assistance to the victims of national origins discrimination in employment, housing, and health-care, as well as to individuals who suffer racist and/or anti-foreign treatment from public officials. Among its many functions, CEOOR provides information to victims, registers their complaints, and assists them in carrying out legal action on the basis of Belgium's 1981 law "on the punishment of certain acts

motivated by racism or xenophobia.”¹²⁸ Some concrete examples of the center’s achievements include an initiative to provide urgent medical assistance to migrant groups ineligible for mainstream health-care benefits, a program for intercultural mediation between doctors and patients, and the promotion of employment training courses for non-Belgians.¹²⁹ Denmark has an organization very similar to Belgium’s CEOOR, the Documentation and Advice Center on Racial Discrimination in Denmark (DRC). Like the CEOOR, it provides advice, documents abuses, and provides various legal services to the victims of racist and xenophobic discrimination. But the DRC is a private organization completely independent of the government. Finally, the Frankfurt Department for Multicultural Affairs also works to reduce incidents of discrimination in the areas of administration (which includes residence and public services), education, and police behavior. Department specialists investigate abuses and invite the responsible parties to take part in dispute mediation.¹³⁰

8. **Developing Multilateral Approaches**

Measures to reduce community tensions and anti-immigrant discrimination have not been confined to the national and subnational levels. A number of international, intergovernmental, and international non-governmental organizations have attempted to coordinate the efforts of nation-states, while adopting novel measures of their own. Perhaps one of the most instructive aspects of multilateral efforts has been the compilation of sets of “best practices” that summarize effective policies undertaken in various locations.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has conducted a number of studies on contemporary forms of racial discrimination, xenophobia, and other sources of anti-foreigner intolerance. In September 1998, the U.N.’s Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, Maurice Glele-Ahanhanzo, submitted a ten-page report to the General Assembly that pointed to an increase in the power of extreme right-wing parties in advanced industrial countries. In particular, Glele-Ahanhanzo noted an alarming profusion of xenophobic Internet sites, 200 of which were disseminating racist propaganda at the time.¹³¹

In Europe, both the Council of Europe and the European Union have been active in the fight against anti-foreign hostility and discrimination. Much of this international activity has come about as part of larger, European-level collaboration on nearly all aspects of migration policy, which has in part advanced the cause of European integration. In addition, there is a sober recognition in Europe that

nation-states can little influence international migration and its attendant effects without the aid of other countries.¹³²

The Council of Europe has primarily concentrated on facilitating the exchange of information concerning successful programs undertaken at the nation-state level. In 1987, the Council's European Committee on Migration (CDMG) began a survey of relations between natives and foreigners in selected member states, which culminated in a report encouraging constituent governments to take effective measures to combat racism and xenophobia. The report also indicated that "there is a growing convergence in policies among countries with diverse foundations, histories, and policy-frameworks. . . pertaining to the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities."¹³³ Accordingly, in 1991 the CDMG created the Migration Policy Group (MPG) to organize a series of national roundtables to allow officials from across Europe to exchange their ideas and experiences concerning immigrant integration. The discussion sessions have included immigrants, members of ethnic minorities, and representatives of immigrant-advocacy organizations within their membership ranks. By 1997, the MPG had established roundtables in 16 European countries, including several that had recently made the transition from source countries to countries of immigration.¹³⁴

In a parallel development, at the Vienna Council of Europe in October 1993, heads of state established the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). Part of the group's mandate consists of reviewing legislation and administrative measures in member states, intended to reduce community tensions and to promote integration. On this basis, the commission has amassed a set of "good practices" undertaken at the local, national, and European levels, which it publicizes on the World Wide Web: <http://www.ecri.coe.int/en/04/02/01/e04020102.htm>.¹³⁵ A second field of ECRI activity is the European Youth Campaign, which has supported 94 pilot projects in 25 countries, intended to promote tolerance and understanding among young people. The programs generally provide training programs for youth leaders and social workers.¹³⁶

The European Union has also taken the lead in multilateral initiatives to reduce community tensions and anti-immigrant discrimination. In 1997, the Netherlands Presidency inaugurated a "European Year against Racism." Like the Council of Europe's Commission against Racism and Intolerance, the campaign sought to document a series of "best practices" and successful initiatives at each level of government in Europe. In addition, the Year against Racism sponsored national and regional programs to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, media, unions, employers associations, religious communities, and

educational institutions. To manage these programs, the Union appropriated 4.7 million ECU from its own budget and oversaw the creation of a network of national coordinating committees.¹³⁷

The European Union has also worked to rollback anti-immigrant discrimination. In 1994, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working Conditions, a semi-autonomous agency created by the Council of Ministers, instituted a program titled “Preventing Racism at the Workplace in the European Union.” For over two decades, the foundation has researched and campaigned for better working conditions in Europe. The 1994 program, however, was its first endeavor to expose and reverse injustices against non-Europeans. At the November 1995 summit of the European heads of state in Madrid, representatives from government, employers associations, trade unions, and academia considered the program’s proposals, which included a recommendation for an EU directive on racial discrimination and tougher anti-discrimination laws in member states.¹³⁸

Multilateral efforts also consist in exchanges and collaboration between government agencies and private organizations nested within particular states. For example, since its inception in 1989, the Department for Multicultural Affairs in Frankfurt, Germany (the “Frankfurt Model”) has established contact with cities in other countries, in order to facilitate informational exchange on strategies for integrating foreigners and reducing community tensions.¹³⁹ Likewise, in December 1997, a group of non-governmental organizations fighting racist and xenophobic discrimination in 13 European countries combined their efforts to form the European Network of Advisory and Information Centers against Racism and Discrimination.¹⁴⁰

In the Americas, two regional groups have placed the promotion of migrants’ rights on their agendas, the Regional Migration Conference (referred to as the Puebla Group) and the Summit of the Americas. The Puebla Group, established during a conference of North and Central American countries in 1996, addresses the concerns of both source and destination countries. This includes the development of a long-term strategy for multilateral migration management, as well as measures to deal with immigration-related developments in each member country. The group ascribes particular value to the promotion of human rights and provides information, training sessions, and regional consultative fora on the appropriate treatment of migrants in North and Central America.

Since 1994, the Summit of the Americas has dealt with immigration-related matters at the hemispheric level. The group’s Plan of Action that year urged member governments “to guarantee the protection of the human rights of all migrant workers and their families.” In 1998, the Summit issued another declaration exhorting governments to respect and defend migrant’s human rights, which would

include cooperation with international instruments relating to human rights. This Second Plan of Action also insisted that member countries undertake effective measures, including public education, in order to reduce incidents of discrimination and xenophobia that can lead to community tensions.

IV. **Conclusion**

Community tensions in countries of immigration assume a variety of forms that often differ from one region to another. In the United States, for instance, most—although not all—conflict between natives and newcomers involves minority groups in urban centers. In Europe, in contrast, community tensions primarily involve hostility between a large, native majority and a comparatively small immigrant minority, much of which is propagated by xenophobic music and political activity.

Despite these differences, community tensions in North America and Europe share a number of common attributes. Many incidents begin as a result of cultural misunderstandings between groups, strained police-community relations, media bias, and/or anti-immigrant discrimination. In addition, the various public arenas where conflict takes place—schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces—generally constitute the settings of inter-group hostility.

Accordingly, countries on both sides of the Atlantic have adopted approaches to solving community tensions that often closely resemble strategies chosen in other states. A review of national, subnational, and multilateral policies in Europe and the United States has therefore yielded a set of seven key elements for successfully reducing incidents of hostility between natives and newcomers. Policymakers and other community leaders can significantly improve inter-group relations by promoting tolerance, empowering migrants, orienting new immigrants, mediating conflict, prosecuting offenses, establishing trust between migrants and law enforcement, and reducing discrimination.

Promoting tolerance through educational programs has proven effective towards establishing a proactive foundation against the buildup of inter-group hostilities. Programs have ranged from attempts to mobilize an entire nation to engage in constructive dialogue to ongoing exhibits and cooperative networks of public servants. In addition to government-sponsored initiatives, non-governmental organizations on both sides of the Atlantic have actively taught understanding through a variety of media, including plays, festivals, films, and discussion fora. Empowering migrants to participate in the civic, social, and economic life of their host societies is a second component of a successful strategy. Initiatives have included giving foreign residents the opportunity to voice their interests and concerns through a variety of public fora, facilitating migrants' acquisition of the host country's primary language,

and making newcomers aware of the rights and benefits available to them. Empowerment speeds the process of immigrant integration, improving migrants' standing and rendering them less vulnerable to hostility and resentment by their native-born neighbors.

Orienting new immigrants to accepted ways of life in the host society functions in a manner similar to empowering migrants by substantially advancing the process of integration. Orientation strategies range from providing new arrivals with information about their new home upon arrival to establishing government agencies and private organizations to advise immigrants on successful adjustment to a new way of life.

When conflicts do erupt between groups, conflict mediation constitutes one method of successfully controlling community disturbances. Mediation takes place in a variety of settings, such as neighborhoods, community centers, and schools and involves a multitude of actors, including community leaders, students, law enforcement agents, and local businesses.

Another reaction consists of prosecuting offenses that result from inter-group hostility. Countries on both sides of the Atlantic have enacted laws that strengthen penalties for those who commit hate crimes and acts of anti-foreigner violence. In addition, governments at the national and subnational levels have established special agencies to observe and punish such crimes.

Successfully reducing community tensions also requires the establishment of positive, reinforcing relations between police and the communities they serve. Mutual trust reduces the likelihood of police brutality, which often causes tensions to arise. It also allows police and community members to work together to identify and eliminate potential danger. Approaches have included special training for civilians and police, the acquisition and training of bicultural police staff, and civilian oversight of and involvement in police activities.

Reducing discrimination against ethnic and racial minorities—particularly in the areas of housing, employment, and education—removes another potential source of community tensions. Successful measures have included the implementation of anti-discrimination laws backed by extensive systems for monitoring abuses and educational and training programs to promote awareness of discrimination among immigrants and natives. Projects that focus on the workplace are particularly important in ensuring the access of minorities to employment.

Multilateral coordination and cooperation enhances measures undertaken at the national and subnational levels. Countries should continue to look towards sets of “best practices” assembled by

international organizations. In addition, such organizations provide important fora in which countries can present examples of successful strategies for reducing community tensions.

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